

ASK THE DOCTOR

Our experts answer your questions

Q | I love my lips after filler and what Botox does, but I hate needles. Although the results are good, the experience is a nightmare. What to do? -Marlene J.

You don't have to suffer to obtain great results. In this day and age of technology in anesthesia there is no reason to have a painful procedure. Unfortunately, some doctors simply don't want to invest the time it takes to make a patient totally numb. I have patients come to my office and say that when they had their lips injected they were handed a tennis ball to squeeze. I just smile because I know that after my painless lip injection procedure, I will have this patient for life. Can you imagine if you went to the dentist and were going to have a tooth drilled and they handed you a tennis ball?! It only takes several extra minutes to make patients totally numb. Personally, I first begin with a potent

topical anesthetic cream when the patient is seated. Next, we ice the lips and perform some small "dental injections" inside the mouth with the smallest needle that is available. After this we continue the ice and wait another five minutes. Although the dental injections may pinch a little bit, the remainder of the procedure is totally painless. This means I can do a better job and the patient is not tortured. After the injections, we immediately reapply the ice. It probably takes an extra 15 minutes for us to perform lip or facial fillers, but it pays off many fold in patient appreciation.

- Joe Niamtu, III, DMD
Richmond, Va.

