

Fat Loss Accelerates Facial Ageing, According to Researchers

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Editorial

In a recent study, researchers attempted to establish how fat loss accelerates the symptoms of facial ageing and how plastic surgeons handle it. The standard reason for sagging is that the facial soft tissues actually give in to gravity's impact over time. While the theory that weakening ligaments in the midface could lead to soft tissue descent still holds water, newer research points in a different direction. The loss of fat, both near the surface and deeper inside the skin, can be the true cause of facial ageing. Researcher studied 19 patients who had computed tomography (CT) scans of the head on two occasions at least a decade apart in a recent report.

Despite the fact that the patients were not having a facelift or any other cosmetic operation, the scans were useful in tracking changes in fat deposits in the midface (the region between the eyes and the mouth) over time. The patients were 46 years old at the time of their initial scan and 57 years old at the time of their follow-up scan.

The results showed a "definite and observable loss of midface fat volume," though the findings differed by patient. The overall volume of facial fat decreased by around 12.2% from 46.50 cc (cubic centimetres) at the initial scan to 40.8 cc at the follow-up scan. The sum of reduction, however, was not the same at all stages. The amount of fat in the superficial compartment, just under the skin, decreased by 11.3 percent on average. In comparison, the deep facial fat compartment saw an average reduction of 18.4%. The findings support the 'volume loss' hypothesis of facial ageing and may aid in understanding some of the particular issues that

drive patients to seek facial rejuvenation. Researchers believe that deep facial fat loss, in particular, eliminates help from the overlying fat.

"The nasolabial fold, which extends from the nose to the mouth, becomes deeper as a result. Fat loss closer to the surface, on the other hand, causes the cheeks to look deflated." Variations in fat volume loss can also explain hollowing around the eyes and jowl heaviness as people get older. "Since there is less fat in the upper face to begin with, fat loss is more noticeable." This research could aid plastic surgeons in developing techniques for replacing or repositioning midface fat in a more "physiological" manner. The results will assist plastic surgeons in developing more natural approaches to facial rejuvenation, with the goal of re-creating the youthful facial fat distribution.

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