

LINE TAMER

Wrinkles are Natural... but they don't have to be permanent!

By Michael Sachs M.D.

Essentially, there are only three factors which make our faces look older: puffiness, droopiness and wrinkles. Usually the puffiness exhibits itself in and around the eyes and makes them appear tired and old. This puffiness is caused by fat deposits and can show up in the chin, jowls and other areas as well, making faces look older, and more saggy. In some cases it may also be caused by a congenital problem around the eyes in which a weak ligament causes fat to herniate through the ligament.

The most familiar sign of aging is an increase in, and a deepening of, wrinkles. Basically there are four types of facial wrinkles, one of which you should be glad you have and three others which can be pretty much eliminated with new technical procedures.

The first type is a natural, normal wrinkle which is seen around the eyes, the nasolabial folds (nose to mouth) and other areas when you smile. These

wrinkles are due to the elastic nature of the skin, which wrinkles to accommodate any movement of the facial structures. Without these wrinkles, you would look quite artificial. Everyone has seen the classic "bad" facelift which has left an immobile (plastic) face.

FINE WRINKLES

The second type of wrinkle is the fine wrinkle that starts to appear in all areas of the face as a result of aging. These wrinkles are intrinsic to the skin and become more pronounced with sun exposure. They appear as a fine river system sketched into the face. The face may also feel leathery and rough.

MOVEMENT WRINKLES

The third type of wrinkle I call the movement, or atrophic wrinkle. These wrinkles are first evident in the forehead region between the eyes and usually occur from frowning or raising and eyebrows

when you are annoyed. Muscles are attached to the skin and actually pull the skin to give the wide range of facial expressions which we use to express emotions because they are caused by a loss, or atrophy, of tissue directly under the skin due to the continual muscle activity in the skin area.

Movement wrinkles are most evident in people who have overlay animated faces or who are scornful and frown continually, (or even in those who smile too much!) They become noticeable in the early thirties and increase over time. (I take a very personal view that facial exercises cause more wrinkles, not less.)

DROOPY WRINKLES

The fourth type of wrinkle is the one that occurs around the jowl and neck area as people reach their fifties. These are what I call droopy wrinkles, because the skin loses its elasticity and starts to stretch and sag. If you can actually pick up the skin on either side of your face and pull it back and make the face look young again, then you have droopy wrinkles. These wrinkles are due to both excess skin and the natural aging process.

SAVING FACE

If you've been scrutinizing yourself in the mirror, counting your wrinkles and lines, don't despair. Each particular wrinkle has its own method of treatment. I will emphasize the most recent and advanced techniques which, based on my experience, work the best.

As I have discussed, we do not want to remove the normal wrinkle, since this allows more natural facial movement.

FINE WRINKLES

The most successful way to treat fine



Vein techniques, including the use of advanced lasers can eliminate facial lines without re-doing them

wrinkles is to actually move the top layer of skin, taking the fine wrinkles away with it. A new layer of fresh, young skin is then uncovered. This can best be achieved either by a sophisticated, computer controlled CO2 laser chemical peel or by dermabrasion. The plastic surgeon will usually select a very specific chemical peel, depending on the area and the amount of peeling required. For instance, a milder peel is used for the area around the eyes, since the skin there is much more delicate than it is in the cheek area. The cheek and mouth areas require a stronger chemical solution.

Because the skin is anesthetized during the treatment, the chemical peel solution doesn't hurt. There is scabbing and discomfort for several days after the procedure, however, for which a pain medicine is prescribed. You must stay out of the sun for approximately six months after a chemical peel and there may be a change in the amount of pigmentation in the new layer of skin.

MOVEMENT WRINKLES

Smile wrinkles, frown lines between the eyes and in the forehead can be lessened with collagen injections, but the technique that I find easiest, safest and most longlasting is one in which the muscle causing the problem is removed via an endoscope brow lift.

THE DROOPY WRINKLE

The droopy extra skin wrinkle, that becomes more evident as we age, is usually handled with a face-lift operation. In the past, face-lifts were generally quite crude and involved simply lifting up the superficial skin around the face, pulling it back, trimming it, and sewing it back into place.

In the modern SMAS (Superficial Muscular and Aponeurotic System) platysma face-lift, surgeons reshape the muscle and fibrous tendon system below the muscles, which gives a stronger, much more natural-looking result.

PUFFINESS

Puffiness, around the eyelids, neck and jowl area, is simply a deposition of fat underneath the skin. The fat that bulges in and around the eyelids due to a weakening of ligaments around the eyes, can be corrected with a new technique called fat evaporation which melts fat away with an electrical needle placed under the skin.

The puffiness and fat deposition in the jowl and neck area is usually due to a congenital propensity towards forming a second chin and can be corrected with liposuction. Extraneous fat is suctioned through a hollow tube inserted into the skin through a small incision. When

performed on younger people (aged 20-40) this procedure does not require a full facelift and can be performed alone to remove the fat under the chin and in the jowl areas.

Liposuction is used in conjunction with a facelift. Liposuction eliminates the two main factors which connote aging: excess, wrinkled skin, and fatty subcutaneous tissue. The advanced facelift incorporates a three part technique which: tightens the underlying tissues so that the smooth, lean looking skin can be beautifully draped over the new taut foundation; sucks away the fat that is causing any extraneous puffiness, bulging, or sagging; lays the trimmed skin over this new foundation. As the face ages, puffiness and wrinkles need not mar a person's appearance. While natural wrinkles are desirable, others can make the skin look Baggly and old - whether they're fine lines on the lips or pronounced creases in the forehead. New advances in surgery can eliminate these wrinkles safely, easily and provide more natural, longer-lasting results. The end result is an improved appearance and a rejuvenated face.

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Liposuction of the neck' is now being added to other facial techniques