



Lip Service

New Techniques To Rejuvenate the Lips,
Lines & Folds Around the Mouth

By Wendy Lewis

Patients love the WOW factor of these treatments.

“You’re in...You’re Out...You’re Gorgeous”

says Dr. Sarnoff

Smoker’s lines, shrinking lips, creases in the corners of the mouth, and nose to mouth folds are just some of the concerns Cosmetic Dermatologist Dr. Deborah Sarnoff hears from her patients in New York and Long Island every day. Fortunately, she has a wide range of treatment options to offer her patients to banish the signs of aging around the mouth.

According to Dr. Sarnoff, “If you give a woman a mirror and ask what bothers her most, nine times out of 10 she’ll point to the lines around her mouth. Nowhere does aging leave its imprint more noticeably. Many factors contribute to the signs of aging around the mouth area. These include heredity, hormones, weight loss, and the three S’s: stress, sun, and smoking. When you look at elderly couples, a woman will often have deep creases around the mouth – older men hardly ever have them. That’s because their coarse beard hair – deeply anchored in thicker, more sebaceous skin – is protective.”

At BeautyShots @ Cosmetique, her state-of-the-art center devoted to the safe, skilled administration of Botox® and the latest FDA approved facial fillers, Dr. Sarnoff has a full arsenal to choose from to suit each patient’s needs. In one visit, she can erase your frown lines, soften your wrinkles, and carefully enhance your lips – with minimal down time and immediate results. “Patients love the WOW factor of these treatments. You’re in ... You’re Out ... You’re Gorgeous,” says Dr. Sarnoff.

REJUVENATE, REPLENISH, RESTORE

Rejuvenation of the perioral area, doc speak for “around the mouth,” is performed to provide an appropriate frame for your smile. As Dr. Sarnoff explains, “Years of facial activity, including kissing, drinking through a straw, cigarette smoking – in fact, simply talking – can etch vertical lines that create

an aging component to the skin. Even a surgical facelift cannot get rid of these pesky lines around the mouth.”

Another contributing factor is loss of volume that occurs over time. “As we age, on every level a woman loses volume. Her bones shrink (think osteoporosis), the layer of fat padding under the skin diminishes, and the skin itself becomes thinner. Add tooth loss to the mix and the result is a significant deepening of the nasolabial folds, and the appearance of marionette lines and jowls.”

Your lips also show changes with aging, most notably, a loss of fullness, definition and shape. “You may have noticed that your upper lip is thinner and the vermillion (the red part of the lip) plus the Cupid’s bow tends to lose its sexy curves. You may find that your smile shows less of your teeth because the upper lip is drooping,” says Dr. Sarnoff.



The rejuvenation process can take many forms, depending on your preferences and priorities. The possible spectrum of treatment can span procedures such as fillers and Botox, which require no downtime, to procedures such as fractional laser resurfacing, which require 4-7 days of downtime. According to Dr. Sarnoff, “The key is to treat the area around the



Significant improvement in fine lines around the mouth after fractional CO2 resurfacing with the SmartSkin™ laser.

mouth as one aesthetic unit and to individualize the treatment plan for each patient. There is no such thing as 'one size fits all' when it comes to treating these areas, and we often use a combination of therapies to get the best results. One common mistake I see is treating only one part of the equation, such as the nasolabial folds, without paying attention to other related areas that can benefit from improvement, such as the marionette folds or upper lip lines. This can create an unbalanced appearance."

Some of the treatments Dr. Sarnoff recommends include: Volumizers for adding fullness and stimulating new collagen formation including poly L-lactic acid (Sculptra®), and calcium hydroxyl apatite (Radiesse®). Sculptra is particularly good for thin faces. Aside from adding volume, Sculptra can help firm and thicken the skin. More robust fillers, such as Radiesse, are used mainly in the nasolabial folds, marionette folds, and on the jawline, especially in older patients who may need better filling to get a good correction. Hyaluronic acid fillers, such as Juvéderm® and Restylane®, can be used for fine lines and for augmentation of the lip itself.



Natural, aesthetically-pleasing results after 1 cc of Juvéderm for lip enhancement.

For lip enhancement, it takes a good aesthetic eye to get it right. As Dr. Sarnoff says, "When it comes to lips, it's important to be conservative. Excessive augmentation of the lip complex can create a distorted and unattractive look. In fact, women are often afraid to have their lips injected because they have seen someone at the mall or on a reality show who had 'bee sting' lips that look too obvious or overdone. I like to start small to see how the patient likes the results, and I ask that they come back to see me in about two weeks so we can check the symmetry and shape. Meticulous attention to detail and the right proportions are key. We can always do a touch up and add more material if desired."

The final touch may be the addition of Botox for fine lines and softening. The benefit of Botox is a weakening of the mus-

THE "PERFECT" LIP

"For many women, it's a daunting task to decide which filler is appropriate to put into the lips and around the mouth. In my opinion, it's not so much about the choice of filler (i.e., the substance one selects to have injected), as much as it's the choice of the person who has the most experience, artistic eye, and a track record for delivering great results. That choice of 'filler' – i.e., the skilled physician – is of paramount importance in achieving the 'perfect' lip."

– Deborah S. Sarnoff, M.D.

cle action around the mouth that causes lines to form. It also helps to make the effects of injectable fillers and resurfacing treatments last longer. "Botox is a valuable adjunct to treating the fine lines around the lips, as well as for lip enhancement, but it is critical to use small, carefully placed amounts to avoid any alteration of the smile," she says.

Another new technique Dr. Sarnoff recommends is Pelleve™, a recently launched skin tightening system. "Pelleve reduces facial wrinkles by slowly and carefully heating the deep layers of the skin without causing injury to the overlying skin. The heat causes the collagen in the skin to contract, and also stimulates new collagen production, which results in improved skin

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quality, texture, and tone. It is a virtually painless procedure, so no anesthetic is required, and we generally treat the whole face with special emphasis around the mouth if needed. Our patients say it feels warm and comfortable, and they can go back to work right after leaving my office. They can see instant results, with continued improvement over the next several weeks."

Dr. Sarnoff also uses fractional skin resurfacing via CO2 laser to improve skin texture and fine wrinkles. "For more advanced skin aging, the SmartXide DOT™ and the Smart-Skin™ lasers have proven to be valuable techniques, especially when combined with Botox. Fractional resurfacing is ideal for the treatment of sun damage, brown spots, fine lines, wrinkles, skin laxity and texture, as well as acne scars. It is safe and quickly performed in about 30 minutes with little downtime so patients can return to work in about a week. In most

instances, the results are long-lasting so Botox and fillers won't be needed anymore."

Dr. Sarnoff believes "Botox, fillers, and laser resurfacing work synergistically to provide just the right 'one-two-three' punch that is guaranteed to put a smile on any woman's face the next time she looks in the mirror."

While the aging process cannot be stopped, with proper care you can maintain your rejuvenated appearance for many years with a little help from Dr. Sarnoff and her team at Cosmetique. ❖

Dr. Deborah S. Sarnoff practices at 625 Park Avenue in Manhattan and on the North Shore of Long Island. Schedule a consultation by calling 212-794-4000 or 516-484-9000 or visit <http://www.cosmetiqueMD.com>