

# I wanted a new face for Christmas..

A new breed of injectables claims to give the same results as a face-lift, without going under the knife. But do they really work... and does it hurt? Mirror columnist **Sue Carroll** tests a new filler that promises a party-ready face in your lunch hour...

**I blame all of what you are about to read on the fact that I bought a new pair of glasses.**

Not reading glasses but the ordinary, day-to-day ones. The sort that make you see clearly for the first time in years. So with perfect clarity you recognise things need to be done - like getting the kitchen tiles re-grouted and the skirting boards painted. And other things become clear, too. Things you really don't want to see... in the mirror. I make no bones about the fact I do absolutely everything no woman ever should if she wants to preserve her skin. I smoke. Bad. I don't drink a lot of water. Bad. I sunbathe. Very, very bad. So really, being philosophical about it, I deserved the face I saw looking back at me through glasses that were anything but rose-tinted.

But, oh dear, what a state. Especially the lower half of my face where the lines around my upper lip had given up living independently and moved in with one another to create what surgeon's call perioral wrinkles but we might refer to as 'cat's bum'.

It's caused mainly by years of sucking hard on cigarettes and it's why I would urge women of all ages to quit now. I won't bore you with my nasolabial folds and marionette lines but if you're a woman - or man - of a certain age you'll know they're the crevices creeping down from your nose to mouth and the lines which form semi-circles round your chin.

So all in all, a pretty depressing picture. Made worse, I hasten to add, by the fact I'd just suffered a vile cold which left my skin like sandpaper. And all this at Christmas. Could I have a new face, San-



**BEFORE**

ta, please? Or one that's a tad less tired? In pantomime this is where the Fairy Godmother waves her wand and, hey presto, the years fall away. In real life, the answer is less simple but it's just a tiny bit magic.

It's called Juvederm ULTRA and is a smooth gel containing natural hyaluronic acid which is injected under the surface of the skin to restore volume, fill the lines, wrinkles and folds, and redefine lips.

It's the hyaluronic acid in our skin, by the way, that we start to lose as we get older, making it drier and less able to retain water.

Short of going for the full surgical monty this, I was assured by my surgeon, Jeya Prakash, was the next best thing and should last for around nine months.

Depending on how much you want filled, it can take as little as 20 minutes, with a more or less party-ready face at the end. Not surprisingly, it's increasingly these non-surgical procedures that can be done in a lunch hour that

**AFTER**

women are opting for. Mind you, having once undergone a 'filler' treatment I was unsure. All that seemed to do was leave me so bruised that I looked like I'd gone 10 rounds with Joe Calzaghe.

Oh yes, and it hurt. Two factors persuaded me to try it again, the first being vanity, obviously. The second was that Juvederm ULTRA contains a numbing agent called lidocaine.

Even so, and I recommend this, my doctor smothered my face with an anaesthetic cream and left it on for 40 minutes before injecting me with a local anaesthetic. After that lot I didn't feel much more than a tingling as the Juvederm ULTRA was sent coursing through my face, plumping me up, smoothing wrinkles and at least fighting a bit of gravity.

I'd also taken the precaution of taking arnica pills for three days to alleviate any bruising. I continued these

for a week afterwards, although it wasn't really necessary. The bruising I suffered was minimal and easily covered by make-up. The pictures you see here were taken 24 hours after I left my doctor's surgery. There was a tiny bit of swelling - well, it was a big job - and I was prepared not to be amazed. But the truth is, I was and still am.

The cat's bum has all but disappeared and the lines around my chin have been smoothed almost to extinction. Will it, as promised, last for almost a year? I'll let you know.

Meanwhile, I'm still wearing the glasses. But now I quite like what I'm seeing in the mirror.

**'My wrinkles were caused by sucking on cigarettes'**



● DR JEYA PRAKASH IS AT 12 HAWLEY STREET, LONDON W1G 7JQ. CALL 0207 724 802. PRICES FROM £18 TO £2,000.

● THE HYALURONIC ACID USED IN JUVEDERM ULTRA IS NON-ANIMAL AND HAS BEEN CLINICALLY TESTED TO PROVIDE NATURAL AND LONG-LASTING AESTHETIC RESULTS.

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