

The Yin & Yang of Facial Aging

Presented by River Region Facial Plastics

Hello, this is Dr. Michael Bowman with River Region Facial Plastics. This month I'd like to discuss an interesting change in how we address facial aging.

As a facial plastic surgeon, my job is to examine the face and analyze it in order to determine the best plan for rejuvenation. I have noticed that, like a coin, there are two different aspects of the facial aging process. Most of us are familiar with "positive aging." This term encompasses many of the changes our clients notice when they come in for their consultation. Specifically, I am referring to the changes that can happen as we get older. These things are not present in our youth, but come about as one ages. Positive aging includes things like sun damage, wrinkling, drooping, sagging jowls, etc. In the past, this was the only aspect of facial aging that was usually addressed.

It is important, however, not to forget the flip side of the coin: "negative aging." I am referring to the things that we lose, as we get older. Specifically, our faces lose volume in a specific and predictable pattern. It is much easier to overlook this aspect of the aging process because it is so easy to ignore what has been lost. However, this aspect of aging cannot be ignored if we want to have the most natural looking rejuvenation possible. Negative aging usually shows up first in a younger face. There are three main areas of volume loss. First, loss of the lateral and deep malar (cheek) fat allows the cheekbones to become more prominent. Medially, loss of cheek

volume causes the cheek to recede relative to the lower lid. This creates what is often called the tear trough (the area below the lower eyelid) to become very prominent. Finally, volume loss in the temple creates a subtle, but noticeable area of volume loss that affects patients of every age.



Positive aging is usually treated with procedures of some type. For example, sagging of the lower face and neck can be corrected with a QuickLift®. Drooping of the upper eyelids and bulging of the lower eyelids can be corrected with a blepharoplasty (eyelid rejuvenation). These procedures are very effective, but do have some associated downtime and recovery. The great news is that treatment of negative aging involves replacement of the lost volume, and this can usually be done with injectable office procedures with minimal downtime and recovery.

Our two main treatment options for volume replacement at River Region Facial Plastics are Sculptra® and Voluma™ XC. Both products are excellent and effective, but they work differently. Sculptra® is a bio-stimulator which helps your face build its own collagen, and in turn, gives you long lasting volume replacement. Since opening in 2012, we have become the leading injector of Sculptra® in Alabama. It is an outstanding and dependable product, but it does take a while for the results to come about

since it depends on your body's own processes to create the new collagen. The wait is worthwhile, though, since most patients see results which last 2-3 years before needing a touch up.

We are very excited about a new product that we mentioned last month: Voluma™ XC. Voluma™ XC is the newest hyaluronic acid (HA) filler to enter the US market. It is in the Juvederm® family of fillers and is produced by Allergan, the makers of Botox® Cosmetic. We are proud to be the first and only providers of Voluma™ XC in the River Region at the time I am writing this article. Voluma™ XC is unique among HA fillers because it is FDA approved for results that last up to 2 years! Like the rest of the HA fillers, Voluma™ XC also gives immediate results, so it is an excellent choice for patients who need instant rejuvenation. Although it is rarely necessary, like other HA fillers, Voluma™ XC can be dissolved with a product called hyaluronidase.

As mentioned above, most volume treatments like Sculptra® and Voluma™ XC are office procedures that take 30 minutes or less and have minimal downtime and recovery. I hope you will give us a call to set up your free consultation so we can help create your own customized beauty plan and determine which treatments will be best for you.



Yours In Good Health,
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