

## Where Did All the Facial Fat Go?

One of our most valuable natural resources is being lost to age, scalpels, and Ozempic. Here's everything you need to know about restoring precious facial fat.

### The Beauty Benefits of Facial Fat

The trend presents a curious paradox: Alongside the throngs of people pursuing contouring procedures, like buccal fat reduction, there's a burgeoning clutch aiming to boost their fat reserves—and frequently they're one and the same. “The patient who requests buccal fat removal will also want to add fat to their cheeks or tear troughs,” says board-certified nurse practitioner Jennifer Hollander, who runs the nonsurgical side of facial plastic surgeon Ben Talei's Beverly Hills practice. “They view fat as a permanent fix and imagine it to be less problematic [than filler] over time.”

Folks are growing wise to the benefits of fat, which exists at various levels of the face. Just below the skin (attached to it) is our subcutaneous fat, which “provides a ‘gliding’ plane for the skin to move over underlying structures,” board-certified New York City plastic surgeon Oren Tepper explains. Deeper down, we have fat pads nestled into distinct compartments, he says; they “play a more structural, supportive, and protective role.”

### What Happens During Facial Fat Grafting?

When performed as a standalone procedure (separate from a lift), facial fat grafting is a fairly minor surgical affair that can be done awake or under light sedation, according to Tepper.

# Fat Versus Filler

Even better, fat doesn't demand frequent touch-ups. Once it takes, it's yours for keeps (about 50 percent of what's transferred sticks around). But since we do continue to lose facial fat with age, patients may choose to repeat the treatment every seven to eight years, Tepper says.

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