

The 'easy' but 'not-so-easy' brow lift

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One of the most apparent and difficult-to-treat aspects of the aging eye is the descent of the eyebrow. The change in the orbital bone structure as well as fat loss and fat redistribution along the upper and lower eyelids and loss of skin elasticity contribute to the skeletonization of the periorbital area and a “drooping” of the eyebrow. Patients either have loss of volume across the entire brow, or primarily across the lateral and central brow creating what is known as an “a-frame” deformity.



Dr. Lily Talakoub

Nonsurgical techniques that help lift the brow include a combination of relaxation of the orbicularis oculi muscle with neurotoxins, in addition to the injection of hyaluronic acid fillers along the brow margin and upper third of the face.

Small amounts of hyaluronic acid fillers injected with a 22- to 25-gauge cannula both above and below the eyebrow along the orbital rim provide an instantaneous lifting effect with long-lasting results. Hyaluronic acid and poly-L-lactic acid in dilute concentrations can also be injected with a cannula in the forehead, which creates a repletion of the volume in the upper face that is often lost with aging to create a lift of the eyebrows. Temple hollows can also be filled with calcium hydroxylapatite, poly-L-lactic acid and less often with hyaluronic acid to revolumize and create a lift of the lateral brow. Care should be taken as fillers used in these areas are off-label and need to be done by trained, expert injectors. The periorbital area is a danger zone with many vessels and nerves, and proper injection technique is crucial to avoid arterial blockage, nerve damage, and long-term complications.



Dr. Naissan Wesley

Nonablative skin tightening with radiofrequency energy or ultrasound can be used for achieving a brow-lift. Although these techniques do provide collagen remodeling, multiple procedures are often necessary, and results are not always substantial. In a study of 36 patients undergoing ultrasound tightening of the face and neck, 86% showed a clinically significant brow-lift 90 days after treatment. The average brow elevation in this study was 1.7 mm.

In practice, however, patients are often more satisfied with the brow elevation they achieve with neurotoxins and fillers. Injectables provide a faster onset of results, fewer treatments, and minimal discomfort. Combination treatments provide the best overall results and although injectables in the periorbital area are technically difficult, patients are often very satisfied and return for repeat treatments.

References [Aesthet Surg J. 2009;May-Jun;29\(3\):174-9.](#)

[J Am Acad Dermatol. 2010;Feb;62\(2\):262-9.](#)

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