

face

face

essentials

Lise Taylor spoke with Minneapolis dermatologist **Charles Crutchfield MD** about various non-invasive methods to rejuvenate the face.

The onset of facial lines and wrinkles are an inevitable part of growing older. But when our expression lines start to detract from our appearance, it's time for many of us to turn to the raft of products and minimally invasive treatments now available to help improve our appearance. Nonsurgical facial rejuvenation encompasses a host of different treatments. 'The field of minimally invasive cosmetic dermatology has grown exponentially over the last three years,' says Minneapolis dermatologist Charles Crutchfield MD, Clinical Associate Professor of Dermatology at the University of Minnesota Medical School. Along with this surge in growth has come a mass of information and an increase in the number of practitioners who perform a range of treatments. This can make it difficult to know which treatment options you require as well as who you should see to perform them.

Some of the more common treatments work effectively as stand-alone procedures, and many can be combined for even more effective results.

Botox

As you age, facial lines and wrinkles start to appear from repeated muscle contractions caused by frowning, smiling, and laughing. Botox (Botulinum Toxin Type A) is a genetically engineered and purified enzyme that is injected in minute quantities to relax the muscles that cause the unwanted lines and wrinkles.

Botox works well on the forehead, the frown lines between the eyes, crow's feet, marionette lines, chin creases and neck bands, and also, to some degree, on smoker's lines around mouth. The results last from three to six months.

Restylane

Restylane is a filling agent that is designed to smooth out the lines and wrinkles that can be seen when the face is at rest. It's a sugar-based gel that goes by the chemical name hyaluronic acid. Hyaluronic acid is a natural product that occurs in human skin and is one of the natural fluids found in our body.

Over time, the lower half of the face loses volume. Restylane is used to fill lines on the cheeks, between the nose and the corner of the mouth, lines around mouth, and to rejuvenate and repair the lips. Treatment with hyaluronic acid can last six to 12 months before being absorbed by the body. This is much longer than protein filler alternatives.

'I prefer hyaluronic acid products because they can be injected smoothly, they don't cause allergic reactions, they last longer than most other fillers and they have a lower side-effect profile,' says Dr. Crutchfield.

Often a combination approach is adopted. Botox is first used to smooth the lines, and then filling agents employed to fill the deeper crevices and wrinkles.

'The field of minimally invasive cosmetic dermatology has grown exponentially over the last three years'

IPL

Intense pulsed light (IPL) therapy involves a laser-like device that uses filters to produce a broad spectrum of light to treat different conditions. IPL is an effective treatment for wrinkles, evening out skin tone, removing unwanted hair and correcting some sun damage. Little downtime is involved. For optimum results, a series of treatments is usually required. The skin's appearance will continue to improve after the treatments have ceased due to further collagen rebuilding.

Dr. Crutchfield explains, 'The newer generation IPL devices tend to have a better effect within their desired target range. The second generation of IPL devices should be introduced within the next six months. They are designed to treat redness, freckling, veins, and changes in the skin associated with chronic sun exposure.'

Peels

Alpha-hydroxy acid treatments for the skin are the fundamental tool that Dr. Crutchfield uses for skin fitness and rejuvenation. 'We have tried a lot of different lines but we now use the NeoStrata line because we consider it to be the gold standard in the field. NeoStrata actually invented peels and they have now come out with a new platinum line to address specific concerns,' he reveals.

He adds that peel programs require a commitment to a skin fitness regimen that will last over six months: 'We usually design and initiate a home program for our patients and have them come into the clinic twice monthly for in-office treatments. The treatments are graduated so the strength of the alpha-hydroxy acid we use increases over time as the patient's skin can accommodate it.'

Microdermabrasion

This is a mild procedure in which fine crystals are projected onto the skin to treat fine lines, some pigmentation spots, acne and acne scars. No downtime is required and several treatment sessions will be needed.

'I am not a big fan of microdermabrasion alone because I believe it doesn't do everything it's purported to do,' says Dr. Crutchfield. 'However, we do exploit the exfoliative properties of microdermabrasion when we design a skin-care program using NeoStrata alpha-hydroxy products because these products penetrate more readily after a microdermabrasion treatment.'

Ultra-moisturizing medical facials

A new treatment Dr. Crutchfield is currently investigating is the ultra-moisturizing medical facial. This treatment uses a combination of collagen and hyaluronic acid to perform an intense, moisturizing facial treatment. Essentially, the dead skin is exfoliated and an ultra-rich hydrating gel is applied to the face. The treatment takes away superficial and fine wrinkles and produces almost a silky smooth, soft feeling to the skin. The result will last from two to three days initially, and over time can have significantly longer effects.

'We recommend that patients have this facial once a week for four to eight weeks. Our experience now is that patients who come in and have it done on a Thursday or Friday before a big weekend find their skin looks fantastic and feels even better. By doing it weekly, the effects will last longer and longer. We also combine this with other skincare programs,' he says.

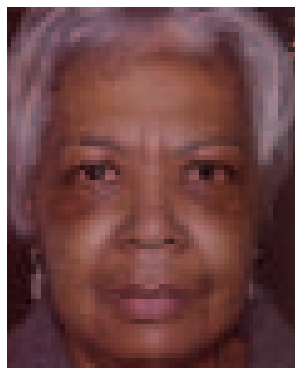
Mesotherapy

Mesotherapy is a technique that can offer dramatic results. It can be used to smooth cellulite, and for body sculpting to remove unwanted deposits of adipose (fat) tissue.

'Mesotherapy body sculpting can be used to remove unwanted pockets of fat on the lower tummy, love handles, saddlebags, flanks, mid back (rolls just under the bra), double chin, and bags under the eyes. Generally speaking, this approach involves tiny injections given every two weeks. Usually, success is achieved in only two to six treatments. We are achieving some remarkable results with mesotherapy,' he explained.

Dr. Crutchfield advises patients to beware of buying packaged treatments. 'Patients should be wary of buying packages unless the seller of the packaged series of treatments will offer a refund if they are not satisfied. Some spas and clinics will pressure the patient to buy a series of treatments and, if the patient is unhappy, they won't refund their money. This should certainly be a warning sign.'

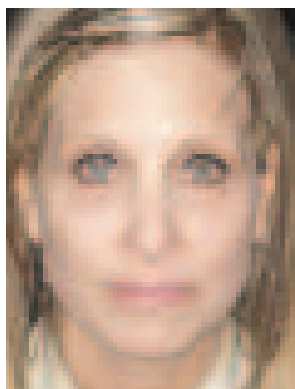
He also believes an important factor with any cosmetic dermatological treatment is the physician administering it, not just the product being used. 'Nothing beats experience,' he says. 'Oftentimes patients will overlook this most important fact and make a selection based on price alone. Price should be only one of many considerations to ensure a good result. A website that provides a whole list of considerations and questions that should be assessed when deciding to have a treatment is www.safebotox.com.' **cbm**



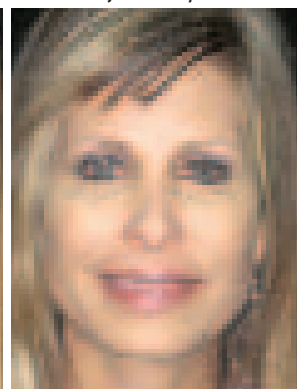
BEFORE



AFTER facial rejuvenation by Dr. Crutchfield



BEFORE



AFTER facial rejuvenation by Dr. Crutchfield