



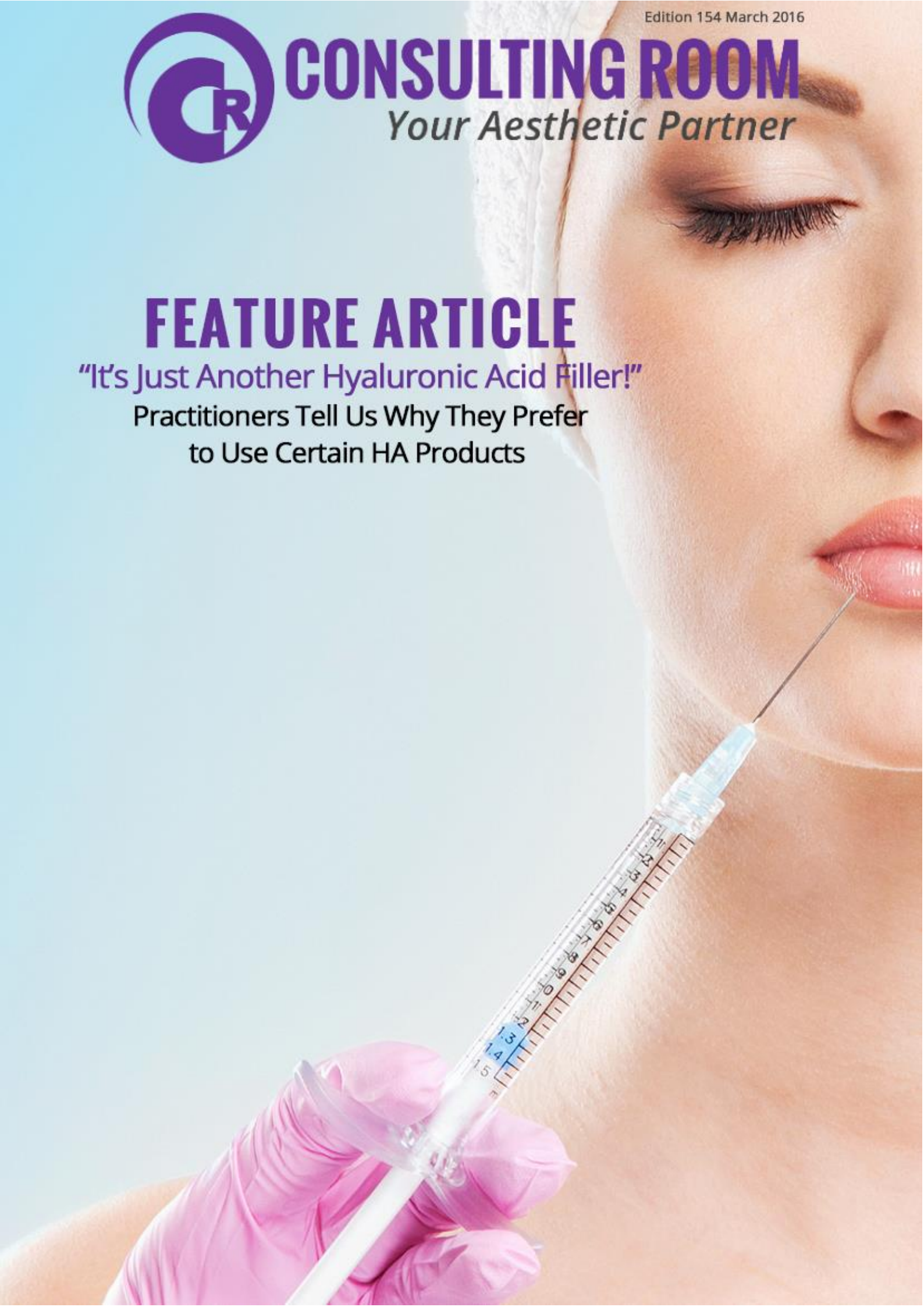
CONSULTING ROOM

Your Aesthetic Partner

FEATURE ARTICLE

"It's Just Another Hyaluronic Acid Filler!"

Practitioners Tell Us Why They Prefer
to Use Certain HA Products



Feature Article

“It’s Just Another Hyaluronic Acid Filler!” Practitioners Tell Us Why They Prefer to Use Certain HA Products

Hyaluronic acid (HA) dermal fillers are not new, as we all know. Since their introduction into the aesthetic practitioner’s arsenal in the mid-1990s, (mostly thanks to Q-Med and the Restylane brand), they have kicked collagen to the proverbial kerb and dominated the marketplace for temporary, injectable dermal fillers or cosmetic implantable devices. This is mostly thanks to their mimicry of a natural skin component and their temporary nature.

