

## **Lip and Soft Tissue Augmentation Instructions**

*Please read and become familiar with these instructions BEFORE and AFTER surgery. By following these instructions carefully, you will assist in obtaining the best possible result from your surgery.*

1. Augmenting lip volume or filling in soft tissue defects (such as cheek folds and wrinkles around the lips) can be accomplished by a variety of implant materials. Some are synthetic and permanent solids, such as Gore-Tex, while others are biological materials which are injectable suspensions and are less permanent, such as collagen. One biological material, AlloDerm, is available in both solid and injectable forms. Each implant material has its own advantages and disadvantages. The exact type and form of material most appropriate for your case will be discussed with you before surgery.
2. Some injectable implants require skin testing and a waiting period before surgery. This skin testing is done to *minimize* the chance of an allergic reaction to the implant. Even if a skin test is negative, allergic reactions are still remotely possible and must be watched for.
3. In the event a *solid* implant is used, you should avoid bumping or traumatizing the implant for the first week after surgery while it is becoming “fixed” in place. This should include avoiding excessive talking, smiling or mouth opening for solid implants placed around the mouth or in the lips. Once the body has begun incorporating the implant with a thin layer of scar tissue, dislodging the implant becomes much more difficult.
4. You can expect some degree of temporary swelling or bruising around any implant site and the incision by which any solid implant was placed. Each patient is unique in their own healing characteristics and will experience different levels of this bruising or swelling. With the exception of lips, *most swelling is minor and usually subsides quickly* (24 to 48 hours). Injectable implants in the lips are usually associated with minor swelling which lasts 1 to 3 days. Solid implants in the lips are usually associated with moderate to impressive swelling that lasts from 3 to 10 days. This lip swelling can be minimized by the use of ice packs to the lips immediately after surgery for several hours (40 minutes out of every hour until bedtime).
5. After the initial swelling has subsided from any *solid* implant, minor tissue “puffiness” may still be discernible to you and I for a time, but should not be noticeable to the general public. Don’t be alarmed by any modest asymmetries or irregularities between implants or implant sides during this stage since irregular tissue edema is the norm.

6. Bruising, if it occurs at all, is usually minor and coverable by makeup until it disappears. The exception to this is the bruising which can occur with *solid* implants in the lips, which can range from no bruising to black and blue, depending on the individual. Significant bruising of the lips, if it occurs, may take up to a week to disappear.
7. Minor asymmetries between the sides of a solid lip implant or between two cheek fold implants may be noticed on close inspection and are generally considered acceptable. The fact is that most faces, if studied closely, have a great deal of asymmetry that is rarely noticed by friends or colleagues. Gross irregularities or obvious implant migration is an infrequent but real possibility for any solid implantation procedure. Our follow-up visits will allow me to monitor for this condition. Significantly displaced implants may require removal or adjustment through surgery.
8. Although solid surgical grade implants are very biocompatible and well accepted by the body, all implants have a small inherent risk of infection or rejection (less than 5% nationwide). Aside from the remote risk of allergic reaction mentioned above, injectable implants are virtually never associated with infection. **Exposure** of solid implants through the overlying skin or incision, *increasing redness* and/or **pain** or **fevers** which can't be explained by an illness are all warning signs of implant infection. If you feel you may be getting an implant infection, don't hesitate to call my office. As a precaution against infection of solid implants, I will usually prescribe an antibiotic for about 10 days after surgery. Significant solid implant infections require that the implant be trimmed or removed.
9. Normally pain is not a significant problem with implants. As with any minor surgical procedure, some localized incisional pain for a day or two can be expected from placement of a solid implant. You will be prescribed pain medication for this. Injectable implants have only minor, if any, discomfort. Over-the-counter pain remedies are usually all that is required after injectable augmentation.
10. Solid Gore-Tex implants can usually be felt but not seen. Solid AlloDerm implants are not usually seen or felt.
11. Final volume effect from *injectable* implants is discernible at about 3 to 7 days. Final volume effect from a *solid* implant is apparent at about 2 to 3 weeks for the face and 4 to 8 weeks for the lips (when most tissue "puffiness" has subsided).
12. You should take care of any external incisions using our "Standard Wound Care Instructions", which you will be provided with. Care of solid implants in the lips should include the use of a lip moisturizer, such as Vaseline, 2 to 3 times a day while swelling is subsiding. The sutures used in the lips dissolve on their own in 5 to 10 days.

*If you should have any questions or concerns during your recovery, do not hesitate to call my office at 785-309-0900 or 1-866-760-0900.*

Sincerely,

David A. Hendrick, M.D.