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What To Know About The New Volumizing Injectable Renuva

By: Beth Shapouri | October 14, 2020

The anti-ager actually grows more of your own fat — true story.

It seems there's a new injectable every few months that promises to work better and longer and give more natural results. Come January 2021, another will be added to the list: **Renuva®**. And although it gives the effect of a traditional filler, that's not quite what it is. Marketed as "an off-the-shelf alternative to autologous fat transfer," it does its work by triggering the body to create more of its own fat in targeted areas.

Part of a larger trend in injectables that's all about stimulating your body to create the anti-aging elements you lose over time rather than replacing them with outside agents, Renuva® promises to be an interesting addition to the ever-growing selection of anti-aging injectables. Here are the basics.

How Renuva® Works

Renuva® is an adipose allograft matrix composed of collagen, proteins, and growth factors derived from donated and purified fat. Think of it as a scaffolding that triggers your body's fat production. After it's injected, "your stem cells divide and grow into new fat cells that populate the new collagen matrix that it creates," says Leif Rogers, MD, a board certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon in Beverly Hills. In other words, the solution gets replaced over time with your own fat.

In addition to resulting in less post-injection swelling, the technology purportedly eliminates that uncanny effect that can happen when filler sits awkwardly on top of moving facial muscles. As Dr. Rogers explains, the new volume "is living cells in the anatomical layer it belongs in.

Because of that it will look and animate naturally.” What’s more? He says those new fat cells can live “for at least 10 years, if not longer.”

In line with injectables like Ellansé®, Radisse®, and Sculptra® (all of which trigger the body to boost its collagen production), Renuva® is one more piece of an industry-wide shift. The thinking behind these treatments is to enhance the body’s own reparative abilities. “It overlaps with general healing as well as anti-aging and longevity — essentially the doorway to the fountain of youth,” Dr. Rogers says.

Similar to the recent positioning of certain neurotoxins and fillers as ‘clean’ or ‘pure’ injectables, West Hollywood-based board certified dermatologist Jason Emer, MD, sees patient desire driving this turn. “People are wanting ‘regenerative’ procedures that stimulate your own body to improve over time,” he explains. “They like the idea of more ‘natural’ and less ‘synthetic’ injectables.”

Another selling point? The decade-long results. “People are looking for more long-term improvements since COVID-19 has limited how often someone wants to go into an office to do treatments,” he notes.

What Renuva® Is Best For

The treatment works in areas of the face that naturally have fat cells, including the temples, nasolabial folds, chin, jawline, and cheeks. It can also be used on the hands. And that’s not all. “It’s great [to use] post-surgical on patients with small indentations or irregularities on the body, like in the breasts or in cellulite, and those with botched liposuction procedures,” Dr. Emer says.

Renuva® is recommended for patients who desire mild plumping, but Dr. Emer has seen it used successfully beyond that. “We often will go ‘off label’ by mixing it with Sculptra® to use for buttock and male chest augmentation to build fat volume and collagen at the same time,” he explains.

It’s important to note that Renuva® is not your best option if speed is your priority. Unlike hyaluronic acid-based dermal fillers that offer immediate volume, the fat-building process can take months. So, while the results are long lasting, they can take several months to show up.

Additionally, Renuva® can’t be dissolved like HA-based fillers — but the process it sets off can be halted along the way. “If the volume is undesirable or if there are firm areas that the patient does not tolerate during the process of fat growth, a diluted steroid can be injected into the area to stop the function of the growth factors, as well as the proliferative phase of fat growth,” Dr. Rogers explains.

The Takeaway

While it won’t replace the instant gratification of HA-filler, Renuva® will further diversify a growing range of injectables that go beyond filling to stimulate natural volume restoration. The

cost of Renuva[®], which will be available across the United States early next year, starts at \$1,040 for 1.5 cc (though it varies based on practice and size of the treatment area). Dr. Rogers describes the price as “approximately equivalent to the longer-lasting hyaluronic acid injectables like Juvederm[®] Voluma.”

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