

Liquid Face Lifts

An introduction to the non-surgical procedures available

This white paper is presented by M. Azhar Ali, M.D. F.A.C.S., of Amae Plastic Surgery in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The following information about *dermal filler and botulinum toxin procedures (most commonly referred to as liquid face lift procedures)* is intended to be informational and introductory. We strongly advise anyone looking to have a non-surgical facial aesthetics procedure of any kind to schedule a professional consultation with a plastic surgeon that is board-certified by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Although a non-surgical procedure, patients often see the best results when selecting a skilled specialist with extensive experience surrounding facial aesthetics.

For more specific information on liquid face lifts or to schedule an immediate consultation with Dr. Ali, please contact us.

About Dr. Ali

Dr. Ali is a board-certified plastic surgeon powerfully motivated to help patients restore their self-confidence, emotional health, and beauty. Dr. Ali has successfully pursued the art of non-surgical aesthetics and skin procedures in addition to many surgical procedures including but not limited to facial procedures, liposuction, tummy tucks, and breast reconstruction, reduction and augmentation.

Through his private practice in Michigan, Amae Plastic Surgery Center, he has performed numerous non-surgical liquid face lift procedures. With *dermal filler and botulinum toxin* manufacturers continually introducing new products to the market, Dr. Ali's studies of non-surgical facial aesthetics is ongoing.

Prior to opening Amae Plastic Surgery Center, Dr. Ali engaged in 11 years of extensive training.

His work studies included:

- Fellowship in Aesthetic and Reconstructive Breast Surgery at Women's College Hospital in Toronto
- Fellowship in Microsurgery and Trauma at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto
- 1 Year Fellowship at Children's Hospital in Toronto, Canada for Pediatric Surgery
- 2 Years of Plastic Surgery at Providence Hospital
- 5 Years of General Surgery Training at Providence and North Oakland Hospitals in Michigan
- 1 Year Pediatric Internship in New York

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In addition to education and training, Dr. Ali belongs to numerous professional organizations including the American College of Surgeons, American Society of Plastic Surgeons, American Medical Society, Michigan State Medical Society, and Oakland County Medical Society.

Introduction: What is a Liquid Face Lift?

Liquid face lifts are non-surgical alternatives to surgical facelifts. Through the use of facial filler injections such as BOTOX®, XEOMIN®, Juvederm®, Restylane®, BELOTERO BALANCE®, Dysport®, Sculptra®, and RADIESSE® (discussed in further detail on page 3), patients can undergo a rejuvenation of the face that is much less invasive. These injections, often used in conjunction with each other, provide lifting, plumping, smoothing and re-contouring.

The benefits of liquid face lifts when compared to surgical procedures include, but are not limited to: shorter procedure time, minimum downtime, lower cost, less risk, and immediate results for a refreshed and youthful appearance.

Am I a Candidate for a Liquid Face Lift?

Age affects us all, eventually reaching every nook and cranny of the body. However, our faces tend to be at the forefront and of most concern, since they are the foundation for interaction each day of our lives.

When we are young, our faces are full. Fat is evenly distributed to plump up our forehead, cheeks, and areas around the eyes, nose and mouth. As we age one of the main changes that take place is a loss of facial fullness. Our fat loses volume and shifts downward, leaving us with a sunken or “loose” appearance. Wrinkles also begin to appear due to the loss of fat and the descent of fat to new locations. These changes eventually happen to all of us, but are often expedited or made worse by sun exposure, hereditary traits and lifestyle choices.

While surgical procedures are common and often yield tremendous results, the softening of facial lines and the restoration of volume and fullness in the face can often be achieved non-surgically through liquid face lifts. A wide variety of facial fillers are being used to enhance the volume of the lips, soften facial wrinkles and enhance shallow contours.

However, it is important to note that liquid face lift procedures are not permanent. This soft tissue augmentation effectively masks the aging of the face, but does not stop the aging process. Many fillers will only last 6 months to a year and require touch-up procedures over time to maintain results and accommodate facial changes.

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If you wish to change the elements of your face, surgery such as a facelift, brow lift or eye lift may be the answer.

We remind patients that no amount of research is a substitute for a professional consultation with a licensed physician.

Liquid Face Lift Products

In the past decade, we have seen an explosion in the popularity of non-surgical procedures, which has resulted in several new FDA-approved products being introduced.

As mentioned earlier, a wide variety of facial fillers can be used to enhance the volume of the lips, soften facial wrinkles and enhance shallow contours. Although often used in conjunction with one another, these non-surgical rejuvenation treatments can also be used alongside forms of facial surgery to achieve even stronger results.

This section explains in detail just *some* of the advanced products used for liquid face lifts today. It is important to understand what each product is used for and what types of results it will yield, before deciding to undergo a procedure.

