

Dr.Mohan Thomas - Cosmetic Surgeon



Does your hubby smoke? Get ready for wrinkles

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Ditch your smoker friends. Doctors are seeing more patients with premature skin ageing, owing to passive smoke

If you are suffering from pigmentation, dullness and premature skin ageing despite seeing a doctor and eliminating every cause you could possibly think of, maybe the answer lies in one you haven't considered yet-- passive smoking.

City doctors are seeing an increasing number of women with signs of premature ageing, as a result of passive smoking. "A second hand smoker inhales cigarette smoke which contains nicotine and carbon monoxide. This enters the blood stream and reduces the oxygen in the body. The quantity of oxygen reaching the skin is depleted, making it vulnerable to wrinkling and pigmentation.

There are more than 70 ingredients in cigarette smoke that have adverse effects on the body. At least three of the 20 people coming to my clinic every day for facelifts have a history of passive smoking," says Dr Apratim Goel, cosmetic dermatologist, Cutis Skin Studio, Bandra and Girgaum.

It's been proven that smokers are more prone to skin ageing owing to the continuous intake of nicotine. Many usually sport wrinkles around the mouth and eyes.

Experts believe excess nicotine prevents the skin from absorbing Vitamin C, which plays an important role in maintaining collagen levels (group of proteins responsible for elasticity) in the skin. "Owing to excess nicotine, the body loses its ability to absorb Vitamin C from fruits and vegetables," Dr Goel adds.

Dr Mohan Thomas, Senior Cosmetic Surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital, echoes Dr Goel's claim. "Currently, there is no documented evidence to prove that secondhand smoking is responsible for skin trouble, but it is a scientific fact that smokers cannot undergo cosmetic procedures because of the nicotine in their

body. We ask them to discontinue smoking for at least a month, after which we measure the nicotine levels in their body. Only if they have resisted smoking can we perform surgery. Cosmetic procedures have a high failure rate among smokers."

Experts suggest that the damage from passive smoking is more among women. "Women coming to me for various cosmetic procedures are middle-aged. Many women tell me their husbands are chain smokers. That's when we must be honest with them and tell them we cannot promise desired results from the cosmetic procedure," says Dr Goel.

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