

30 Minutes to a Younger-Looking You

Written by Story by Nichole Brophy

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While a youthful glow is what most hope will greet them in the bathroom mirror each morning, the reality is that the fountain of youth does not spill from the bathroom faucet. Fortunately, a different kind of liquid is available for those who desire to turn back the clock without going under the knife—the Liquid Face Lift.



“The liquid facelift is typically for someone in their late thirties, forties or early fifties, who is not quite ready for a full surgical facelift,” says Dr. Lawrence Shaw, a board certified plastic surgeon and principal at The Shaw Center in Scottsdale. “Potential patients should undergo a thorough evaluation to see if a surgical facelift or a Liquid Facelift would best achieve their aesthetic goals and expectations.”

The most sought-after perk of procedures within the Liquid Facelift realm is the ability to achieve almost immediate or, in some cases, on-the-spot results that last from several months to a year, depending on the injectable employed. All that a prospective patient needs is a 30-minute appointment to put time back on their side. Armed with the right expert, a fresh, youthful look is as easy as one, two, three.

1. Neuromodulators (Botox, Dysport and Xeomin)

Neuromodulators block impulses from nerves to small facial muscles temporarily. The blockage causes a weakness of targeted muscles that prevents their contraction. “I almost liken it to a child’s safety cap on a wall outlet, where it blocks the outlet so it cannot be used,” Dr. Shaw says. “By blocking the impulse, you can accurately prevent a certain expression.”

Though the primary application of neuromodulators is in the upper face, where it is used to minimize frown lines, crows feet, and forehead lines, among others, it also harnesses the power to raise the corners of the mouth, reduce dimpling of the chin and minimize the appearance of the platysmal bands that run vertically along the neck.

Youthful, lifted eyebrow position is what often comes to mind with the mention of Botox. “I like to describe the brows as a tug of war,” Dr. Shaw explains. “There are muscles that lift the brows up and muscles that pull the brows down. You have to be very careful in selecting which muscles you are going to weaken.”

“Being a plastic surgeon and doing surgical brow lifts, I see these muscles from the inside. We train in facial anatomy as plastic surgeons, which is why board certified plastic surgeons have an advantage in knowing the structures, nerves, and muscles of the face. You can’t simply inject it and hope for a good result, it takes a lot of planning and knowledge of anatomy.”

At The Shaw Center, different neuromodulators are used depending on the muscle being treated. Whether your plastic surgeon uses Botox, Dysport, Xeomin or a combination of the three, results can be expected within three to seven days and last approximately three months.

2. Radiesse

Radiesse is a calcium-based, injectable gel that aims to restore volume lost in the aging process. “As you get older, you start losing volume in your face and that is where some of these fillers come into place,” Dr. Shaw says. “I always say fat is youth. Look at a baby, they are plump and young with big round faces. When you look at someone who is older, you can see the loss of volume. So volume replacement is key.”

Typically employed to enhance the dimensions of the mid-face region, Radiesse can be applied just under the skin to promote collagen synthesis and skin plumping, or it can be injected deeper onto the cheek bone and almost simulate a cheek implant.

Dr. Shaw points out that creating a higher cheekbone can sometimes correct fine lines and wrinkles around the mouth. “A lot of people will inject the naso-labial fold, which is the line running from your nose down to your mouth, but in reality, if you augment the cheek, it will serve as a lift so you don’t really need much or any in the fold itself,” Dr. Shaw says.

Unlike neuromodulators that take days for results to appear, Radiesse’s effects can be seen virtually immediately and last up to a year.

3. HA Fillers (Juvederm, Restylane, Perlane)

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) is a chemical naturally produced by the body, whose production capability decreases over time. HA Fillers, like Juvederm, Restylane and Perlane act by attracting water to the injected area and thereby increasing its volume.

HA Fillers can be used to volumize the lower face, creating plumper lips and lip lines, enhanced jaw lines, and softening of the naso-labial fold. In some instances, these fillers can also be used under the brow or the tear troughs of the eyes. “We use different fillers based on what we are

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trying to accomplish," Dr. Shaw says. "They typically last around six months, but if you retreat within three months of the initial procedure, studies have shown it can last up to a year."

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