

SCALPEL NEWS

By Joan Kron



295%

more breast-augmentation procedures were done in 2007 than in 1997.

—The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery

Breast Inflation

Whether women getting breast augmentation choose implants filled with saline, as 60 percent of patients did in 2007, or silicone gel, which became widely available last year, there is a risk of eventual leak or rupture. Now an innovative type of implant in development, the Implite, addresses this problem. The shell is made of silicone, and the filling is simply air, contained in multiple honeycomb-like compartments. Even if ruptured, it will not collapse, in contrast with saline implants, says developer Ami Glicksman, a plastic surgeon in Israel. (Studies of breast aug-

mentation patients in 2000 found that 7 to 10 percent of saline implants ruptured or deflated within five years; for breast-cancer patients who had undergone breast reconstruction, the rate was 8 to 18 percent. And a 2007 study of 149 women with silicone-gel implants of varying ages found that 11.8 percent of the implants had ruptured.) The Implite is 65 percent lighter than traditional implants, so it may be less prone to cause sagging of the breast over time; it is also expected to minimize visible dimpling, a possible side effect of saline. Trials needed for FDA approval are planned to start within the next two to two and a half years.

Line-Erasing Time

Collagen, the original wrinkle filler, has many benefits, including minimal swelling and bruising, but since the effect wears off within two to six months, longer-lasting hyaluronic acids (such as Restylane, which lasts at least six months) have become preferred. Recently, the FDA approved a more durable collagen, Evolence. Derived from porcine tendons, it requires no allergy testing, unlike bovine collagen. In a study led by Z. Paul Lorenc, a plastic surgeon in New York City, Evolence was found to smooth nasolabial folds for 9 months in 95.3 percent of patients and for 12 months in 76.5 percent of them. Trevor Born, a plastic surgeon in New York City and Toronto, finds it useful for filling deflated facial areas, but notes that it "contains no painkiller and is even more painful than hyaluronic acids," so he injects anesthetic into patients' gums. A lighter formula, Evolence Breeze, for the lips and fine lines, is popular in Canada but is not currently approved here.

Fast Fat Loss

A device that reduces fat with ultrasound waves—without anesthesia, incisions, injections, or suction—is in trials that could lead to FDA approval. Available in more than 50 countries, UltraShape has been shown to disrupt fat cells without harming the skin, blood vessels, nerves, or tissue—reducing fat thickness with treatments that take less than an hour apiece.

Among 30 patients who each had three treatments at four-week intervals, circumferential body measurements decreased by an average of one and a half inches (and as much as four inches) by one month after the final session. Body weight was unaffected. Jeffrey Kenkel, professor of plastic surgery at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and vice-chairman of UltraShape's advisory board, is now evaluating its safety and efficacy in 125 patients.

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