

Aging Should Bring Wisdom, Not Wrinkles.

Part I: Using Botox® and Dermal Fillers.

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As the years go by we become wiser, learning more lessons to try to live a better life. However, experience and maturity don't come free. The price of all this knowledge and wisdom is getting old. But really getting old doesn't mean feeling old or looking old.

We admire some of the movie stars and super models and wonder how they can look so great for so many years; it seems like some of them never age. For instance, Christie Brinkley (my husband's favorite model) - she has good genes, her parents still look great, she has had no plastic surgery but she uses several minimally invasive treatments. At 53 Brinkley still looks fabulous!

Well, part of that is genetic. You look at your parents and chances are that is the way you are going to look when you grow old. That is the truth; genes are the most important factor in how we age. However, the way you take care of yourself, the type of life you live, and the treatments that you have had will make a major difference. During the last years, the western world's attitude to aging has changed dramatically and none of us will escape the consequences. Even if you believe that nature should take its course, there will be plenty of friends, family and colleagues who have no intention of doing likewise.

Non-surgical Alternatives

Now we are entering a crucial phase. The era of dramatic changes and Joan Rivers' overdone look is out. Today's look is more natural, so that maturity, wisdom and beauty can still go together. The most important thing is to achieve an appropriate look for your age. You can't pretend to look twenty if you are fifty. Facelifts that give you cat's eyes and baboon cheek bones are overrated. Last year the American Society of Plastic Surgery announced a decrease in the number of facelifts performed in the USA. This doesn't mean that people are giving up and just want to look old; it only means that there are better, more natural alternatives that are available. In reality this change is due to all the non-invasive, non-surgical and more affordable alternatives available today such as Botox®, Dermal Fillers and Lasers.

How to start your improvement? Just look at yourself in the mirror and think what you would like to improve - and I say improve, not



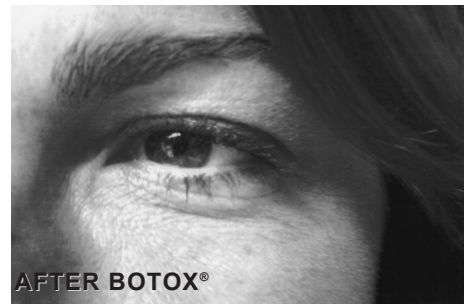
change. You want to still look like yourself but younger and rested. The next step is to visit your cosmetic dermatologist, he or she should listen to you and your expectations, and then you will learn about the different minimally invasive alternatives available today. That should be the only purpose of the first consultation.

If your doctor's office has the VISIA, a computerized skin and face analysis that compares you with people of similar age and race and generates a score for wrinkles, pore size, complexion and sun spots, it is even easier to know what treatments you may need. This computer also recreates the appearance of the patient ten years later and how the patient may look after the treatments.

After a complete evaluation and a carefully designed plan, the treatments can be carried out. In my practice, most of these alternatives have no down time, although a few of them do. In this first part of the article I will address Dermal Fillers and Botox®. In part II next month, I will cover lasers and lights.

Botox® Treatments

Botox® is a purified protein produced by a bacterium (Clostridium botulinum), which reduces the activity of the muscles that cause wrinkles. Remember that there are two types of wrinkles: active and permanent or fixed. The active wrinkles are produced when we smile, frown or express our feelings. With time,



repetitive motion causes the skin to crinkle and these wrinkles become permanent. Today Botox® is the gold-standard to treat active wrinkles and prevent and soften fixed ones.

Botox® is safe and highly effective. One 10-minute treatment and a few tiny injections and in 3-5 days after the treatment the difference is noticeable. You will look several years younger and your face will look rested. The effects last from 3-5 months. In the past, Botox® was used only by celebrities and movie stars; nowadays is very popular. In my practice, we have equal number of men and women that get Botox® cosmetic treatments, in all kinds of jobs. GR is a brilliant, 40-year-old trial lawyer who comes to my office for Botox® treatment three times per year. He tells me he feels more confident to speak in front of the jury when he has his Botox®. He looks younger, rested and more relaxed. Botox® relaxes the muscles so you can express yourself without looking wrinkled.

