

Expert Answers to Frequently Asked Questions on Lip Fillers

Here, we explore the many concerns individuals have surrounding their lips and address these concerns with answers from an experienced and expert aesthetic nurse and master injector Julie Horne.

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Why do people ask for lip fillers?

Well, there are many reasons why an individual may choose lip treatments. The lips are a significant feature of the face, they are used for speaking, for kissing, for eating – how they look and feel is important to some people.

I have thin lips, is there a procedure for thin lips?

Yes, there is a treatment and it’s important not to over volumize them as you need only a small amount of product to create shape and lifting of the lips. Having patience is key for individuals with thin lips in the first year of treatment. It may help to get treatments up to 3-4 times in the first year.

What is a filler?

A filler is a hyaluronic acid-based gel that is injected and volumizes and lifts features of your face, such as the lips.

Are there different kinds of fillers?

Yes, there are several different types of fillers- they have different formulas and therefore different lifting capacity. Some are flexible, some are not. RESTYLANE® has grown to become the world’s most diverse range of HA dermal

fillers[1,2] to treat individual needs.[3] The specific product is selected based on your tissue quality and what kind of result you would like to achieve. If you have, for example, loose tissue in the lips (such as lines and wrinkles on the surface of the lip), it's very important that a soft filler is chosen with high-tissue integration that will fill out the pockets to give the lips a nice and smooth result. We treat the lips with a soft filler in order to plump them up naturally, and after 4 weeks, a firmer filler is chosen to create the right shape, height and lifting of the lips. It is carried out in 2 sittings.

What is hyaluronic acid?

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) is a naturally occurring substance – a polysaccharide (a carbohydrate e.g. starch, cellulose, or glycogen with molecules consisting of sugar molecules that are bonded together) that we have in our body. It keeps our skin hydrated and firm.

I worry I won't look like myself anymore with a lip treatment. Can you change the way you look through changing your lips?

If you go to an experienced injector, the first thing we look at is facial proportions. A good injector should never volumize the lips so that they are out of proportion.

Are there any standards or ideals on how lips should look?

There are different ideals around the world. My personal favourite is to give patients a crisp and defined lip border, and to create some height in the centre of the lip – allowing the height to fade out laterally. I'm more aware of shape and definition as opposed to size. It's also important to give a patient the right proportions. If you see the patient in a profile view and you draw a line from the tip of the nose to the chin, the lower lip should touch the line and the upper lip should be 2mm behind, creating the perfect Ricketts line. I'm always trying to balance the

Ricketts line. It’s important to get a nice protruding lower lip to balance the lips.

What is the process for lip treatments?

First, we have a consultation. Together, we discuss what you want to achieve with your lips. Then you fill out some paperwork. After this, you will be given topical numbing cream in a relaxed setting (10-15 minutes) followed by the treatment (10 minutes). After your treatment, you will receive information about what to expect and think about post-treatment. It’s important to know that the lips settle after 2 weeks. At this time, it’s good to return for consultation. This is where we learn about your thoughts, experiences and if you are satisfied. Going forward, we can plan your next appointment of building up your thin lips.

If I bring a picture of lips that I feel look beautiful, could you replicate them?

You can absolutely bring a picture so that the HCP can get an idea of what you think is beautiful and what you would like to work toward. Ultimately, everything points toward your natural anatomy and what we can achieve from that. It’s good to know what kind of shape and look that you like so that we can individualize the treatment and try to achieve results that are as similar as possible.

Is it painful?

Lips are the most sensitive area that HCPs (healthcare professionals) treat on the face. You can have either a dental block when you inject lidocaine (a local anesthetic or numbing medication) so you won’t feel a thing or apply a topical anesthesia. You then sit about 15 minutes pre-treatment to get comfortably numb.

Is there going to be a lot of swelling? Will it show?

Regarding the healing process, expect 48 hours of visible swelling. That’s why Friday’s can be very popular for this treatment – as people have the weekend to recover. After the second day the lips start to settle and feel natural again. It’s important to note that you can also get bruising, but makeup can cover this. It’s usually just small bruising that can be covered up with lipstick, for example.

Is there anything that can go wrong? What if I won’t look like myself anymore?

Make sure that you go to an experienced injector and have a proper consultation. Though fillers are minimally invasive, they still carry some risks. Before the treatment, you should discuss all possible risks and benefits with your healthcare practitioner. It’s very important to feel comfortable with them. Tell them what you want to achieve and any queries you may have. It’s so important that you feel safe and that you’re both on the same page regarding your results. Once this is achieved, you can then feel safe in their guidance. Ensure that they know what you want to look like and what you want to enhance and highlight in your face.

When I come home after the treatment, can I go back to normal e.g. wash my face, go running, etc.?

Directly after the treatment, try not to touch your lips (we don’t want any bacteria getting into the area). Don’t put any makeup on for 6 hours. Wait to eat for about an hour so – until the anesthesia has disappeared. For the swelling, you can use ice or anti-histamines to reduce the swelling. Sleep with an extra pillow under your head on the first night. After 4-5 days, post treatment, I would recommend to touch and feel your way around your lips and if you feel lumps or bumps, rub them to flatten them out and massage them away.

As I’m getting older, I’m getting wrinkles on and around my lips. Is there anything I can do about that?

While we are aging, a decrease in collagen, elastin, and hyaluronic acid leads to a decrease in our skin quality. That is when the lines are starting to appear. We also lose volume in our face. I like to restore the volume loss and give support to the tissue on the upper lip. It helps very nicely with the vertical fine lines. For the vertical lines on your upper lip, I’d recommend a very thin and soft filler. It would be injected superficially right under your skin to give tissue support.

If I have lip treatment, will it last forever?

A lip filler treatment can last up to 12 months. In the first year, it can be good to do 1-2 retreatments in order to build up the volume of your lips.

Do you have any lip fillers you’d recommend?

I would definitely recommend Restylane® KYSSE™. It’s a very flexible filler and it works perfectly in movable areas (i.e. the lips) as the filler follows the tissue – giving a natural result. It’s very versatile and as it is neither soft nor firm, you get the soft, nice lips with the sharp definition.

If I kiss someone after the treatment, will they notice?

They will definitely want to kiss you again.

Do you have any top tips for lip care?

- Hydrate the lips by drinking plenty of water
- Use an effective lip balm or extra virgin coconut oil on the lips
- Scrub your lips 1-2 times a week to get rid of the dead skin cells
- Try to have good lifestyle factors: avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption
- Always wear sunscreen to protect the lips

To find out more about **RESTYLANE® treatments and products, click here**.

References

1 Data on file (MA-33939).
2 Öhrlund A. Poster presented at AMWC 2019.
3 Carruthers JD et al. Plast Reconstr Surg 2008;121 (Suppl 5):5S–30S.

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