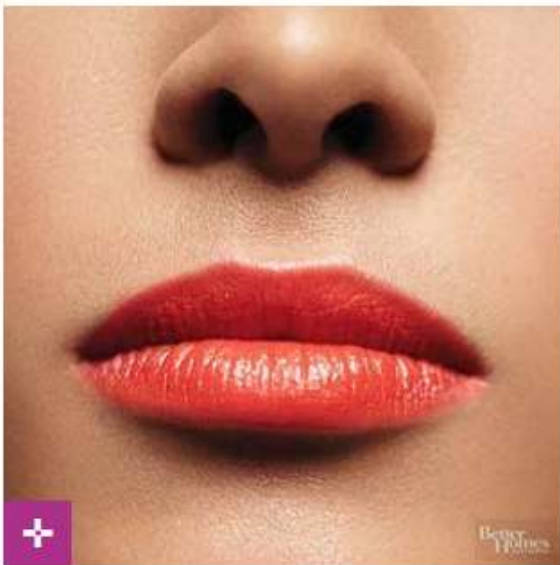


Thinking About Lip Fillers? 5 Things to Consider First

It seems like every Hollywood starlet is suddenly sporting fuller lips these days, and there's no denying that going under the needle is a quick and easy way to plump your pout -- but how do you ensure you don't end up with crazy-looking duck lips? (You know the kind.) Ahead, top derms share the most important things to keep in mind when it comes to lip fillers, plus, easy ways to fake fuller lips, no trip to the dermatologist required.

1. Fuller lips don't have to look fake.



Whitney Bowe, M.D., assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center, explains that there is a "golden ratio" to beautiful face proportions that has been around since the ancient Egyptian times. "According to this principle, the lower lip should be 1.618 times larger than the upper lip."

Next time you see a set of lips that are clownishly large, take a closer look and see if you notice this. That's not to say that your injector will be following these precise calculations, but any experienced practitioner will understand these natural aesthetics and maintain that same balance.

For many mature women, the goal isn't to make lips bigger, but rather to add back the fullness that's lost as we age, explains cosmetic dermatologist, Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank. "By the time they hit 50, many women have lost up to 50% of the volume in their lips," he says. The bottom line: It is possible to plump your lips without looking like Donald Duck.

2. Lip fillers can do more than just plump your lips.

Small amounts can help add definition to the border of the lips, which also tends to soften as we get older. "The border begins to thin and flatten. Fillers can give you back the defined shape and restore the cupid's bow above the lip," Bowe says. This can be done either in lieu of or alongside the standard plumping procedure.

3. There are different options available.

There are a variety of lip fillers on the market, and while they all use hyaluronic acid (a sugar that's naturally-occurring in our body -- it can hold up to 1,000 times its weight in water, making it choice for creating a fuller appearance), not all are created equal.

Restylane Silk and Juvederm Ultra are both commonly used, though the end results differ slightly. "Restylane Silk is the most natural-looking, while Juvéderm Ultra is slightly firmer and creates a different looking aesthetic," Bowe says. Ask your injector which product they plan on using and why to decide which option is best for you.

4. Prep and prepare.

It's a smart move to stop taking blood thinners (ibuprofen, naproxen, fish oil) two weeks prior to your appointment to help minimize the likelihood of bruising and swelling. You also can take bromelain or arnica as oral supplements the morning of your appointment to help with bruising, she adds.

5. Be realistic about your expectations and the results.

Lips look terrifyingly large after your injection? No need to stress. To the previous point about swelling, it can take a day or two for all of it to go down and for you to see the actual result of the filler, Frank says. Plan on coming back a week or two after your appointment as well.

"Seventy to 80 percent of the time I end up doing a slight tweak when the patient returns," he says. Still totally unhappy? Hylauronic acid fillers can be dissolved using an injectable enzyme that works within 24 hours.

Not quite ready to go under the needle? Pro makeup artist and beauty expert [Jo Levy](#) shares three easy ways to fake a fuller pout, no injection needed.

- Exfoliate, exfoliate, exfoliate! "Not only does exfoliation boost blood flow and makes lips look fuller, it also sloughs off any dead skin so that lips look and feel smoother." [Try our DIY lip scrub.](#)
- Layer products strategically. Start with a soft nude or rose lipstick -- light and neutral shades make lips look fuller than dark colors. Follow by lining the lips, just outside the natural lip line, with a pencil in a color that matches the lipstick. Finish by dabbing on a gloss in the center of your lips; a clear or delicate pink hue both work well. "The extra layer of texture creates the illusion of fuller lips," Levy says.
- Super countoured skin has taken backseat to a fresh-face glow, a trend that also can make lips look larger, Levy says. Post lip color, apply a pearly liquid, cream or powder highlighter to the cupid's bow, as well as on the center of the bottom lip. "This soft glow adds dimension to make your pout seem plumper," she says.