Limited repetitive movement prevents the formation of permanent wrinkles. I have patients as young as 25 that use Botox® cosmetic treatments to prevent wrinkles. Downtime is virtually none. It takes 3-4 days to see the effects - so, if you are preparing for a big event, have the treatment done one week in advance. Although drooping of the eyelids can be an adverse effect, it happens only very rarely. When treatments are done by an experienced physician, there are virtually no side effects. In my practice, I have not seen a single side effect. I recommend avoiding blood thinners like Aspirin, Advil and Ibuprofen three days before the treatment.

The cost varies in every region of the country. For instance, on the west coast it is more expensive. In the Midwest, a fair price is

\$300 dollars per site. In my practice we charge \$300 dollars for the first site and, if the patient adds a second site, it is \$500 for both. Be careful with cheap Botox® treatments - what happens is some use it more diluted so the effects are less lasting. Botox® cosmetic should be administered by an experienced physician. Be careful not to over do it, you don't want Nicole Kidman's frozen face look; you still want to look natural and expressive.

Injectable Dermal Fillers

As we age, our faces lose volume and production of collagen, elastic tissue and hyaluronic acid slow down, reducing skin's ability to "snap back." Exposure to sunlight accelerates this process. If your wrinkles are already fixed or permanent and if your lips are drooping and becoming thinner, the answer is Dermal Fillers. Originally there was only collagen, but this lasted only three months. Today we have a new generation of FDA-approved Dermal Fillers.

Juvederm is the newest one. This is hyaluronic acid in the form of an injectable gel that has a very smooth consistency. In the hands of a skilled physician, Juvederm can be used to correct marionette lines (oral commissures), nasolabial folds (smile lines), and deep frown lines. This product can also be used to restore the natural fullness of lips and to treat perioral lines. The results are immediate and last up to one year.



BEFORE DERMAL FILLERS



AFTER DERMAL FILLERS

My other favorite filler is Radiesse. This is a thicker, more lasting filler made of something similar to what bones are made of. Radiesse is used to treat deeper wrinkles, nasolabial folds, and facial asymmetry. It is also used for the enhancement of cheeks and chin. Radiesse lasts around two years. The cost of Juvederm is

around \$500 dollars for a 0.8 cc syringe. The price of 1.3 cc of Radiesse is around \$850 dollars.

In my office, Dermal Fillers injections are done under topical anesthetic combined with regional blocks, so the treatments are completely pain free. Side effects include only some mild bruising. However, it only happens when the patients are taking blood thinners which I recommend to be discontinued three days before the treatment. If the treatment is done right there are no side effects. Dermal Fillers are safe and effective and highly rewarding since results are immediate.

Remember, whatever treatment you choose, the main objective is to achieve a natural look. I'm in no way opposed to plastic surgery. In some cases when I consider it necessary, I don't hesitate to refer my patients to a competent plastic surgeon.

Next month I will review other non-surgical alternatives like lasers and lights to help you age full of wisdom and grace.

Skin Diagnostics Laser and Rejuvenation offers Botox Cosmetic and the best FDA-approved dermal fillers to help you age gracefully. Call us for an appointment at 513-631-0059 or visit our website at www.cincinnatiaskinlaser.com.



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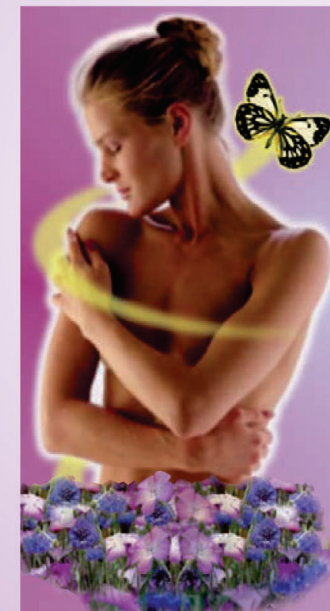
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