The JCCP is committed to raising public awareness of the risks associated with various non-surgical and hair restoration treatments. As part of this process the JCCP will publish regular 'Information Sheets' in key areas.

Dermal Fillers

Whilst botulinum toxins are medicines which target muscles, dermal fillers by contrast are injectable implants, that are presented in the form of a viscous gel. Where botulinum toxins target expression lines, dermal fillers can target all forms of lines. Further, they can target folds to lift them and they can add volume where required. The addition of volume is beneficial to address the volume loss that occurs as a natural process over time, or they can be used to augment natural features – the lips being a common example.

The JCCP regulate their members for what are loosely termed the 'temporary' and 'semi-permanent' dermal fillers. The temporary products are most commonly made from a product that contains hyaluronic acid. The semi-permanent variety tend to last longer because they have an additional collagen stimulating effect. The JCCP do not regulate or approve the highest risk category of dermal fillers – permanent fillers.

Dermal fillers are classified as medical devices. This can offer a certain amount of protection in terms of product quality; however, the restrictions that are placed on the use and supply of dermal fillers are not as significant as those provided for prescription medicines (such as Botox®) even though risks can be significant.

Treatment/Procedure

Your practitioner will explain details of the full procedure to you.

Dermal fillers are presented as a gel in a sterile, pre-filled syringe. Your will have agreed the use of one or more syringes prior to treatment. You will also have discussed options, where required, for pain control.

There are various techniques available to inject the filler into or underneath the skin, targeting the specified area to achieve the agreed result.

The result is immediate, but several days are sometimes required for any swelling and redness to settle. The treatment should last between 6 to 18 months, on average, depending on the product used and the location of treatment.

You should be made familiar with the product used, where it has been used, and the specific aftercare instructions, including what side effects you should be aware of and the actions you should take to

minimise their impact. You should also ensure that you have been provided with an emergency contact number should you need to use it following your treatment.

Effects/Benefits

The effects can be as subtle or dramatic as required but should always be natural in appearance and proportion. Treatments can range from the injection of dermal fillers superficially into the skin to smooth out fine lines, through the slightly deeper placement to support folds, to the more demanding process of providing larger amounts of volume where required. The 'liquid face-lift' is so called because it targets specific areas to provide both volume and structural support in order to lift.

Side-Effects

- Dermal filler treatments can be quite involved, and the injection related side-effects – bruising, swelling, redness – are common.
- The treatment related side effects – infection, localised reactions to the product – are less common but should always be noted.
- Perhaps the most worrying complication from a dermal filler treatment is when it is placed in such a way as to inhibit blood supply. In extreme circumstances, or when not properly addressed, this can cause scarring, tissue loss and blindness, and requires immediate intervention. Treatments on or around the forehead, nose, lips and around the eyes are considered the highest risk for this complication.

Your practitioner will discuss these complications with you and explain the measures to be taken to minimise or avoid harm being caused.

Restrictions

There are no legal advertising restrictions for medical devices. However, the JCCP and CPSA consider that promotions which are seen to entice the public, are unethical, and as such, contrary to their regulations.

There is no legal requirement for a face to face consultation with a prescriber. However, considering the potential risks, the CPSA and the JCCP have subjected dermal fillers to the same patient safety processes and procedures as prescription medicines. As such face to face consultations with a qualified clinical prescriber is always required for all of our registrants. This is because the management of dermal filler complications require timely access to prescription medicines.