

Facial Fat Grafting

Questions about Fat Grafting

Is the fat grafting permanent?

Fat grafting is considered permanent. The reason is the fat is from your own body – the grafted fat is now just living in a new place. Once a blood supply grows to the transplanted fat cells, they become living fat cells in that part of your body. However, the aging process is ongoing and natural fat changes continue.

How much fat can be grafted?

Blood supply is what limits the amount of fat that can be placed. Only a certain amount can be placed at one time but in general for most individuals, only one fat grafting session is required.

What can be treated with fat grafting?

The areas I most commonly treat are around the eyes, the cheeks, the area called the nasolabial fold and the jowl area. I am asked often about fat grafting to the lips to provide fullness. I have found filling the lips with fat to be much less reliable than other areas of the face. The best permanent lip enhancement presently available is with soft lip implants.

Can fat grafting be performed with other facial procedures?

Yes, it can and I commonly perform fat grafting with eyelid and facelift procedures. However, in younger individuals, sometimes all that is needed for a younger or refreshed look is fat grafting alone without other more invasive procedures.

What is the healing process after fat grafting?

Healing from a fat grafting procedure is generally an easy process. You will notice the small incisions where the fat was placed as tiny scabs. Swelling and bruising will likely show up in the areas of the fat placement but generally it is minimal. You may wash your face the first day and apply makeup as needed to cover the areas. Most individuals appear normal in 5 – 10 days. As with most surgical procedures, the final result is not evident for several months after the procedure.



-Before-



-After-



-Before-



-After-



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Facial Fat Grafting

If you look at people who appear young, their faces are full and smooth. Unfortunately, as we age, we lose some of the “fullness of youth” because we lose fat in our face in certain areas. If you look at the pictures showing the aging process, the face typically thins around the eyes, cheeks and jawline. The formation of the jowls is as much a thinning of the fat in the area of the jowl as it is due to the loosening of the skin along the jawline.



-Before-



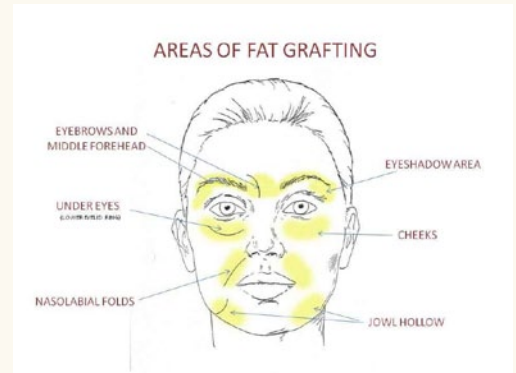
-After-



-Before-



-After-



A youthful face is a full face – but fullness in the right places. As we age, we often gain weight in the lower part of the face and the neck but thin out in the upper portion. The hollowing under the eyes and “dark circles” are from fat loss just under the skin. Adding back the fullness with fat under the skin to the thinned areas can really make you look younger and refreshed.

The process of fat grafting takes small amounts of fat from the thigh or belly areas and transplants it very carefully into the areas of the face where the fat has been lost. The important words are “very carefully”. The removal of the fat is not with liposuction, it is removed much more gently so the fat is not damaged. The placement is done using a very small tube directed under the skin. The placement areas heal without a scar. This procedure has little recovery time with most of the swelling and bruising gone in approximately 10 days.

Fat Grafting around the Eyes

We lose fat under the skin of the eyelids as we age and this produces the appearance of “tiredness” and dark circles. This is not something that gets talked about much but this affects most everyone as they age. I perform a simple procedure where small amounts of fat are placed under the skin through pinpoint incisions to restore fullness and blend the eyelid with the cheek. Fat can also be placed just under the eyebrow to give back the round fullness of youth in that area.



-Before-



-After-

Dark Circles under the Eyes:

There are two reasons why “dark circles” appear under the eyes. If your skin is light colored, the muscle that is used to “squint the eye is right under the eyelid skin may show through creating a brownish or purple hue. How this happens is the eyelid skin is very thin and delicate.

As we age, the skin itself thins as does the fat, so the muscle color shows through the skin to a greater degree. The muscle is dark red to brown and this produces the dark skin discoloration. The dark circles are not from blood vessels as is often stated. I can help with dark circles by adding some fat beneath the skin again which keeps the color of the muscle from showing through. If your skin is dark, excess pigment can become deposited in the lower eyelid skin with aging. We have special eye creams that can be quite effective in reducing the amount of pigment in the skin thus helping the discoloration.

Fat grafting to the cheeks:

High cheekbones and full cheeks are associated with youth and beauty. Some people lose the fullness in their cheeks with aging and others have had hollow cheeks their whole life. In either case, adding back fullness to the cheeks with fat grafting can give the look of health and youth.