Name: BOTOX®

Description: BOTOX injections are one of the most commonly performed non-surgical procedures used to refresh the face by eliminating wrinkles. BOTOX is a purified protein that is derived from botulinum toxin, an element strong enough to temporarily block the transmission of nerve impulses to the muscle. When used in very minute quantities, it paralyzes select areas of the face where wrinkles have formed and provides a smoothing effect.

The muscles of the face that are targeted are the muscles used for facial expression. Because these muscles are so frequently used on a daily basis, they eventually cause creases in different parts of the face. Examples include forehead creases, frown lines, crow's feet around the eyes, and bands in the neck. BOTOX is very effective in reducing or eliminating these wrinkles and results in a refreshed appearance.

Healing & Recovery: Most people find that the injections cause only minor discomfort. Immediately after the injection, there may be some redness and swelling but this usually subsides within 24 hours. Side effects of this treatment, though rare, are headache, swelling, redness and flu-like symptoms.

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Results: The effects of BOTOX are temporary and last for approximately four months. In addition to facial treatments, BOTOX is also very effective in decreasing sweating when injected in to areas such as the armpits. This can be a great relief for patients who experience excessive sweating.

Name: XEOMIN®

Description: Similar to BOTOX®, XEOMIN contains botulinum toxin. It is a prescription medication used in facial aesthetics to temporarily improve the appearance of moderate to severe glabellar lines (frown lines) between the eyes.

Healing & Recovery: Most patients return to their normal daily activities following the procedure. A XEOMIN treatment only takes 10-20 minutes and anesthesia is not required. Sometimes a topical anesthetic or cold pack is used to minimize discomfort.

Results: While results are not immediate, most patients observe visible smoothing as early as 3-4 days following the injection. The maximum effect usually occurs at or around 30 days. Results can last up to 3 months depending on the patient.

Name: Juvederm®

Description: Juvederm was the first FDA-approved hyaluronic acid dermal filler. Hyaluronic acid is a natural substance found in the body that plays a key role in the maintenance of skin volume and hydration.

Juvederm utilizes hyaluronic acid to correct facial wrinkles and folds, such as nasolabial folds (the folds running from the bottom of the nose to the outer corners of the mouth – also called “laugh lines”). Because hyaluronic acid retains water, it adds volume to the skin’s surface. Juvederm may also be appropriate for patients with surface wrinkles or concave scars.

Healing & Recovery: Recovery time after Juvederm injections is quite quick. Patients usually return to work or other normal activities the very same day. Side effects do exist and include redness, swelling, and itching around the injection area, but will most often disappear within 1-3 days.

Results: With visible results lasting up to one year, Juvederm provides longer-lasting effects. In addition to correcting wrinkles and adding volume to the skin’s surface, hyaluronic acid binds with collagen and elastin to transport essential nutrients to the face’s fibers.

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Name: Restylane®

Description: Like Juvederm, Restylane also utilizes hyaluronic acid to decrease wrinkles. It adds volume and fullness to the skin around the nose and corners of the mouth. Restylane may also be used for lip enhancements in patients over 21 years of age, and can occasionally be used to treat surface wrinkles and concave scars.

Healing & Recovery: Restylane injections are injected into the treatment area using an ultra-fine needle. The procedure usually takes less than one hour and there is little to no downtime for the patient. Your doctor may administer pain medication to make you as comfortable as possible during the procedure. After treatment, some patients experience swelling, redness, pain or tenderness at the injection site.

Results: Studies show that Restylane results can be seen for up to 18 months after the initial treatment, when patients return for a follow-up treatment at 4-5 months. As with all dermal fillers, touch-ups and future procedures are recommended for maximum results.

Name: BELOTERO BALANCE®

Description: BELOTERO BALANCE is another dermal filler made of hyaluronic acid. By binding to water it fills in wrinkles and folds, allowing for immediate and smooth results. The versatility of this product makes it strong enough to handle deep treatment areas around the mouth, such as smile lines. It is also soft enough to treat lip lines and delicate areas around the nose.

Healing & Recovery: Because there is very little to no downtime associated with this procedure, most patients return to their normal daily activity immediately following their visit. Side effects may include mild irritation, swelling, itching, redness, bruising or tenderness, but these side effects typically resolve on their own.

Results: With BELOTERO BALANCE, patients receive immediate results. Once the hyaluronic acid is injected, it plumps the skin and smoothes away wrinkles. Individual results may vary, but most patients see results for 6 months.

Name: Dysport®

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Description: Dysport is a prescription injection used for the temporary improvement of moderate to severe glabellar lines (frown lines found on the face, between the eyebrows). Dysport injections are administered into 5 points between and above the eyebrows. This product works by blocking the signal from the nerve to the muscle, ultimately resulting in the reduction of muscle activity that causes frown lines.

Healing & Recovery: Treatment generally takes just 10 to 20 minutes with virtually no recovery time, dressings, or bandages needed. Patients may experience small red bumps at the injection site but they usually subside within 15-30 minutes.

