

Injectable Soft Tissue Fillers

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Over the last few decades, the advent and growing popularity of noninvasive cosmetic procedures have encouraged further technological advances in a range of treatment modalities, including lasers, light sources, radiofrequency devices, botulinum toxins, and injectable soft tissue fillers. In particular, facial rejuvenation with soft tissue fillers has quickly become an alternative to invasive surgical procedures in patients both young and old. As a result, the use of dermal fillers has taken on an integral role in dermatology and cosmetic surgery.

The wide range of dermal fillers that are available in the United States will only continue to expand. Currently marketed products include nonpermanent, semipermanent, and permanent fillers. This issue includes a review of soft tissue augmentation in which the authors compare and contrast current US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved fillers to help practitioners better understand the manufacturing differences that affect a product's augmentation properties and mechanism of augmentation; the article also includes a review of the pivotal clinical trials that brought cosmetic fillers into the US market.¹

Facial rejuvenation with soft tissue fillers involves a sense of artistic reflection, which differs for every cosmetic practitioner. The new paradigm of cosmetic combination therapy is addressed in another review as a method of targeting different factors that contribute to skin aging. The authors also provide tips on using fillers in combination therapies, specifically with botulinum toxin type A and laser/light procedures.²

The rapid growth of soft tissue augmentation has stimulated the development of more innovative, off-label uses of fillers. Another review discusses new and emerging use for fillers including facial applications such as nasal

augmentation, brow ptosis, and ear lobe rejuvenation; chest and breast rejuvenation; and full-face restoration with microcannulas. This review describes the swift evolution of soft tissue augmentation in recent years.³

On the horizon, there are many new dermal fillers awaiting FDA approval and entrance into the US market. In a review of next-generation fillers and volumizers, the authors present some up-and-coming products including Belotero Balance (Merz Aesthetics, Inc), which recently was approved by the FDA in November 2011 for the correction of moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds, such as nasolabial folds. The authors discuss how these new fillers differ from one another and review the data supporting their use.⁴

Despite their popularity and seemingly easy use, soft tissue fillers are associated with a variety of complications when not administered properly. In another article to be featured in an upcoming issue, the major and minor complications from soft tissue augmentation with different types of fillers are discussed and recommendations for managing and avoiding these complications are provided. This article is a particularly important read for both the novice and more experienced cosmetic practitioner.⁵

The rapid progression of the field of cosmetic dermatology in the last several decades has been an exciting one. The use of injectable soft tissue fillers and other noninvasive cosmetic procedures have truly revolutionized the art of cosmetic medicine. We look forward to seeing what further advancements the upcoming decades will bring forth to our field.

References

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