

Celebrities rush 'pillow face' injections in their vain quest to defer middle age

What's new pussycat? Stars look so 'feline'

By health writer
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IN their eternal bid to slow the signs of ageing, celebrities are driving a trend dubbed the "pillow face".

Not just content with padding their faces with injections such as Botox to smooth out wrinkles, stars are plumping up their cheeks to produce a more rounded face.

From Kylie Minogue to Catherine Zeta-Jones, Madonna and Daryl Hannah, stars in — and approaching — middle age are being injected with "dermal fillers" to lift the area under their eyes, fill out their cheeks and foreheads and even smooth out their jawline.

The face traditionally hollows out from about the age of 40, and more women are turning to the non-surgical procedure, which delivers an instant result with no recovery time.

The popularity of the "pillow face" in Hollywood is encouraging Australian women to consider face "volumisers". Cosmetic surgeons say inquiries about the procedure have soared in the past year.

But cosmetic surgeon Kourosh Tavakoli said some A-listers were over-using the products, losing character in their faces and looking more feline and puffy with every injection.

"Kylie Minogue is in the early stage of that trend. She's heading that way if she doesn't stop, but she hasn't got that freakish, feline look yet," Dr Tavakoli said.

"She's only 40 — you can see that product accumulation will start now and, by the time she's 47 or 48, she's going to start looking feline. Her sister is heading that way, too."

Australasian Academy of Facial Plastic Surgery president Jayson Oates also singled out Kylie and Dannii Minogue.

"I often think of the Minogue sisters: massive, round, full cheeks, but really thin and obviously doing a lot to keep thin," Dr Oates said.

"But you can't have those massive cheeks and skinny waists when you're 40 (without intervention)."

Dr Oates said he often explained to patients that, with age, the face deflates: "It's like the difference between a sultana and a grape."

Dr Tavakoli reported a 100 per cent increase in demand for injectables at his Sydney practice.

Dr Oates said that in Perth, inquiries had surged by 50 per cent in a year.

"We have a love affair with American culture, and celebrity drives that culture," Dr Tavakoli said.

"Secondly, Australians are a bit scared of surgery — more so than the Americans and Europeans — so we tend to use non-surgical means of facial enhancement.

"Thirdly, we live in a country that has a harsh environment, so there's definitely premature ageing in the Australian population."

Sydney cosmetic surgeon Anoop Rastogi said Australia's harsh sun played a big role in the boom.

"(Volumising) is non-invasive; they feel it's sensible, reasonable and safe. We do age much faster here, and women don't want to," he said.

Cosmetic Physicians Society of Australasia president Mary Dingley said fillers could provide a better result than facelifts and were much cheaper.

"With traditional facelifts, you're

not actually adding any volume — you're just tightening the loose skin over a facial skeleton, so you can end up with this skeletal, wind-tunnel look," Dr Dingley said.

"They don't have as much loose skin, but it's not a particularly attractive or younger look.

"As we get older, we put on volume on our bottoms, but we lose it from our faces.

"With these new techniques, we can put volume back into the face and it does tend to give an instant, softer, younger-looking face."

Under local anaesthetic, patients are injected with "dermal filler" as deep as the bone structure.

Each 1ml syringe of the gel costs about \$1000. Some patients require several syringes, depending on the facial area involved.

The effects can last for 18 months, but patients often get top-ups before then. The gel eventually dissolves, but could stimulate body tissues to leave a residual improvement, Dr Dingley said.

Dr Oates said "dermal fillers" were more predictable than fat transfers from other parts of the body.



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PAMELA ANDERSON



LISA MARIE PRESLEY



ZETA-JONES



MADONNA



Crows feet and forehead lines frozen with Botox

Upper and lower cheek augmentation. Dermal fillers have been used excessively rounding up the face

Lip augmentation using dermal fillers

KYLIE

Source: Dr Kourosh Tavakoli, Cosmetic plastic surgeon