Unlike in America, dermal fillers, and specifically HA fillers, are classed as non-prescription medical devices rather than medicines, within Europe. This of course means that regulation surrounding both their commercialisation and use is somewhat laxer on our shores. To that end, the simple requirement for a CE mark in order to sell a HA dermal filler into the European marketplace, means that estimates of the number of products being sold ranges widely from around 100 to 300+ different product variants and brands. I think it’s probably fair to say that the answer is that nobody really knows, or keeps count of exactly how many dermal filler brands/products are floating around the supply chain these days. This does however make it something of a minefield when choosing which dermal filler brand to plump for.



But of course, this doesn’t mean all doom and gloom, far from it in some ways.

America may be a world power, they may have regulations that appear better, or more stringent than those imposed on our sector by Europe, but as a regular attendee at FACE conferences over the years I have heard many an American Dermatologist state that they are little bit jealous of their friends in Blightly who get to ‘play’ with a broader variety of HA products than they do. Currently the [U.S. FDA](#) only approves five distinct HA filler brands (Juvéderm, Restylane, Belotero, Prevelle and Eleveess) with two others no longer commercially available (Hylaform and Captique). Not all variants within each brand are approved for use either.

Similarly, the U.S.A. has different rules on some of the core aspects of manufacture. For example, BDDE (butanediol diglycidyl ether) is very commonly used as the cross-linking agent, to a greater or lesser degree, in the manufacture of HA fillers. This careful balancing act, alongside the use of other components, determines the optimum product duration, implant performance and any issues with biocompatibility. The FDA has something to say about the levels of residual BDDE present in HA fillers and these standards, which need to be met for their approval to commercialise the product, can be set much lower than accepted by other regulators around the globe. Safety and perception is clearly at the heart of this, the lower the levels are, the safer it is, and the more ‘natural’ the product is perceived to be.

It’s therefore fair to say that aesthetic practitioners in the UK have the jump on their American cousins, with a much wider choice available to them. However, making a ‘good’ choice is still paramount. I don’t think I’d be speaking out of turn if I said that replying to that email that you got about cheap HA in the post from the Far East was a wise choice. Sticking with those brands from well-established pharmaceutical companies and recognised distributors, which can demonstrate clinical safety and efficacy, as well as best practice production standards is certainly a good start on the road to weeding out the hundreds of products on offer. Of course, no one is saying that you need to, or must, stick to one brand and one brand alone always; I think that is quite rare in practice.

Speaking to Consulting Room Adviser, plastic surgeon, Dr. Niroshan Sivathasan, he told us; “*Whilst there are, quite literally, 100s of types of filler, I strongly opine that an experienced practitioner only requires around just 6-8 types (all with differing rheological properties, affecting, for example, required extrusion force, cohesivity, etc.) in one’s armamentarium, as the skill of filler-use is more to do with objective patient assessment and artistic*

execution, i.e. location, depth and style of placement. Injectors that are deft with creating natural looks have come to appreciate that there should be gentle transitions to respect light and dark (shadow) areas and that over-volumisation is inappropriate.

Practitioners should understand that ageing involves the loss of harmony between hard and soft tissues, and this may be consequential to the following: tissue atrophy (volume-loss is, for instance, more obvious in the submalar and temple regions); tissue laxity (causing 'true' descent, as opposed to an illusion by change in the proportions); loss of skin texture and patina. So, to correct these, the filler(s) that are chosen should be with respect to soft tissue location and quality, in addition to the filler's rheology, and lifting requirements. To address the former, a 'skin booster', such as Restylane Vital or Princess Rich, should be chosen – this class of filler is underused, and I am guilty of this, also, although this lack of widespread-usage may be due to patients only seeing very short-term effects per intervention. One must remember that patients usually demand significant tangible differences, and that long-term dermal integration of HA-based fillers requires precise scrutiny and much patience whilst further ageing is occurring.

Essentially, the choice of filler may be whittled down to the requirement for focal structural support vs. moulding-/shaping- need."

