

Combining products benefits soft tissue augmentation

Customized treatment for patients provides most natural results

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By: [Jill Taylor](#)

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Dr. Baumann

Chicago — Forget for a minute the idea of having access to the one best filler. Imagine instead that the products on the market right now make up a palate that offers the ability to customize treatment for the patient and provide the overall most natural and pleasing results.

This is the treatment approach of Leslie Baumann, M.D., director of the University of Miami Cosmetic Center and associate professor in the department of dermatology and cutaneous surgery. Dr. Baumann's message at Academy

'05 here was that clinicians should be leveraging the assets offered by different fillers to address the variety of needs each patient may present.

"If you're a painter, you're not going to just use green paint. You're going to use all the colors of the spectrum," Dr. Baumann tells **Dermatology Times**. "I feel that it's the same way with soft tissue augmentation products; you should use several of them in combination to get the best results."

Staying true to nature

"I like to replace what is naturally lost with aging, which is collagen and hyaluronic acid," Dr. Baumann says. "On average, I use at least two different fillers per patient. Sometimes I'll use three or four," based on their individual attributes, she adds.

According to Dr. Baumann, collagen fillers are structural, and function to hold the skin up, like scaffolding. Collagen fillers, such as Zyplast (Inamed) and CosmoPlast (Inamed), are useful for features that are targeted to stand out.

Hyaluronic acid products, on the other hand, bind with water very well and provide volume to features. This is useful in areas such as the body of the lips, over the cheekbones or along the jawline. However, variation between these fillers can be



DT Extra: Looking good

exploited to the benefit of the patient.

In Dr. Baumann's experience, Hylaform (Inamed) is the softest of the hyaluronic acid fillers, Restylane (Q-Med Laboratories) is the stiffest, and Captique (Genzyme Corp.) is in the middle. So while Restylane may provide the best effect for acne scars or very deep wrinkles, Hylaform would be most suitable for adding volume to the lips.

Using a combination of collagen and hyaluronic acid fillers to treat a single area functions to replace what the patient has lost in both structure and volume. However, the benefits go beyond look and feel — combination treatment can also significantly impact patient comfort during the cosmetic procedure and reduce immediate side effects.

For deep lines, such as the nasolabial folds, Dr. Baumann first injects Cosmoplast, which contains lidocaine. By using the collagen product first, the treatment area is numbed for the remainder of the procedure and swelling is minimized by stabilizing eosinophils. The hyaluronic acid filler of choice can be injected afterward.

Additional products and techniques

Although not approved yet in the United States, another hyaluronic acid product, Juvederm (Inamed), appears to extend treatment effects, which last four to six months using the currently approved products.

"Juvederm is very exciting because, unlike the other hyaluronic acid fillers, which are particle-based, it is a homogenous hyaluronate gel," Dr. Baumann notes. "Enzymes have a tougher time breaking it down, so it may last for 12 to 15 months."

A product that Dr. Baumann currently utilizes heavily in clinical practice is Sculptra (Dermik), which she points out is not a true filler.

"I like to call it a dermal stimulator," she says. "The injection encourages the skin to make its own collagen."

Sculptra is a poly-L-lactic acid that converts to lactic acid after injection and is absorbed completely, leaving behind a collagen matrix that forms in the treatment process. The product is approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat HIV-related lipoatrophy, but in Dr. Baumann's experience, Sculptra is safe and effective for off-label cosmetic use alone or in combination with other fillers. The nature of the product makes it suitable not just for filling wrinkles, but for changing the structure of the face.

Dr. Baumann prepares Sculptra in a dilution of water (5 cc) and lidocaine with epinephrine (1 cc). The preparation is then injected into large areas of the face where she wants to promote collagen production.

"The face is numbed all over from the lidocaine, and the epinephrine causes the blood vessels to constrict so they are less likely to bruise," Dr. Baumann explains.

"After injection, I massage the area for about five minutes before moving on to wrinkle treatment with collagen and hyaluronic acid products."

Sculptra treatment consists of once-monthly injections over the course of four months. Reports from Europe indicate that the treatment effect then lasts for about two years.

Disclosure: Dr. Baumann is currently the lead investigator in Juvederm trials, and is a past investigator in trials for Sculptra, Hylaform and Hylaform Plus. She owns stock in Medicis Aesthetics, the maker of Restylane.