Results: Dysport provides a natural-looking softening and eliminates most wrinkles but will only last 3-6 months. Patients are advised to wait at least 90 days between Dysport treatments.

Name: Sculptra®

Description: Contrary to many types of fillers, Sculptra is not an immediate fix. This product provides subtle results over time by replacing lost collagen.

Sculptra utilizes a Poly-L-lactic acid (PLLA) that is a safe, synthetic, and biocompatible material. It is injected below the surface of the skin in to the area of fat loss and provides a gradual and significant increase in skin thickness, which improves the appearance of folds and sunken areas.

Sculptra is not for use in the lips, and is not recommended around the eyes. It is most successful when used to treat the deep folds between the nose and the mouth (also called smile lines), the lines framing your mouth (marionette lines), and chin wrinkles.

Healing & Recovery: Sculptra injections require no limitation to daily activities. Side effects of Sculptra sometimes but rarely include injection site pain, redness, bruising, bleeding, itching, or swelling.

Results: A series of Sculptra injections (an average of three injection sessions over the course of a few months) can provide results that last more than two years.

Name: RADIESSE

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Description: RADIESSE is a wrinkle filler that is injected into the skin to restore facial volume and smooth out the signs of aging. It can be used to improve smile lines, corners of the mouth, pre-jowl, chin wrinkles and marionette lines.

Once this calcium-based filler is injected, it works with your body to stimulate your own natural collagen production. The production of natural collagen continues for several months, which extends the results beyond the initial procedure.

Healing & Recovery: There is little to no down time involved in a RADIESSE procedure. Some patients may experience swelling, itching, redness, bruising or tenderness at the injection site.

Results: Immediately after the injection, RADIESSE restores volume to smooth out the signs of aging. These natural-looking results may last up to a year or more.

How to Prolong Liquid Face Lift Results

The first step in prolonging liquid face lift results is to follow the instruction provided by your doctor. Different procedures require different post-treatment care. For example, you may be told not to lay down for a few hours following a BOTOX® treatment.

Although signs of aging eventually happen to all of us, they are often made worse by sun exposure and lifestyle. Knowing how to protect your skin and prevent further damage is critical in prolonging liquid face lift results. Wearing high grade sunscreens every day, applying high grade moisturizers regularly, and maintaining overall good hygiene is strongly encouraged.

Also, patients should maintain their results with routine touch-up treatments. All of the aforementioned liquid face lift products are NOT intended to be permanent solutions and provide the best results when performed routinely. Your doctor will determine how often these procedures are necessary depending on your specific condition, and the products being used to treat your skin.

Risk Associated with Liquid Face Lifts

Liquid face lift risks are quite minimal; however, they do exist. It is for this reason that patients should ALWAYS inform their doctor of any pre-existing conditions, former procedures, medical history, medications, and more. Your doctor should always ask questions before performing any procedure.

The Price of Liquid Face Lifts

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Due to the cosmetic nature of a liquid face lift, procedures are very rarely covered by insurance companies. Liquid face lift costs are dependent on a number of factors including but not limited to: the number of injections, the number of visits required, products used, and the number of products used in conjunction with one another. Prices will also vary from one physician to another.

Treatments are unique to each individual and their particular wants and needs. To get an exact cost, you will need to schedule a consultation with your doctor.

Selecting Your Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon

Many liquid face lift fillers can be administered by dermatologists, primary care physicians, cosmetic aestheticians, plastic surgeons, and other healthcare professionals who are licensed to administer the particular product of choice.

However, the experience and knowledge of your physician is extremely important. It is for this reason that we recommend visiting a board-certified plastic surgeon who fully understands product placement, injection technique, and product mix, and has the aesthetic skill to maximize results.

This necessary experience can significantly impact how quickly and easily the desired results are achieved, and how long the results will last.

Summary – A Note From Dr. Ali

The choice to have a liquid face lift procedure is yours to make, and yours only. While this white paper may serve as an introduction to and overview of products and procedures, no amount of online research is a substitute for a professional consultation with a licensed physician.

If you decide that a liquid face lift procedure is right for you, or are simply considering it, we strongly encourage you to call Amae Plastic Surgery Center in Michigan for your initial consultation. We believe that patient education and realistic expectations are the keys to success with any cosmetic procedure. We will take the time to educate you, understand your goals, and provide you with information and options that will allow you to make the best decisions regarding your body.

Every patient is different, and requires special attention. The team at Amae Plastic Surgery Center enjoys a top rating at Vitals.com and I have personally been the plastic surgeon of choice for several other doctors and their patients. Our commitment to high quality services and procedures is for the safety and happiness of each and every patient!

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Whether you choose to have a surgical or non-surgical procedure, only trust your board-certified plastic surgeon when it comes to your health and achieving the desired aesthetic outcome for your body!
Experience matters!

To your health!

Dr. M. Azhar Ali

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