

A NOTE ON COVID-19 VACCINES AND DERMAL FILLERS

GREAT news! COVID-19 vaccines are now more widely available, and we are hoping all will join in on this planet-wide safety measure! Most of the Laser & Skin providers have received their first dose (and some already have had their second!) of the vaccine. Almost everyone is scheduled to receive it soon. Both Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are proven to be highly effective with very rare side effects, which is why the FDA authorized their use in the United States.

In the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine trial, only three of the 30,000 participants as of December 2020 experienced temporary facial swelling. Of these three people, two received the vaccine and one received the placebo. The person who received the placebo had dental work two weeks prior. All three of these people had a history of receiving facial fillers. The swelling did subside. We have known that dental work and vaccines have triggered facial fillers to swell in about 1/10,000 patients. This vaccine seems to have a similar rate of possible swelling. Facial swelling is a known possible side effect of filler injections. It is rare and is usually brought on by the addition of other stressors, such as recent dental work, illness like the flu, or other vaccines.

In the Moderna trial, of the other 29,997 vaccine trial participants, we do not know who among them had a history of receiving facial fillers but did not experience facial swelling after receiving the vaccine. Further, we are not sure if the swelling was caused by the interaction between the facial filler and the vaccine, although it is possible. Bottomline, the Moderna (and probably the Pfizer and other COVID vaccines) are likely to have a similar incidence of facial swelling -- 1/10,000 patients -- and this reaction is treatable, so it should not preclude one from getting a potentially lifesaving vaccine. Therefore, we do not recommend avoiding the COVID-19 vaccine if you are a facial filler recipient in light of these rare reports of swelling.

We want to encourage all patients who are able to receive a COVID-19 vaccine to get one, even those who have received facial fillers. Consult with your primary care physician to understand your candidacy for the vaccine. See us if you experience a reaction and had facial filler done at our clinic, and we will get you right in to evaluate and treat the reaction. Please stay safe and get vaccinated. Your health is our priority! Remember to wear a mask when in proximity to those not in your household, even after you've received the vaccine, until the CDC advises otherwise. We wish you all the best and are here for you!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Kilmer - and the rest of the Laser & Skin team

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Surgery Center of
Northern California