



# A Fuller Life

A new FDA-approved filler combats the loss of facial fat common among HIV patients

## Timeless Beauty

A recent column in HX discussed lipoatrophy, the common side effect of HIV medications that results in a loss of fat under the skin of the face, especially in the cheeks and temples. Fortunately, a few months ago, the FDA approved a new facial filler, called Sculptra, to combat the signs of lipoatrophy.

During this cosmetic procedure, Sculptra, which is a biodegradable man-made material known as poly-L-lactic acid, is injected under the patient's skin where the fat loss has occurred. The filler doesn't solve the lipoatrophy problem, but simply improves the patient's appearance—no small accomplishment.

"People want Sculptra to work immediately, but it may take several sessions," says **Joseph Eviatar MD of Chelsea Eye & Cosmetic Surgery Associates**, who specializes in cosmetic surgery and Lasik. He explains that because Sculptra provides a gradual increase in skin thickness, patients check in after a few weeks to see if more is needed. Patients with severe facial fat loss may require three to six treatment sessions.

If the possibility of repeat doctor visits has you seeing red-as in mounting medical bills relax. "Sculptra is rarely covered by insurance," acknowledges **Dr. Eviatar**, "because insurance companies consider it strictly a cosmetic procedure." However, he says, the company that makes Sculptra offers a compassionate need policy, discounting the filler to patients who qualify. After faxing over tax forms and discuss-

ing their financial situations with **Carolyn Brenner at Chelsea Eye**, patients may be billed according to a sliding scale.

Sculptra, which has been used in biodegradable stitches and was previously known as New Fill, can pro-

Sculptra is rarely covered by insurance, says Dr. Joseph Eviatar at Chelsea Eye, but discounts are now available to those who qualify

vide skin thickness for up to two years before it is broken down by the natural processes in the body. A skin test is not necessary before treatment, and the most common side effects are temporary soreness and swelling from the injection. "You can go back to work after the procedure," **Dr. Eviatar** notes, adding that another possible side effect is "getting a few small bumps under the skin that can be felt but usually not seen. These can usually be treated with massage."

**Dr. Eviatar** says he performs 15-20 filler injections per week, including Sculptra and Radiesse (another filler material used for lipoatrophy, for which **Dr. Eviatar** is a lead FDA investigator). With the new sliding scale for Sculptra, the Chelsea surgeon is sure to have his hands full in the near future.

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FACIAL FILLERS ALSO COMBAT WRINKLES AND AGING SKIN

Face it: We all want to look better. Facial fillers are a popular, non-invasive procedure that can help anyone's skin regain a younger appearance. They're not just for those suffering from lipoatrophy, a loss of facial fat. Fillers such as collagen, Restylane, Sculptra and Radiesse as well as other non-invasive treatments such as Botox and laser peels are just some of the many treatments available at **Chelsea Eye & Cosmetic Surgery Associates**. "Fillers can be used for wrinkles, fuller lips and fattening of your face," says **Dr. Joseph Eviatar**, adding: "Youthful faces are plump—you lose some of the fat as you get older." He sees a variety of patients in their 30s-50s who want to look better but don't need surgery. Set up a consultation at **Chelsea Eye** for more information. "The goal of these treatments is to make patients look natural, youthful and more rested," says **Dr. Eviatar**. "You shouldn't be able to tell that they've had something done."