

"Less is more", nouveau concept en médecine esthétique

“Less is more”: A new concept in aesthetic medicine

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Résumé

La médecine et la chirurgie esthétique sont en perpétuelle évolution, comme d'ailleurs l'ensemble des secteurs de la médecine moderne. Toutes les procédures deviennent moins invasifs avec une reprise sociale précoce et en esthétique des résultats au naturels qui donnent enfin ses lettres de noblesses à cette discipline. Les concepts de traitement progressent et, les produits se sécurisent, notamment l'acide hyaluronique qui constitue le vrai pilier des comblements de rides et de la volumétrie faciale. Le concept "Less is more" représente l'évolution ultime de cette philosophie autour de la "French touch". Il permet d'optimiser les qualités et les performances des produits injectés, en se basant sur une analyse sémiologique statique et dynamique fine, effaçant sélectivement les expressions négatives de la face et, en choisissant les zones de traitement où les reflets lumineux seront les plus impactant.

Mots-clés : "Less is more", "French touch", acide hyaluronique, expressions faciales négatives, volumétrie faciale.

Summary

Aesthetic medicine and cosmetic surgery are in constant evolution, just like all fields of modern medicine. Procedures are becoming less and less invasive, allowing a prompt social recovery and giving aesthetical results so natural they finally give the discipline the credentials it deserves. Treatment concepts are making progress, and the products are becoming safer and safer, particularly hyaluronic acid, which is the true cornerstone of wrinkle fillers and facial volumetry. The "Less is More" concept represents the ultimate evolution of the "French Touch" philosophy. It optimises the qualities and the performances of injected products. Based on a careful semiotic analysis, both static and dynamic, it selectively erases negative facial expressions by choosing to treat the areas where light reflection will have the most impact.

Key-words: Less is more, french touch, hyaluronic acid, negative facial expressions, facial volumetry.

INTRODUCTION

Aesthetic medicine is a field in constant evolution. It has been growing at a strong pace for the past several years. Certain phases of its development have been deemed excessive, triggering some criticism, notably due to its "artificial" aspect in terms of outcome. However, in the past few years, aesthetic medicine has won its letters of nobility. It has become effective, accurate, precise and safe. The latest major evolutions in aesthetic medicine and the use of hyaluronic acid fillers have notably been characterized by codified techniques, control of the injection quantities, and products that are extremely well tolerated [1, 2]. In the past few years, the "French touch" concept has appeared; this technique aims to preserve facial volumes, while respecting facial expressions. This concept is the result of careful physiological analysis [3]. With the "French touch", particularly natural-

looking results can now be achieved, thus positioning aesthetic medicine more as a technique to accompany the ageing process and prevent the signs of facial ageing, rather than to repair [1, 3]. Practitioners' treatment techniques and analysis have become much subtler, with the practitioner adopting techniques akin to those of a sculptor, and with this form of medicine approaching artistry. The transformative work achieved through the use of hyaluronic acid fillers in facial volumetry, the treatment of deep lines and wrinkles, as well as restoring



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Fig. 1: The foundations for the "Less is more" concept: Anatomy, clinical data and art.

facial volumes, have reached such a high degree of precision that some practitioners even speak of “haute couture” aesthetic medicine to convey the level of personalization in their techniques.

The foundations for researching and developing modern aesthetic medicine are based on anatomical data, clinical data and an artistic approach (fig. 1).

With regard to anatomical data, the latest research enables us to pinpoint the various planes in which hyaluronic acid fillers are injected, while also making a very clear distinction between the dynamic and static facial zones. This approach enables the practitioner to target injections to static zones, or to choose more superficial injections for the dynamic facial zones so that the products yield a perfectly natural outcome when subject to the dynamic movement of the face [1, 3] (fig. 2).

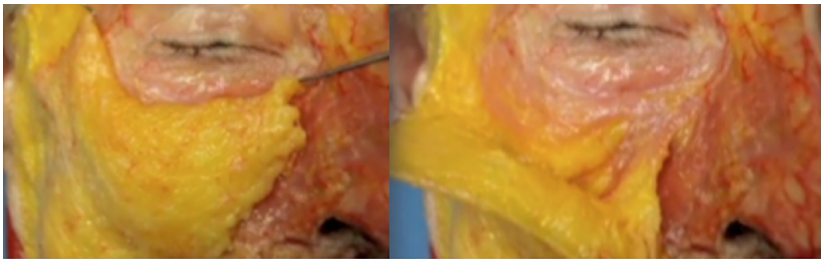


Fig. 2: Hyaluronic acid fillers must be injected differently depending on whether the target sites are static, deep fat pads or dynamic, superficial fat pads.

