

Women seek neck muscle 'lip job'

Forget the collagen, for the perfect pout plump for a lip graft using muscle from your neck, according to US cosmetic surgeons.

A team at the Aesthetic Surgery Centre in Naples, Florida, claim they have achieved good results in 25 patients.

They say the surgery, which can be done at the same time as a facelift, helps defy signs of ageing by making the lips appear fuller and less puckered.

Their findings are published in Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery.

Lip job

Fuller lips are high on some people's cosmetic wish list. Lips are a sexual symbol and where attractiveness is concerned, some believe size is everything.

Lip augmentation is not new. Since ancient times, women have used plant dyes and coloured clays to enhance their lips.

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Cosmetic surgeon Anurag Agarwal

In the 1980s, collagen injections were introduced into the cosmetic surgery market and rapidly gained popularity.

Since then, other similar procedures have followed.

But experts still strive for the ideal permanent fix, according to Dr Anurag Agarwal and colleagues.

They say the neck muscle graft technique they have used offers improved appearance for at least two years.

All of the patients they treated using segments of the sternocleidomastoid muscle running along the side of the neck, as well as the connective tissue that overlies it, were pleased with the results.

But one requested extra treatment to further plump the lips with a gel.

The researchers say the surgery is simple and the recovery straightforward with few complications.

Once the swelling has gone down after a few weeks, the lips should have the desired fullness.

Dr Agarwal said: "Our patients have been thrilled with the natural feel and appearance, without the need for an artificial filler or implant."

But they stress that no single procedure is perfect or can reverse all signs of ageing.

Mr Douglas McGeorge, cosmetic surgeon and past president of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, said: "There are lots of ways to increase the volume of the lips. This is another way. It's not necessarily any better, but it may give a more permanent result.

"However, further augmentations may be required. And as with any procedure, things can go wrong, although this is rare."

Also, if the patient was not already going for a facelift they should be made aware that they would be left with a scar behind the hairline from the surgery, he said.