

PATIENT SAFETY · INJECTABLES

After your filler treatment

What is expected in the days after filler, which signs need same-day assessment, which are emergencies, and how to reach the clinic. Keep this sheet where you can find it.

KEY FACTS

Clinic contact	WhatsApp or call +65 8023 7170, Mon–Fri 10am–8pm, Sat 11am–3pm. Post-treatment questions come back to Dr Sin Yong through this line.
Usually expected	Some swelling, redness, tenderness or bruising at the injection sites, settling over the following days.
Same-day signs	Skin turning white (blanching), dusky, purple or mottled skin, or pain that is severe or getting worse.
Emergency signs	Any change in vision, stroke signs, or swelling of the lips, tongue or throat with difficulty breathing: nearest A&E; or call 995.
Outside clinic hours	Urgent signs go to the nearest hospital emergency department. Do not wait for a message reply.
Hyaluronidase	Dissolves hyaluronic acid filler only. No effect on Sculptra, Ellansé or Radiesse.

Contact the clinic the same day if you notice

- Skin turning white over or near the injected area (blanching).
- A dusky, purple, grey or mottled, net-like discolouration of the skin.
- Pain that is severe, or that is getting worse rather than settling in the hours or days after injection.
- These can mean filler is affecting the blood supply (vascular occlusion). They are time-critical: seek medical assessment the same day, whether with this clinic, the clinic that injected you, or another doctor. Do not wait to see whether it improves by the next routine appointment.

Go to the nearest hospital emergency department (A&E;) or call 995 immediately if you notice

- Any change in vision after a filler injection: blurring, loss of vision, double vision, or pain in or around the eye.
- Signs of a stroke: new facial weakness, slurred speech, or weakness of an arm or leg.
- Swelling of the lips, tongue or throat with difficulty breathing.
- Do not travel to the clinic first. The emergency department has the investigations and the other specialities the situation may need.

What is expected after filler

Most of what people notice after treatment is expected: some swelling, redness, tenderness or bruising at the injection points, which settle on their own over the following days. Recovery varies between individuals and between areas; the lips and under-eye area tend to swell more than the cheeks. These are discussed before treatment and set out in the written aftercare you leave with.

In the first 24 to 48 hours

- Avoid strenuous exercise, alcohol, saunas and steam rooms.
- Do not touch, press or massage the treated area unless Dr Sin Yong has specifically instructed you to.
- Keep make-up off fresh injection points until they have closed, and keep your hands clean around the area.
- Sleep with your head slightly raised if the area is swollen; a cool (not frozen) compress may be used briefly if advised.
- Follow the written aftercare for your specific treatment; it lists what is expected, what to avoid and which signs to report.

Problems that can appear later

A firm nodule months or years after filler can be an inflammatory reaction such as a biofilm or granuloma. It needs examination rather than massage or guesswork. Any lump that is painful, growing or changing the colour of the skin should be assessed promptly.

Signs that filler may have moved

Filler migration is product found outside the area or tissue plane where it was injected. It develops gradually and is rarely urgent, but it is worth a review. It is usually noticed as a change in shape at the edge of a treated area rather than a lump in the middle of it:

- A soft shelf or fullness above the lip border, where the crisp edge of the lip has blurred into the skin above it.
- Under-eye puffiness that is still there in the afternoon, sometimes with a faint blue tint under thin skin (the Tyndall effect, caused by hyaluronic acid sitting close to the surface).
- A face that looks wider or heavier than before, as if volume has slid lower than where it was placed.
- A bump away from the original injection point, or photographs that no longer look like you.

Not every fullness is migrated filler: the under-eye area swells for many reasons, hyaluronic acid can hold water, and ageing changes the same areas. The cause is established by examination, and high-frequency ultrasound can show where filler sits and often what type it is.

“Migrated filler is a location problem before it is a volume problem.”

Dr Sin Yong

If you suspect your filler has moved, adding more product elsewhere to balance it is the step most likely to make things harder. The useful first step is an examination that establishes what is in your face and where. Sometimes the right answer is to dissolve nothing yet.

What hyaluronidase can and cannot do

For hyaluronic acid (HA) filler, the doctor may use hyaluronidase, an enzyme that breaks down the HA gel so the body can clear it. It is kept on hand where HA filler is injected; published guidelines describe its urgent use when vascular occlusion from HA filler is suspected, and its planned use for filler that is misplaced or excessive. Firmer, highly cross-linked gels take longer to respond, which is one reason planned dissolving is often staged with a review in between.

Hyaluronidase acts only on hyaluronic acid. It has no effect on Sculptra (poly-L-lactic acid), Ellansé (polycaprolactone) or Radiesse (calcium hydroxylapatite); concerns after those products are assessed and managed case by case. Hyaluronidase is a medical treatment with its own considerations, including possible allergic reaction, which is screened for, and it also acts on the hyaluronic acid naturally present in tissue. Whether it is used, and how much, is decided after examination.

“Hyaluronidase dissolves hyaluronic acid and nothing else. If someone offers to dissolve Ellansé or Sculptra, they are describing something that does not happen.”

Dr Sin Yong

If you were treated somewhere else

Warning signs follow the same rules wherever you were treated: same-day assessment for blanching, mottling or worsening pain, and the emergency department for any vision change. Contact the clinic that treated you, or another doctor, rather than waiting for the original clinic to reopen. For anything that is not urgent, an assessment can be arranged; if you do not know what was injected, or it was done overseas, the assessment still proceeds.

When you message the clinic, tell us

- What was done and when: the product name, the areas treated and the date, as far as you know them.
- What you are noticing, and whether it is settling, unchanged or getting worse.
- A clear description helps, but it does not replace being seen when being seen is needed. You will be told plainly whether it sounds expected, whether it needs to be seen, and how soon.

How follow-up works

Every treatment is performed personally by Dr Sin Yong. Injectable treatments are reviewed once the product has settled, and written aftercare is given for each treatment. Where a problem needs care outside aesthetic practice, such as skin disease that needs a dermatologist or something that needs plastic surgery, Dr Sin Yong refers rather than manages it alone.

NEXT STEP

Consultations with Dr Sin Yong are by appointment at Orchard Road, Singapore. WhatsApp a short note on your concern to +65 8023 7170 (replies within clinic hours: Mon–Fri 10am–8pm, Sat 11am–3pm). Every assessment is carried out personally; options explained include waiting, no treatment or referral.

SOURCES

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- Wollina U, Goldman A. Filler migration after facial injection: a narrative review. Cosmetics, 2023.
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