



Dr. Michael McCracken of McCracken Eye and Face Institute explains the options in cosmetic eye surgery and rejuvenation with every new patient.

# GOING BAG-LESS



## Popular Treatment Rejuvenates Eyes with Little Downtime

*She'd barely turned 40 when Jodi Urgitus (adjacent page, upper photos) looked in the mirror and gave into the urge: She was going to battle Mother Nature. Forget going down without a fight, she decided. The half-moon-shaped, under-eye bags, which screamed "I'm tired" no matter how rested she was, had to go.*

Despite the bravado of her call to arms, the busy mother of two teenagers could have hugged the plastic surgeon when he said he could give her exactly what she wanted – without surgery. During an office visit that lasted less than a lunch hour, Dr. Michael McCracken minimized those bags for Urgitus – no stitches, no downtime, no problem.

“Overall, it was a piece of cake,” Urgitus, 45, says of her treatment with Restylane®, a popular dermal filler. Approved in the United States in 2003, Restylane® consists of hyaluronic acid, a naturally occurring substance in the skin. Side effects are minimal, and downtime practically nonexistent. “I went to a football game that night,” Urgitus says.

About 1.8 million people, 1.7 million of them women, chose dermal fillers last year, up 3 percent from 2009, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. “Its popularity continues to grow,” Dr. McCracken says of Restylane®, which is his dermal filler of choice for under-eye bags. Using ice or numbing cream and tiny needles, Dr. McCracken injects the hyaluronic acid in problem areas, such as the eye-bag area, or tear trough. Hyaluronic acid, which helps provide fullness and elasticity in the skin, decreases as people age.

“Over time, the tissue that holds the fat in toward the eyeball becomes lax, and it allows the fat to bulge forward,” Dr. McCracken says, noting that the process generally

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becomes noticeable around age 35, although every patient is different. “You get a tear trough underneath the fat bags that pooch forward over time. We fill that in with Restylane®.”

After her visit with Dr. McCracken, whom her eye doctor recommended because he is a board-certified ophthalmologist with a fellowship in eye plastic surgery, Urgitus’ husband said she looked 35. That was three years ago, and she’s had two touch-ups since then. In addition to filling in her tear troughs, Dr. McCracken has used Restylane® to restore cheek volume she lost during the aging process.

“I am really happy,” says Urgitus, whose results from her first treatment lasted 10 months with minimal bruising for a couple of days. “They looked like little spots of dirt, but I could cover them up with makeup and go out. You might have slight swelling, but I’m the only

one who noticed.” Results of her second treatment lasted 14 months with no bruising and little swelling, and she just had another touch-up this summer. “The Restylane® takes effect right away. It’s great.”

About half of his patients have a little bruising, and half have none, Dr. McCracken says. “It’s certainly less than with surgery, and it’s gone within a week.” Another bonus with Restylane®: The naturally-occurring acid can be dissolved with an enzyme.

Urgitus says the procedure is not that uncomfortable. “It feels like a pinprick. Some women do it without numbing cream.” One vial costs \$500 and is all Urgitus ever needed. The price per-vial decreases if more vials are used. Restylane® is also effective for deep wrinkles or folds, such as the lines that can form from the nose to the corners of the mouth (nasolabial folds or laugh lines). As Urgitus discovered, it can also be used to restore age-related volume loss in the cheeks.

Older patients with lots of laxity, or patients with significant changes, might want to consider surgery rather than dermal filler, Dr. McCracken says. But for younger patients, it’s a great option for delaying the downtime and cost of surgery, which Urgitus says she will eventually have (see “Surgical Option”).

Her best advice for patients considering Restylane®: 1) Be prepared to want to try other wrinkle-reducing procedures, as she did, and 2) Have realistic expectations. “They are subtle differences, but you can tell,” she says, adding that’s actually part of what she likes about the minimally-invasive procedure.

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### LOWER LID RESYTLANE INJECTION



BEFORE

AFTER

### UPPER AND LOWER LID BLEPHAROPLASTY



BEFORE

AFTER

### THE PROCEDURE

- Reduces puffiness.
- Provides a smoother, more youthful appearance.
- Takes an hour or less.
- Results in minimal postoperative discomfort.
- Allows normal activity within a week.
- Involves stitches that dissolve in about a week.
- Prohibits makeup and contact use until stitches dissolve.

### SURGICAL OPTION

Lower eyelid surgery, or blepharoplasty, provides a longer-lasting option for that tired, puffy look that comes with aging. The surgery involves making a small, hidden incision to remove or reposition eyelid fat and might also include removal of excess lower lid skin.

For more about the McCracken Eye and Face Institute and the many other procedures performed there, go to [www.mccrackenmd.com](http://www.mccrackenmd.com) or call 720.851.6600.