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## COSMETIC SURGERY

*A National Post special interest supplement on cosmetic surgery*



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**ARTIST AT WORK:** Dr. Trevor Born performs cosmetic surgery on one of a growing number of Canadians who are choosing the life-changing procedure

## Results are immediate

**Y**ears ago, women and men who visited the cosmetic surgeon's office to "do something about those wrinkles" faced only one choice: the scalpel. Facelifts and browlifts, however, have been supplemented more recently by a wide range of "injectable" products that minimize or completely fill in wrinkles. Injectables are also used to plump up thinner lips for a kissable, "Angelina Jolie" look. The results are often immediate, and last from a matter of months to a lifetime.

No wonder, then, that products such as Artecoll, Restylane, Hylaform, Botox, and more traditional Zyplast and Zyderm collagen, have taken the cosmetic surgery world by storm. Of the 5.7 million cosmetic procedures performed in the United States in 2000, reports the

American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, nearly 30% were Botox and collagen injections. In Canada, where Restylane, Hylaform and Artecoll are also available, that percentage could be even higher.

The beauty of these treatments is their instant gratification: patients can come in, have an injection and be back at work the same afternoon, looking visibly more "refreshed" and younger, at a fraction of the cost of a facelift. While they will not stave off surgery forever – eventually, says Dr. Harold Silver a Toronto plastic surgeon, wrinkles caused by sagging skin and loss of elasticity will require a surgical fix – they have become the treatment of choice for patients who are not yet ready to face the scalpel and sutures, and who may not want to shell out \$5,000 and up for a facelift. *(continued on next page)*

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Botox works by temporarily paralyzing facial muscles that cause frown lines in the forehead and “crow’s feet” and laugh lines at the corners of the eyes. Injected into the forehead or around the eyes, for example, it takes away a patient’s ability to scrunch up her eyes or draw her brows together. One injection, which costs about \$500, lasts about four months.

To fill in wrinkles or acne scars, and to plump up lips, patients can choose from a wealth of products. Collagen, in the form of products such as McGhan Medical’s Zyderm and Zyplast, was the first dermal filler. More recently, it has been joined by hyaluronic-acid-based fillers such as Hylaform (also manufactured by McGhan) and Q-Med’s Restylane, Restylane Fine Lines and Perlane. Because hyaluronic acid occurs naturally in the body and is not derived from animal sources, it is hypo-allergenic, a boon for patients who are sensitive to collagen or who do not want to take the time for an allergy test.

Dr. Solomon uses a combination of fillers for his patients. Restylane Fine Lines, he says, works well for tiny wrinkles. He uses Restylane for wrinkles throughout the face and lips, and its sister product, Perlane, to fill out larger wrinkles such as the nasolabial folds that run from the nose to the corners of the mouth.

He says the effects can last up to eight months before the fillers are absorbed completely by the body.

While the products are temporary, practitioners have noted that for some patients their effect seems to be cumulative: Patients who have repeat treatments can use less of the product and go longer between treatments with the same results.

The temporary effect of these treatments is plus for those patients who want a taste of a new look before they commit to it wholeheartedly.

“I’ve had the occasional patient say, “This wasn’t really what I had in mind,” says Dr. David Naiberg, a facial plastic surgeon who practices out of the Renaissance Facial Cosmetic Surgery Centre in Scarborough, Ont.



**Permanent and temporary solutions for wrinkles, scars and lips.**

“With the temporary fillers, that’s OK. If they like the look, then I recommend they go with Artecoll, which is a permanent filler.”

Artecoll, which is manufactured by Canderm, uses microscopic Plexiglass beads mixed in a collagen base and injected into wrinkles, the lips, or scars. Plastic surgeon Dr. Trevor Born of Toronto, has also used it in breast surgery to add volume to nipples. As the injected collagen dissolves, the body own collagen gradually engulfs the beads, forming scar tissue that fills in the tissues.

While the effect is permanent, it may take a few months and repeat treatments for the full effects to become apparent. Because the product is collagen based, patients must undergo an allergy test before using Artecoll.

Since Artecoll’s effects are permanent, Dr. Born says it is important to ensure that the doctor who performs the injection is well trained in the techniques and has lot’s of experience. If the product is injected unevenly or too close to the surface of the skin, it can leave small lumps under the skin’s surface, which can sometimes be corrected with massage or by excising the lumps surgically.

The growing use of injectables reflects a trend toward prevention and the “maintenance” of a youthful look with less invasive products over a period of years. Rather than waiting until they reach their 50s for the more radical effects of a facelift, patients “buy time” with injectables, says Dr. Solomon.

“These fillers are a great adjunct to what we do as plastic surgeons.”

