

Mumbai's got a 'fat bank'!

People in the city are freezing fat cells to fill out wrinkles at a later age

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Move over cash and jewellery, an increasing number of people are now storing their body fat for future use. The stored fat, when injected into one's face at an older age, fills laughter lines and wrinkles. The phenomenon, a huge hit abroad, is slowly

finding takers in Mumbai. "It's a permanent filler and can be an alternative to similar synthetic products. While the latter needs to be done again and again, injecting fat has to be done maximum three times — with a six-month gap between each sitting — for permanency. So, it's creating a lot of buzz," says cosmetic surgeon Dr Aamod Rao.

How it works

The basic premise is simple: Doctors isolate the good fat — that is, fat rich in stem cells — from a person's body and store it in a dedicated refrigeration unit (called fat bank). When you're ready to re-inject the stored fat, your doctor notifies the bank and requests for the appropriate amount.

Explains cosmetologist Dr Rashmi Shetty, "Stem cells are biological cells that have the ability to grow into a muscle, cardiac tissue, connective tissue... anything. The fat is taken out during major liposuction, out of special areas like stomach, thighs, but-



Freeze your fat for a later day

tocks etc. It is then shipped to centres where experts take out the embryonic stem cells and then process and store it in liquid-nitrogen vapour."

Is it safe? Yes, says cosmetic surgeon Dr Mohan Thomas. "One just has to ensure that the fat is aspirated in a sterile manner, bar-coded and stored. Also, there should not be any blood-borne infection. The container should be labelled with the patient's name and the freezer should not be opened and exposed to outside temperature." He adds, "The percentage of people asking for it has risen tremendously. Youthfulness is about the presence of volume, and loss of volume leads to an aged, deflated look. People are keen to go for it, as it's the most natural tissue that you can use. Moreover, since it is your own fat, there is no risk."

Society is game

Actress Isha Koppikhar, who is against botox and other chemical cosmetic procedures, is keen to try out a bank in future. "This is an amazing idea! We all want to look young and hot always. I'd much rather use my own tissue than any artificial regimens. The ability of stem cells is well known. It could be a great replacement for chemical therapies," she says.