

Luscious Lips

A recent study by Unilever scientists has confirmed what most of us have long suspected: fuller lips really do make you look younger. With so many lip plumping treatments on the market, it can be difficult to know which one to choose, however there is one product that has been successfully and permanently filling out the lips of America since 2003 and now it's available in the UK. Ruth Kerrison investigates...

Lip plumping looks set to be the aesthetic treatment of 2010, with women of all ages wanting to emulate the full, sensuous pouts of models and film stars. Until recently, the most popular form of lip augmentation has been the use of injectable fillers using collagen or hyaluronic acid. However, as with any injectable treatment, this requires a top-up every six months or so to maintain the results, which can prove costly over time.

Another problem with injectables is that the end result is dependent on the skill of the injector, but more permanent alternatives have always tended to scare women off, as we only

ever see examples of when it goes wrong – celebrities afflicted with a permanent 'trout pout' flood the tabloids, whilst those with more subtle enhancements tend to pass unnoticed.

One of the more serious downsides of permanent lip augmentation is the possibility of tissue in-growth, which causes the lips to look unnatural,

makes it very difficult to remove the implant and can lead to permanent disfigurement.

All of which doesn't exactly fill one with confidence as far as lip plumping is concerned. But there doesn't seem much point investing in creams and treatments to erase lines and wrinkles if our thin lips will give the game away anyway!



“ Those little lines that you get around the lips as you age have disappeared, and they haven't come back! ”

Thankfully, help is at hand.

PermaLip, distributed in the UK by SurgiSol is a soft, solid silicone implant, which means it won't rupture, leak or deflate over time, but it is also flexible and malleable, allowing it to adapt to the shape and natural movements of your mouth.

PermaLip is also resistant to tissue in-growth, making it easy to remove if for any reason you are unhappy with the outcome. And if you decide you want to have even fuller lips, you can have a larger implant inserted instead, as the implant comes in three different sized diameters and in three different lengths. This is to make the end result more natural-looking, so the implant tapers right to the corner of the lip, instead of just plumping the middle section.

As you might expect from such a patient-friendly implant, PermaLip was invented not by scientists in a laboratory but by two plastic surgeons, Drs Scott Harris and Peter Raphael, in response to demand from patients sick of the pain, hassle and cost involved in lip plumping injections and too afraid of the potential disfigurement associated with more permanent alternatives.

PermaLip is now finding favour with UK surgeons as they realise what it can offer their patients. Ms Angelica Kavouni has been

So confident were the surgeons in their invention that one of the first patients to receive the implant was Dr Harris's wife, Lee Ann:

"I was one of the first people to have the PermaLip implant. I was in my early 40s and starting to lose my upper lip, as a lot of people do. I had got to the point where I stopped smiling in photographs because my top lip would disappear. I hated it, so this new implant my husband kept raving about was something I really wanted to try.

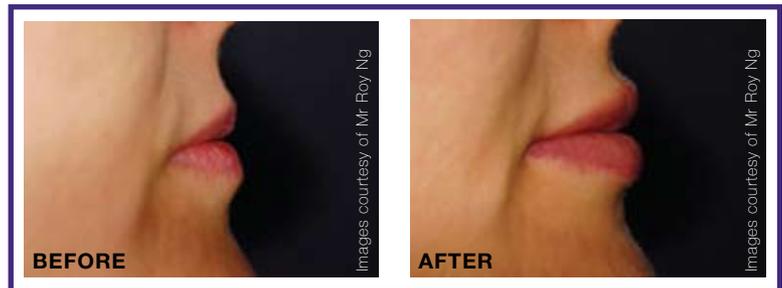
The experience itself was amazing – once you've been numbed with a dental block the whole thing takes about ten minutes. And there is just one stitch in each corner, which doesn't even show because they do it on the inside of the mouth. The stitches dissolve within about a week to ten days.

It's kind of like having breast implants – when you have a breast augmentation, for the first six weeks while you're recuperating, they don't feel like they're really part of you.

With PermaLip it takes about a month and then you suddenly wake up one morning and you don't even know it's there – your lips have softened up, your partner can't feel it, in fact nobody can.

I had the first implant in 2003 when it first came out, then I switched it for a larger size in 2008, so now my lip volume is probably back to what it was when I was 20.

The implant hasn't changed over time in terms of shape or volume, but I have had one unexpected side effect – all those little lines that you get around the lips as you age have disappeared, and they haven't come back! I love that part."



using PermaLip implants for several years and believes it is all about increased patient choice: "Some practitioners might fear losing income from lip filling but I think it's important to offer patients a choice and, in these tough times, cost effective options.

"These soft silicone implants give very predictable, soft and natural results, taking around thirty minutes per lip to insert under a dental anaesthetic. By no means is PermaLip 'one size fits all' as there are different

lengths and sizes available so mouths of all shapes and sizes can be enhanced. The only complaints seem to be that the implants they chose aren't big enough – many patients come back for a larger size!"

CS&AM

Treatment: PermaLip

Price: From £1000 per lip

Time taken: About 15 minutes

Anaesthetic type: Dental block

Hospital stay: None