

# Liver Spots and Aging Hands

As people age, unsightly blemishes commonly called liver spots can appear on the face and on the back of hands. Another upsetting change for many is the loss of smoothly contoured hands. Dermatologic surgeons can remedy both of these distressing conditions.

## **What are liver spots?**

Liver spots also called lentigos, are sharply defined, round, brown or black flat patches of skin. The epidermis is expanding with more pigment developing what looks like a large freckle. They may appear by themselves or a few together. Many people have a hereditary predisposition to them. They may develop at an early age, even in childhood, but they are more common in older people especially those who have spent too much time in the sun.

## **Are liver spots cancerous?**

The spots are not cancerous, nor do they lead to cancer. On skin exposed to the sun however, they may be accompanied by precancerous scaly, red elevations of the skin called Actinic Keratosis. Dark spots which might be cancerous may also appear on the lips. All of these blemishes should be evaluated by a dermatologic surgeon.

## **Can liver spots be prevented?**

Although nothing can be done about the role heredity plays, excessive exposure to the sun should be avoided from childhood a precaution that will also diminish the threat of skin cancer. To moderate exposure, the skin should be protected by a sunscreen having the minimum SPF (sun protective factor) of 15.

## **How are liver spots treated?**

The average treatment results last six months or even longer.

## **What should patients do prior to treatment?**

Patients should avoid taking aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, St. John's Wort, or high doses of Vitamin E supplements for one week prior to treatment. This will help to minimize any bruising or bleeding at the injection site.

## **Is any of the material left in the skin after Hyaluronic Acid is degraded?**

No. Hyaluronic Acid is completely degraded, leaving absolutely no traces of the injected material in the body.

## **Is Hyaluronic Acid safe?**

Yes. Hyaluronic Acid has been used safely by dermatologist worldwide since 1996. Because Hyaluronic Acid is non-animal based and fully biocompatible, allergy testing is not required. This quality virtually eliminates any risk on animal-based disease transmission or allergic reaction. The most commonly reported side effects were temporary redness and swelling at the injection site. These effects typically resolve within two to three days.

## **Are there any side effects?**

As with any injection, some common injection-related reactions might occur. The most common side effects are temporary redness at the injection site. These typically resolve within two to three days.

## **How is Hyaluronic Acid administered?**

Hyaluronic Acid is injected directly into the skin in tiny amounts using an ultrafine needle. After the injection, Dr. Kern may gently massage your skin to optimize contouring. Hyaluronic Acid is a simple and convenient procedure and results are practically instantaneous.

**How can I be sure the needle is clean?**

Hyaluronic Acid is prepackaged in a disposable glass syringe with a sterilized needle.

**How often should I have Hyaluronic Acid treatments done?**

*Captique*<sup>™</sup> lasts as long as collagen, whereas *Restylane* can last two to three months longer. This is because *Restylane* has a higher concentration of Hyaluronic Acid. Treatments are typically scheduled two to three times a year, depending on which Hyaluronic Acid product is used. Evidence shows that having a touch-up treatment before the product has fully dissipated will enhance the lasting effect.

**Is Hyaluronic Acid approved by the FDA?**

Yes.

**Do Hyaluronic Acid injections hurt?**

Hyaluronic Acid is injected directly into the skin in tiny amounts by an ultrafine needle, resulting in minimal discomfort. To optimize your comfort during the short procedure, Dr. Kern may anesthetize the treatment area.

**Can Hyaluronic Acid be used anywhere on the face.**

Although Hyaluronic Acid has been used in more than one million treatments in over 60 countries to smooth wrinkles and deep facial folds and to enhance the appearance and fullness of lips, in the US it is currently indicated only for the correction of moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds, such as nasolabial folds.

**How is Hyaluronic Acid different from Botox?**

Hyaluronic Acid is a natural cosmetic filler. In contrast, Botox is a protein that blocks nerve transmission and relaxes the underlying muscles. Many patients have been very pleased after receiving treatment with both products.

**How much does Hyaluronic Acid cost?**

Hyaluronic Acid treatments are customized procedures based on specific individual needs, so the cost will vary from patient to patient. In general, the cost of Hyaluronic Acid is comparable to the cost of similar procedures. *Restylane* is more concentrated Hyaluronic Acid product than *Captique*<sup>™</sup> and therefore, slightly more expensive. Because Hyaluronic Acid is longer lasting, it proves to be very economical over the long term.