

# 7 things to know if you are considering dermal fillers

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Dermal fillers with hyaluronic acid have been used for more than 20 years and they have become immensely popular. The established safety and the natural result that is achievable today are some of the motivators for people all over the world to have a filler treatment.

If you have not had a filler injection before you may have some questions and concerns. “What results can I expect?” “Will I look strange afterwards?” “Is it painful?” Here are seven things to know about dermal fillers that may help you decide if this is something for you.

## 1. Dermal fillers: what it is and how it works

The vast majority of dermal fillers today consist of hyaluronic acid, a substance that occurs naturally in the body. Hyaluronic acid is a polysaccharide, or sugar molecule, that attracts a thousand times its own molecular weight of water. Hyaluronic acid that occurs naturally in the body and skin is degraded by the body within a day or two. Hyaluronic acid that is used in dermal fillers has been slightly modified, meaning that it takes longer for the body to degrade it, normally between six months up to two years. In the last 20 years, dermal fillers with hyaluronic acid have replaced most other types of filler material, because of their safety, effectiveness, and lasting effect.

## Hyaluronic acid – short facts/interesting facts:

- It is a sugar molecule
- It is a natural substance in the skin
- It is hydrating
- It can bind a thousand times its own weight of water
- From the age of 28 we lose 1% per year of the skin’s content of hyaluronic acid

## 2. Established safety profile

To date, patients all over the world have had tens of millions of filler treatments with hyaluronic acid. A large number of clinical trials have also been conducted to evaluate results and side effects of these filler injections. The hyaluronic acid fillers are generally very well tolerated and have an established safety profile. However, they still carry some risks and before the treatment, you should discuss all possible risks and benefits with your healthcare practitioner. A well-educated healthcare practitioner will know how to take care of side effects. **Like with any type of treatment, it is important to choose a qualified healthcare practitioner who uses products of proven and well-researched quality.**

## 3. Pain or discomfort under and after treatment

When a dermal filler is injected you may experience some pain, but most patients describe the pain as mild. Today, most fillers contain lidocaine, a local anaesthetic, which takes away most of the discomfort. The injection point might become a little red and it might bleed a little bit when the filler is injected.

After the treatment, you may for a few days feel some pain or tension in the area that has been injected. Other expected reactions at the injection site are bruising, swelling and itching.

## 4. Quick results

You can see the results more or less immediately after a hyaluronic acid filler injection. Usually, the area that has been injected becomes slightly swollen for a few days, so the final result can be seen a few days or up to two weeks after the treatment.

## 5. Lasting effect but not permanent

Hyaluronic acid filler injections do not give permanent results, but the effect will last for some months, normally between six months and two years. How long filler injections will last differ from patient to patient. The body metabolizes hyaluronic acid faster in some patients than in others.

## 6. Replacing surgery

As already mentioned, fillers with hyaluronic acid have been around for more than 20 years. For every year, manufacturers and healthcare practitioners have gained more knowledge and understanding of how filler injections can be used. **Some manufacturers can now offer dermal fillers of different firmness for different applications.** A firmer filler is suitable to build structure, for example in the jawline or chin. Softer fillers are suitable for giving volume, for example in the cheeks or lips or for a softer definition of the chin. Accordingly, healthcare practitioners can give patients the natural results that most people are looking for.

The broad area of use, and the established safety of hyaluronic acid dermal fillers, have led to fillers replacing surgery to an increasing extent. Filler injections can for example be used instead of chin implants or jaw implants, with minimal downtime or discomfort for the patient. Fillers can also be used to make eye bags less visible.

## 7. Maintaining or enhancing your own beauty

Some believe that fillers are for older people. And it is true that fillers are a good tool in helping older people look younger. When fillers became popular 20 years ago, they were used to fill wrinkles, such as nasolabial folds or marionette lines. Healthcare practitioners and manufacturers have since then learnt a lot about aesthetic treatments and different ways to use fillers. Facial aging involves complex changes and interactions between skin, fat, muscle and bone. The aging process involves for example resorption of bone in particular of the midface and soft tissue redundancy due to facial tissue movements and the slow force of gravity. The soft tissue redundancy is in particular visible around the jawline and nasolabial folds also creating hollows appearing as volume loss. **Adding volume and compensating for bone resorption is one of the best ways to refresh the face and decrease wrinkles and lines.** The goal is to help maintain the patient’s own beauty and to make people feel

more confident and happy about themselves.

**But fillers can also be used to enhance – to volumize and to build structure.** Adding volume to the lips or the cheeks has been popular for many years. Today, people are also looking for filler treatments that build structure. Depending on personal taste, it could be a more prominent chin or a sharper jawline. Personalization is a strong trend today in dermal filler treatments. The idea is not to overtreat patients but to enhance the person's natural beauty and to refine and refresh. **Remember to choose a healthcare practitioner who really listens to you, who understands your concerns, and who has the same view of beauty as you do.**

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