Our society has had an ongoing obsession with limiting fat in our diets and on our bodies for a number of years. Certainly being overweight may not be healthy or desirable, but fat itself has gotten a bad reputation. Fat cells are important sources of energy in our body, storing it during times of plenty. Unfortunately, we can’t control where it is stored.

Once we reach puberty, the number of fat cells we have remains unchanged throughout our lives. When we gain weight, our fat cells swell. Conversely, they shrink whenever we lose weight. In the face, we not only develop laxity or loosening of tissues as we age, but also lose volume, especially in our central face and cheeks. This gives older people a drawn, haggard sunken appearance that looks tired. Sometimes, the right thing to do is resuspend the droopy loose tissue as in a mid-facelift or facelift. However, often what is needed is adding back some volume where it has been lost.

Fat can be harvested from areas we don’t need it, in the abdomen, flanks or thighs, processed immediately, and then injected into the face where we need it. In our experience, 80% of patients retain some or all of their transplanted fat long-term. These cells live in their new home on the face.
Fat cells that are transplanted as described above also appear to impart beneficial effects on the overlying skin aside from just filling it out. There may be some stem cell like elements that have a capacity to improve skin appearance which we don’t fully understand.

Although there are a lot of options for facial augmentation, both temporary and permanent, fat should always be considered as it is easy to harvest, inject, works well in most people and has minimal potential side effects as it is harvested from the patients own body. Dr. Ducic has published articles and lectured extensively on the use of fat grafting and would welcome the chance to meet with you and personally discuss whether this would be a good option for you.

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