

THE AGING FACE

Presented by River Region Facial Plastics

Let's face it; all of our faces are aging. At this time, there is no "fountain of youth." No one has a way to prevent aging despite many claims to the contrary from many sources; however, there are products and procedures available to rejuvenate the facial appearance. Also, there are ways to help one diminish the rapidity of aging.

Aging of the face occurs by way of volume loss in the tissues beneath the skin. There are compartments of fat in the temples, over the cheeks, around the eyes, and in the jaws that are full in our youth. When we progress with time, the youthful face (through diminution of that fatty tissue) allows for a slow loss of facial volume. Hormonal changes that occur through aging also promote the loss of fat.

Our facial skeleton shrinks through aging, which allows the overlying skin and tissues to droop and wrinkle. Our skin loses elasticity from weakened collagen and this induces wrinkles and loss of skin thickness or strength.

With all of the above negatively affecting our youthful facial appearance, what does one do?

We all know someone who is said to have mirrored the youthful appearance of his or her parents. There is no substitute for great genetics. Fair complexions have a tendency to age more rapidly than darker complexions. Those of African American descent don't usually age as quickly. The same is true for faces of Asian descent.

Keeping a healthy face commands a healthy lifestyle. Exercise, vitamins, and proper nutrition are helpful, while smoking and sun exposure will increase wrinkling of the facial skin. Unfortunately, smoking cessation doesn't allow the reversal of the skin damage that has already been done, nor does protection of the skin with sunscreen or clothing reverse solar skin damage. If one does stop smoking, it will help to keep the aging pace minimized and the same is true of good sun protection.

Today is a great time to help you cope with aging. There are a vast number of products and procedures available. Our culture seeks good looks and youthfulness. So, I will enlighten you as to how we, at River Region Facial Plastics, approach your facial aging.

An investment in good skin care is essential. SkinMedica® products promote great looking skin in many ways. A fabulous sunscreen is available, as well as a product that exfoliates surface skin cells through a combination of

three retinoid ingredients, and then another product that utilizes a growth factor and antioxidants grown from human cells in a laboratory to give glow and strength to the skin. Our staff can help you to decide the products that are best for you and provide a customized skin care routine.

There is still confusion about fillers versus neuromodulators. Fillers have names familiar to some, i.e. Restylane®, Juvederm®, Perlane®, and they are designed to fill in depressions in the lower face where volume loss has occurred. A new product, Belotero Balance®, has also recently become available. The fillers are actually approved by the FDA for use in creases called nasolabial folds (the lines from the nose to the corners of the mouth); however, they are successfully used "off label" for filling tear troughs (the hollow beneath the eyes), volumizing lips, and volumizing the lateral upper eyelids. The term "off label" simply means that a drug is being prescribed and used for a particular indication even though it has not yet received approval from the FDA for that particular condition.

The injection of these products causes very little discomfort or bruising and gives instant gratification to appearance. There are few side effects or negatives when administered by the hands of physicians who are trained in the application. These products are metabolized by our bodies and will last 6-12 months with excellent results.

Neuromodulators, i.e. Botox Cosmetic®, Dysport® and Xeomin® are also available at River Region Facial Plastics. They are delivered to select areas of facial muscles to diminish the lines of facial expression. Our goal is to temporarily, for 4-6 months after delivery, stop a select muscular function and thus soften or eliminate lines of facial expression. The application takes effect within 4-6 days. Discomfort from injections is minimal with few side effects.

River Region Facial Plastics is pleased to offer Sculptra Aesthetic® and Ultherapy® for our patients. Sculptra® is an L-poly-lactic acid, which is injected into facial depressions to stimulate the face to increase production of collagen beneath the skin. Lactic acid is a natural body product and makes our muscles sore when we exercise; Sculptra® is a derivative product of lactic acid. By a series of injections, Sculptra® causes our collagen to volumize selectively at the site of the injection. The FDA has confirmed Sculptra's ability to last for two years.

Ultherapy® is a procedure that allows the delivery of ultrasonic energy to the depths of our facial and neck skin. Ultrasonic devices include those used in medicine to study thyroids, blood vessels, and many other body areas. The sonogram for evaluation of the fetus of an expectant mother is another use of ultrasonic energy. Ultherapy® converts sound wave energy to thermal or heat energy and penetrates the surface skin to concentrate beneath the skin to the dermis. The effect of this heat stimulus to the dermis is an immediate tightening of the overlying skin. There is also further skin tightening that happens three months later. This one time application of Ultherapy® takes between 1-2 hours to administer and is done with mild analgesics. Ultherapy® is a consideration for patients who have health issues and may not be good candidates for surgeries. It can be performed on all skin types and colors, smokers, or simply those who are not quite ready or in need of face or neck surgery. The results are gratifying, and the FDA verifies the results will last for one year or longer.

River Region Facial Plastics also offers a procedure called the QuickLift®. The QuickLift® is a modification of a facelift and, in most patients, there is little discomfort, bruising or swelling yet it delivers quality, long lasting results. The QuickLift® can be performed without general anesthesia and in conjunction with other procedures such as facial liposculpting and blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery). The consultation for consideration of a surgery is private and personalized. We educate our patients on realistic expectations of surgery and decide what would be optimal for best results.

No one product or procedure fits the needs of all patients, that's why we offer many options to provide beautiful, natural facial rejuvenation. Let us help you decide what works best for you. No longer must you look at yourself in the mirror and lament that nothing is available to help your appearance. The magic wand of aging elimination is forever unavailable, but as I have enumerated, several things are ready for you and your needs. DO SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL TODAY!

*Yours in Good Health,
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