



**TRUST YOUR FACE TO
A FACIAL PLASTIC SURGEON.**

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The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) is the world's largest association of facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons – those physicians performing cosmetic and reconstructive surgery of the face, head, and neck. The Academy's bylaws provide that AAFPRS fellows be board-certified surgeons with training and experience in facial plastic surgery.

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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FACIAL PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

LIP ENHANCEMENT

UNDERSTANDING LIP ENHANCEMENT

However, very few individual health problems would limit undergoing lip enhancement due to their typical minimally-invasive nature.

MAKING A DECISION FOR A SPECIFIC THERAPY

Lip augmentation involves the implantation of one or more biological or synthetic materials into the various structures of the lip to produce the desired appearance as pre-determined during discussions with your surgeon. While preferences for specific materials used for lip augmentation may vary between surgeons, please be reminded that the types of available materials and their applications in lip enhancement are continuing to evolve. Materials and techniques used for lip augmentation may be performed as FDA-approved or "off-label" as recommended by an experienced facial plastic surgeon to achieve an effective and safe treatment result for you. It is often advisable that patients first undergo a relatively temporary procedure which will allow them to evaluate the appearance, feeling and movement of their lips in the augmented state, before proceeding with relatively more permanent augmentation implants or synthetic surgical implant procedures.

Upper and lower lip augmentation with injectable fillers is currently the most common approach for both patients and their surgeons. An evolving range of injectable fillers is currently available for your care which is conventionally based upon one of the following materials or combinations: fat, hyaluronic acid, calcium hydroxylapatite, poly-L-lactic acid, collagen/PVMA. Advantages of injectable fillers include relative ease and short duration for placement in the lips, a more even consistency of texture when feeling the lip, and a duration ranging from 3-18 months or longer, depending upon the material and its location, technique and frequency of injection.

Permanent and surgically-implantable filler materials are produced from both biological and totally synthetic graft materials such as dermis, fascia, polytetrafluoroethylene (Gortex), and silicone, among other materials. These materials typically require a minor, office-based surgical procedure for their implantation, but offer an extended or permanent result for the modest additional effort. While both injectable and surgically-implantable materials may alter the texture or feeling of the lips after placement, you will all of the implants deemed reasonable for your individual care.

Lip appearance is a very personal preference and it is the most versatile facial feature for portraying yourself and recognizing others socially. Lips vary in appearance due to one's sex, age, ethnicity and behaviors and these factors, along with the overall proportions of your face, must be accounted for when considering lip enhancement. Nevertheless, in time, you may come to feel that the appearance of your lips is no longer proportional, robust, or accurately portrays your inner character. At this point, you may desire to enhance your face to complement, renew, or revitalize your appearance in a positive and meaningful way.

Lip enhancement refers to a myriad of minimally-invasive injectable and surgical methods for aesthetically reshaping, resizing or increasing the definition of the lips. Fortunately, when provided by a facial plastic surgeon, your means to accomplish your goals have never been more available, safe, and successful.

Treatments for lip enhancement are usually performed in the office setting which is convenient, private, and safe for persons who desire therapy. Your health, in conjunction with an appropriate therapy to achieve your goals, is given full consideration by your surgeon prior to the any decision to undertake a specific treatment.

The shape and features of our lips simultaneously define our facial appearance, provide for distinct movements when speaking and expressing emotions, allow us to gracefully eat food and drink liquids, and are the focus of intimate sensual touch on our face. Youthful, voluptuous lips portray an elegant balance of fullness and versatile movement which are both physically and psychologically vital to our individual health and our social experiences.

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“I was a bit frightened to undergo surgery and wanted a less invasive procedure. I chose an injectable filler as a great way to ease myself into facial enhancement.”

—HEATHER B., AGE 37

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ENHANCEMENTS

Lip enhancement most commonly focuses upon lip augmentation through restoring or further accentuating youthful-appearing lip proportions. Inherent or age-related lip thinning, flattening and loss of border definition, especially along the central Cupid’s bow of the upper lip, is safely and effectively reversed by increasing the proportional show of the red lip and redefining the supple curvature of the vermillion border of the lips through methods to restore lip volume. Reducing or eliminating other surrounding age-related lip features, such as small vertical “smokers” lines, marionette-like drooping at the corners of the mouth or deepened nasolabial folds along the lip-cheek borders, is also commonly performed to optimize the appearance of the lips by ensuring that adjacent soft-tissue features which immediately “frame” the lips are symmetric and attuned.

Lip enhancement may also refer to the desire for a proportional reduction in the size or shape of the lips resulting from congenital deformity, illness, trauma, or prominence associated with ethnicity. While less commonly requested, the goals in lip reduction remain the achievement of a youthful, symmetric and proportional appearance of the lips in aesthetic balance with other defining facial features.

Some fillers are better for fine lines; some are better for deeper creases and increasing facial volume.



Injectable fillers to correct melolabial creases.



Above: This patient has fairly good lip shape but desired more fullness.

Below: Fullness of both the upper and lower lips can enhance the overall appearance.



Above: The use of a hyaluronic acid filler can enhance the definition of a youthful lip

Below: A youthful lip before injection with a hyaluronic acid filler

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER TREATMENT

Most aesthetic injectable methods of lip augmentation can be accomplished using a topical or injectable local anesthetic during a 15-30 minute office procedure. Side effects include minor local irritation, redness, bruising, or swelling at the injection sites are the most commonly observed side effects, all of which typically abate within a few hours. Some mild irritation at the injection sites is unavoidable but can easily be camouflaged with standard make-up, if necessary.

Surgical implant insertions typically take up to an hour to perform in the office, depending upon the number and extent of treatment locations. Several sutures are commonly used to close the insertion sites. More swelling, redness, and discomfort may accompany these procedures, which require the use of an injectable local anesthetic. Local application of cold compresses may feel comforting. Most early swelling subsides within a day or two, though minor swelling and irritation may last for several weeks during the implant healing phase. Your activity level and medication for pain after the procedure are dependent upon your doctor’s recommendations.

Insurance does not generally cover lip surgery that is purely for cosmetic reasons. Surgery to correct or improve facial lip scars or lip contour deformities resulting from injury may be covered. It is the patient’s responsibility to check with the insurance carrier for information on the degree of coverage.

Lip enhancement is increasingly popular in many age groups. There are multiple options for temporary or permanent improvement