

HOUSE CALLS:

THE DOCTOR IS IN

TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS



PERMANENT OR NON-PERMANENT: A QUALIFIED ANSWER

Q: I AM ONLY 42 BUT I FIND THAT MY FACE IS ALREADY STARTING TO SAG, ESPECIALLY AROUND THE MOUTH AND CHEEK AREA. I AM CONTEMPLATING DERMAL INJECTIONS BUT I AM CONFUSED BETWEEN THE PERMANENT AND NON-PERMANENT TYPE. WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES AND WHAT TYPE DO YOU RECOMMEND I HAVE DONE?



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One of the earliest signs of aging is a loss of facial fullness, and sagging tissue. Soft tissue fillers have the unique ability to create a smoother and more youthful look by filling and contouring these changes. Soft tissue fillers are flexible substances that can be injected under the skin, and in front of sagging tissue to improve the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, and plump and re-contour the facial shape. Keep in mind that soft tissue augmentation with fillers does not lift sagging tissue or stop the aging process. If you wish to lift sagging tissues, ask your facial surgeon to discuss surgical options such as a facelift. Non-surgical rejuvenation treatments such as injectable fillers cannot achieve the same results, but may help delay the time at which a facelift becomes appropriate.

Most filler substances work by replacing the lost components of the skin: collagen, hyaluronic acid, and fat. How long the improvement will last depends on the type of filler used, the areas treated, and the ability of the patient's skin to absorb the materials. Temporary fillers usually last between 4 to 6 months, and include human and bovine (cattle) collagen, and hyaluronic acid. Collagen is a natural protein that supports the skin. Hyaluronic

acid (HA) is a natural sugar molecule in human skin and is the framework in which skin cells live. All hyaluronic acid products bind water and give the skin volume. Unlike with collagen fillers, no skin allergy testing is needed with HA products. The results with HA fillers tend to last longer than collagen fillers.

Permanent fillers are longer lasting, but the results are not necessarily permanent. The continued aging of your face and variables in your skin's absorption of fillers will affect how long your results last. Examples of "permanent" fillers include autologous fat (one's own fat), and BioAlcamid™. Autologous fat is harvested from your own body, can be re-injected to enhance facial fullness. Fat injection requires a more extensive procedure than other injectable fillers. Bio-Alcamid™ is a synthetic injectable gel which unlike other injectable fillers, is more secure and has less chance to migrate in your tissues because it becomes covered by a very thin collagen capsule which completely surrounds the gel, holding it in place.

Each filler brings subtle, distinctive benefits. Sometimes more than one filler may be used to achieve the best results. Permanent fillers need to be placed in deeper folds or creases, and provide longer-lasting results, while temporary fillers can be placed closer to the surface of the skin, and allow for more precision with fine lines, and still others can be combined or layered to gradually bring the face into better balance. Before committing to a permanent filler, it is advisable to have a temporary filler placed in deep folds to determine if your expectations are met.

While not as involved as surgical cosmetic procedures, soft tissue augmentation is still a medical procedure. The first and most important choice in your decision making process is selecting a facial surgeon, one who has specialized facial surgery training and a thorough understanding of facial anatomy, to recommend and inject an appropriate filler or other surgical procedure.