Furthermore, this anatomical data enables us to better identify the facial danger zones, notably vascular regions where the embolization risk must be carefully identified and controlled. Thus, this anatomical research allows us to define which injection zones are safe and which ones present a risk [4] (fig. 3).

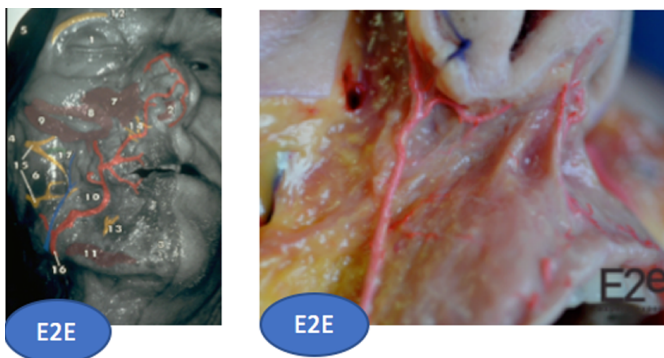


Fig. 3: Anatomical dissections and vascular network with branches of the facial artery (Source: Expert2 expert).

Turning now to the clinical approach, practitioners have noted that patients do not consult them because they want to change their appearance. Instead, patients wish to

feel more comfortable in their own bodies, and they want the image they portray to match their own idea of a positive expression. In fact, for every patient, there is quite probably a period of time that could be described as the “benchmark period”, corresponding to the period when the face just begins to suffer from the negative effects of time. This is in fact the precise period where the patient would like to halt the negative effects of ageing. Thus, the treatment will be focused on restoring a positive image that corresponds to the “benchmark” image for each of us [3].

The final segment of this threefold approach is the artistic aspect. Like a sculptor, the aesthetic doctor is now able to better analyze a face and to intervene on the junction between the various zones of the face for both static positions and dynamic facial expressions. As such, the practitioner will be perfectly qualified and able to fill in a wrinkle or a deep line – which might be the initial reason for the patient to consult – but also better advise the patient in order to balance out the face, harmonizing its various portions [3].

Notions of medical profiloplasty have also appeared alongside these artistic physiological analyses. By intervening on one facial zone, a practitioner can produce an effect on a separate zone. For instance, a treatment targeting the junction zones of the nose – the central part of the profile zone – can create the impression that the nose is longer or shorter, whereas the nose itself has not been treated [5-7]. Likewise, a treatment targeting the projection of the cheekbones or the nasolabial junction will have an impact on the relative dimensions of the nose. The artistic analysis thus aims to be a somewhat more global analysis of the face, with a broader perspective in making recommendations, and the physician will ideally be able to advise the patient on how to achieve a natural outcome (fig. 4).

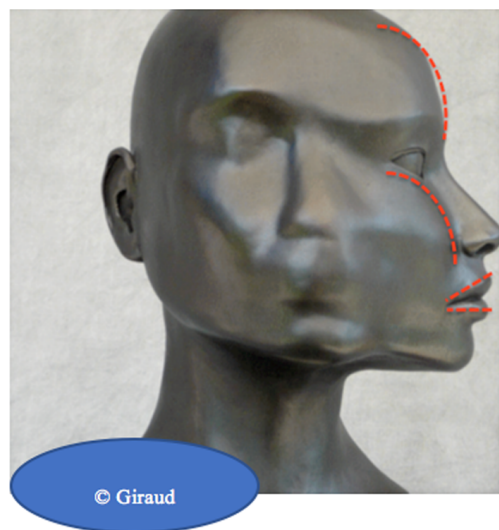


Fig. 4: Profiloplasty and relative interpretation of volumes.

“LESS IS MORE”: THE CONCEPT

The “Less is More” concept is the fruit of the abovementioned threefold approach. It is actually based on optimizing the use of hyaluronic acid fillers in order to achieve an optimal outcome with a limited number of syringes [1]. This approach has three advantages. It enables us to be more effective, more natural, and safer. As an added bonus, it is less costly for the patient [1, 8]. “Less is More” focuses on erasing negative facial expressions and restoring bright facial volumes and contours [1, 9, 10]. Volume restoration with a facial filler should not be considered simply the installation of a product, but rather, the establishment of a harmonious relationship between a product and its surrounding tissue [1].

a) Treating negative static facial expressions

This approach aims to erase, with great precision and accuracy, the zones that catch light negatively because they create shadows [3]. This specific analysis enables us to define the regions where an extremely targeted treatment can achieve a significant improvement with a small quantity of filler (fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Negative facial expressions (shadows and deep lines).

These shadows on the face are quite familiar to professional photographers, who know how to work with great precision on the areas that can be highlighted, or conversely on the areas that should be avoided in a particular face. We have chosen to classify most of these negative facial expression zones together as “negative vertical lines”.

