

## THE TECH-NECK

April 12, 2017



Too much screen time? It's a fine line

Technology has claimed its first anti-ageing victim: the Tech Neck. Horizontal neck rings don't usually become permanently etched around a woman's neck until her late forties. However they are making a premature appearance on the millennial tech addicts, frowning at computer screens and perpetually gazing down at their smartphones causing deep frown lines, creases and 'necklace wrinkles'.

Practitioners are reporting an increasing number of patients in their early 20-30's who request botox to reduce frowning and fillers to pad out emerging lines and creases. Screen use has been named as the key culprit for these premature signs of ageing. The neck area is notoriously difficult to treat as it has less subcutaneous fat tissue than other areas such as the face, making the skin less elastic. As a result, the skin in this delicate zone can become far more wrinkled, saggy, crepey and pigmented than that on our face.

Botox relaxes the muscles (platysmal bands) that pull the jawline down. These cord-like bands running down the neck contract vertically, which scrunches the neck into horizontal lines; the jawline gets dragged down like a concertina. Every time we talk, eat, smile or look down the cords become tighter and thicker. Known as the Nefertiti lift (named after the Egyptian queen much admired for her elegant neck), botox is a fast, non-surgical way to smooth out the entire neck area.

Whilst the Nefertiti Lift uses botox to relax the muscles that pull the face down, the Y Lift uses strategically- placed fillers along the jawline, in front of the ear and in the cheek to subtly lift sagging skin. Over time the fat from our cheeks drops to our jawline, and this shows more on a slim face. This loss of definition along the jawline can appear equally as ageing as fine lines and wrinkles, if not more so. Forget facial exercises – this is a skin issue not a muscle issue. (Our facial muscles get more than enough exercise!). Combined, these two treatments define both the neck and jawline and can delay a face lift. Prevention is always far better than cure.

At Cosmé we understand that results are only as good as the injector. A good practitioner knows when to stop – so you look rested not 'done'. An inexperienced practitioner can easily push all the filler into the subcutaneous fat, which will have no result; or inject too much along the jawline which can look masculine.

Good practitioners also understand that a holistic approach will complement anti-ageing treatments. Don't forget to include your neck in your skin care routine. Because the skin is so much thinner on the neck, with fewer oil glands, it simply can't hold on to as much moisture so becomes dry and crepey. In the morning apply sunblock with antioxidants; in the evening apply a nourishing night cream with AHAs to smooth this crepiness down as far as your décolleté – body lotion doesn't count!

Whether it's hours at the office glaring down at your laptop, or gazing at your iPhone whilst you scroll through endless instagram feeds, posture is key for avoiding the 'Tech-Neck'. Try to keep your mobile devices at eye level and position your laptop at a higher level to avoid heavy creasing of the chin and neck.

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