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Everything You Need to Know About Lip Filler Before Making an Appointment

"I had a patient come in the other day who had a significant asymmetry," says double board-certified plastic surgeon [Melissa Doft](#), M.D., who practices in New York City, adding that the patient only wanted filler in the smaller lip. "But if we only do the top, the bottom doesn't look quite right. I think filler should always be put in the top and bottom to get the similar effects on both lips," even when correcting an asymmetry.

And lastly, it may sound strange, but it's true: "Some people get lip fillers to moisturize their lips," says Dr. Doft. "The hyaluronic acid will trap in moisture, so it's really great for people who have chronically chapped lips," she says, adding that as the temperature drops, she injects one of her assistants, who is prone to chapped lips, specifically for this reason. "It really helps her!" promises Dr. Doft.

But Dr. Alexiades's latest love, echoed by Dr. Doft, is the new U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved facial injectable, the [RHA Collection](#). It "more closely mimics the naturally occurring hyaluronic acid," explains Dr. Doft, meaning that "the body recognizes it more and doesn't see it as quite as foreign." To boot, its texture is "phenomenal," according to Dr. Alexiades, yet still firm enough to sculpt a long-lasting effect.

Side effects range from annoying to do-not-pass-go serious. Clocking in at a minor danger level with a relatively common frequency are bruising, unevenness, and the pesky, but correctible, filler bumps, according to Dr. Doft. To resolve the filler bumps, often a result of too much filler being injected too superficially, Dr. Doft recommends a "massage with power" as soon as they appear to smooth them out, but if there's no change, dissolution via [hyaluronidase](#) may be needed.

How long until the final look appears?

In the first few days after the injection, you may experience a bit of uneven bruising and swelling until your lips settle into their final position. Allow up to two weeks to let it all settle down, suggests Dr. Doft, before making any decisions about whether you like it or not, and starting planning further lip reshaping.

In Dr. Dof's New York City practice, she rarely injects more than half of a syringe in one appointment, which contributes to how long-lasting it will be. "The lower volume [of filler injected], high vascularity, and extreme movement" all play a role in a filler's lifespan. "Even so," says Dr. Dof, "most people come [back] at six to 12 months, which is pretty similar to other places on the face."

If you're planning an appointment, it's important to know that cost varies depending on the injector, the city, and the number of syringes injected, but a good range to expect at a board-certified dermatologist or plastic surgeon's office is between \$700 and \$1,000, according to Dof.

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