These negative vertical facial lines are vertical paramedian lines in which under-eye bags, nasolabial folds, laugh lines, marionette lines and the mandibular notch develop. Careful analysis of each negative vertical band

reveals small triangles of light, as well as small triangles of shadow, which can be treated with a small quantity of filler to restore a positive shape to the patient being treated (fig. 6).



Fig. 6: Negative vertical facial lines (author’s own description).

b) Treatment of volumes

This volume treatment actually derives from the recent modern concepts of facial contouring, i.e. facial makeup techniques that highlight specific zones of the face [1, 3]. These highlighted zones and light-reflecting convex zones are areas where the deep structural support is extremely close to the skin surface. With very little filler, we can achieve a very effective volumetry. The light-reflecting zones, which are the key facial areas that enable us to apply the “Less is More” concept, are the nasal region and in particular the Sheen lines (the most important light-reflecting part of the nose), the jaw area and the labiomandibular fold, the most lateral and prominent part of the cheekbone, and the lateral part of the brow tail, where the orbital edge is more or less sharp. A fundamental principle behind optimizing volume restoration and contouring is to treat all levels of the facial envelope beginning with the establishment of deep structural support [1] (fig. 7).

By filling and restoring the light-reflecting zones and convexity of these four areas, we can re-establish an effective “medical contouring” [1, 3].

These volume-restoring treatment zones, combined with filling of the deep lines and wrinkles that form the negative vertical bands, are at the heart of the “Less is More” concept. With a small quantity of filler, equivalent to two or three syringes, we can achieve extremely attractive outcomes.



Fig. 7: Contouring applied to aesthetic medicine. Key zones that provide structural support for hyaluronic acid fillers.

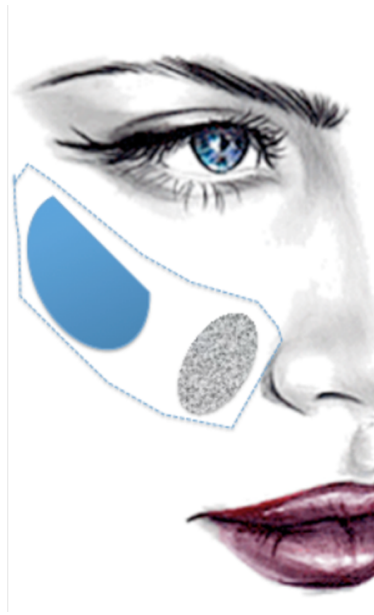


Fig. 8: Contouring applied to aesthetic medicine. Key zones that provide structural support for hyaluronic acid fillers.



SELECTED CLINICAL CASES



Fig. 9: Complete treatment of the face with 2 syringes of hyaluronic acid filler. Midface, superior nasolabial folds, lips, chin (Source: Dr F. Braccini's archives).



Fig. 10: Complete treatment of the face with 3 syringes of hyaluronic acid filler. Nose, midface, chin (Source: Dr F. Braccini's archives).



Fig. 11: Complete treatment of the face with 2 syringes of hyaluronic acid filler.
Nose, superior nasolabial folds, lip contour, chin
(Source: Dr F. Braccini's archives).

CONCLUSION

The “Less is More” concept, as presented in this paper, is the result of careful reflection about technique, artistic approach and safety (i.e. anatomy) applied to the use of hyaluronic acid fillers for the face.

This “Less is More” trend is, ultimately, to use the right quantities of fillers efficiently, in order to achieve a better performance, and to maintain a natural-looking – not artificial – appearance for the patients we treat. Furthermore, using fewer syringes and a smaller quantity of filler also reduces the statistical risk of complications linked to the use of large numbers of syringes.

Lastly, the reduction in the quantity of filler allows patients to access treatment more easily, while limiting the financial burden.

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Adverse Effects:

the doctor must inform the patient that potential adverse effects exist that are related to implantation of these medical devices occurring immediately or with a delay. Among these (non-exhaustive list): inflammatory reactions (redness, oedema, erythema) that may be combined with itching, superficial erosions in the crow's feet area (for ART FILLER Fine Lines) and soreness when pressed may occur after the injection. These reactions may last for up to a week. In a limited number of cases, 1.6% (1/61) of the subjects in the clinical study, slight pain, spontaneous or at palpation can last more than a week, bruising, change of colour or discolouring of skin in the injection area, hardening or nodules in the area of the injection, poor filling effectiveness or poor filling effect, cases of necrosis of the glabella, abscesses, granuloma and immediate or delayed hypersensitivity have been reported after injections of hyaluronic acid and/or lidocaine. These potential risks should be taken into account, the patient must inform the doctor as soon as possible if an inflammatory reaction persists for longer than one week or if any other side effects occur. The doctor will treat these appropriately, the distributor and/or manufacturer must be alerted to any other adverse effect related to the injection of these medical devices.