

Replacing Volume Loss from Facial Aging

Presented by River Region Facial Plastics

Maintaining facial harmony as we age is a delicate balance. We often hear people say, "I don't look on the outside how I feel on the inside." Thanks to science and research, those with trained hands are now able to use products that can enhance one's natural facial features. There's the old saying 'just because you have a hammer, doesn't make everything a nail' and the same goes for these products. Always remember that everyone is unique and therefore may require different treatment plans. For this month's column, I will describe Sculptra® aesthetic, a non-surgical option to improve facial appearance.

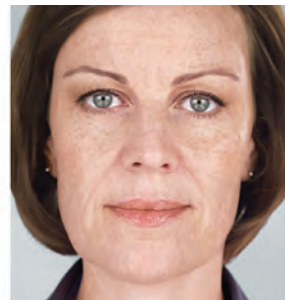
In 2004, the Food and Drug Administration approved poly-L-lactic acid, better known by its brand name, Sculptra® aesthetic. Sculptra® is indicated for use in facial areas that lose volume as we age. Initially, the treatment was used for patients with an HIV diagnosis. HIV patients often experience an extensive amount of facial volume loss, particularly at the temples and in the hollowing of the cheeks.

As the aging process continues, we lose the diamond shape of our facial structure to a more rectangular shape. Commonly we look into a mirror and see our reflection only to notice hollowed cheeks, sunken temples, and a loss of volume under the eyes - which draws attention to wobbles of the chin or jowls. The best news is yet to come! As we age, our skull will shrink, leaving the layer of skin to drape as ill fitted trousers would drape... this is all a result of volume loss.

Restoring facial volume with fillers (such as Juvederm® or Restylane®),



Before treatment
(all photos unretouched)



Results after 25 months

non-surgical procedures (such as Ultherapy®) and products that restore volume loss (such as Sculptra®) can rejuvenate the face and give very gratifying results.

Sculptra® (poly-L-lactic acid) is a synthetic material injected into areas of volume loss in the face and will ultimately replace lost collagen. Sculptra® is targeted to areas such as the temples and hollowed cheeks to revive the diamond youthful shape of the face. When the lost volume is replaced, wobbly jowls diminish, eyes become softer, and cheeks return to a more youthful state. Sculptra® is not recommended for use in the nasolabial folds. Other fillers such as Juvederm® and Restylane® are the products of choice for refreshing those areas.

Sculptra® injections are not a painful process. We take great care to ensure comfort by using topical numbing creams applied one hour before the procedure. Sculptra® is manufactured to include a local anesthetic, which helps make the procedure quite tolerable. Sculptra® is commonly injected over a series of three sessions approximately six

weeks apart. This regimen yields a refreshed look to the face and lasts up to two years.

Sculptra® takes a little longer to achieve results compared with fillers (such as Juvederm®); however, the results last twice as long. By injecting Sculptra®, your

body responds by producing your own natural collagen. Sculptra® is very safe, and since lactic acid is found naturally in the body, allergic reactions are of little concern.

Sometimes bruising may occur; however, with the use of blunt tip cannulas, we are able to push the blood vessels aside as opposed to pushing through them with a needle. The cannula has improved our technique, resulting in very little bruising. Sculptra® injections have no downtime and only require a gentle facial massage for about five days post injection. Make up may be applied if minor bruising does occur.

At River Region Facial Plastics, not only are we very pleased with the results of Sculptra®, but our patients are pleased as well! If you think Sculptra® may be right for you, please call our office for a complimentary consultation and Do Something Beautiful today!

*Yours in Good Health,
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