Similarly, as well as the composition and characteristics of the HA filler itself, one may also be drawn by the delivery options – this may be limited to the choice between needle and cannula, or as we are seeing with more and more of the products available, smart needles or pen type applicators which can deliver specific doses for specific techniques (e.g., linear or bolus) are rapidly being introduced as proprietary systems with certain brands. Yet more attempts, alongside the addition of lidocaine and the antioxidant mannitol to differentiate and give an HA product a USP over its competition, to remove the "just another HA" stigma. But it's not just all about trend, the decision on the delivery method and technique for your HA product is a serious consideration.

"A competent practitioner should know when and why to use cannulae and needles. Whilst it was en-vogue to use cannulae around seven years ago, I feel that needles have seen a resurgence in more recent years because practitioners have become less susceptible to market fads and because of wider recognition that needles are superior to cannulae for certain tasks (e.g., preperiosteal placement of boli) and treatments can be effected very efficaciously with them. Of course, cannulae allow for more consistent placement of threads-of-filler, and are much better to use than needles for some requirements. They also cause less bruising, which, for instance, may be particularly advantageous when correcting the tear trough. It is incorrect to think that intravascular embarrassment cannot occur with cannulae; basic physics suggests, by virtue of pressure equals force divided by area, that small gauge cannulae may puncture vessels, leading to intrinsic intravascular occlusion if filler is injected at that point."; concluded Dr. Sivathasan.

I prefer to use the HA filler brand...

Learning about the properties and characteristics of the primary HA fillers available in the UK marketplace is pretty simple, whether it's reading a corporate website or pamphlet or listening to sale reps at trade shows and training events, but getting that hands-on user feedback can often be hard to come by. It's not like there are pages of reviews, Amazon style, for you to trawl through to understand how long-term users got on with the nuances of each brand. To that end, at the Consulting Room, we asked a handful of practitioners who are firm fans of a particular brand. Any declarations in relation to being KOLs are also declared, but I hope you will enjoy the opinions that follow.

Belotero

We have already met Dr. Niro in this article, who has given us his broad opinion on HA fillers, but we pinned him down for just a little more information!

Dr. Nirosan Sivathasan is a plastic surgeon, trained in the UK, who now practices in aesthetic, cosmetic and reconstructive surgery and aesthetic medicine in Sydney, Australia. He is a senior trainer in cosmetic injectables.

He told us why Belotero, from Merz, is his preferred HA dermal filler brand.

"I have extensively used the fillers produced by Allergan, Croma, Galderma, Laboratoires Teoxane, Merz, and Sinclair IS Pharma, and this has allowed me to competently decide which products work best in my hands. Indeed, I believe that all junior practitioners, whether medical or paramedical (dentists and nurses), should be exposed to using fillers from different ranges.

I am a proponent of monophasic fillers (which exhibit more predictable breakdown and less migration), and I particularly like the Belotero range by Merz, the Vycross family by Juvéderm (especially Volbella), and the Princess range by Croma. Belotero Balance is outstanding for periorbital use, particularly in the immediately subcutaneous plane – I do not inject deep to the orbicularis oculi when medial to the pupillary axis.

With regard to Galderma's offerings, I have found that Emervel Lip has the appropriate rheological properties to satisfy the demands of today's 'typical' young women wanting a specific 'type of lip', and Restylane Perlane (which may be used in many areas and has multiple applications) has advantages owing to its relatively minimal hydrophilicity. I think that Restylane Sub-Q has great lifting properties secondary to its high G', but it should be placed deeply in order to mitigate against its small tendency to react and form granulomata. I no longer use Restylane as I feel it is 'old' technology, is biphasic, and I cannot see any advantages or U.S.Ps. conferred by it.



If I had to choose just one brand to work with, I would select the Belotero family by Merz as I believe that I have received the best clinical outcomes with this range of HA filler.

This range of filler has just enough offerings that vary in viscosity, cohesion, and lifting capacity, and has not flooded the market with an excessive number of products with intangible differences (which Galderma is guilty of).

Whilst I spend the lion's share of my consultations on education, and am blessed to have a demographic of

patient that is relatively price-insensitive, if the available budget were limited, then the Princess range by Croma hits that 'sweet spot'. Croma's syringes are also user-friendly with regard to ease of changing needles and being much less likely to crack when doing so (as they are made of glass and not flimsy plastic).

I should also add that the relationship that I have with my patients is all about science and medical experience-guided care; the patient is predominantly paying for my expertise and only subsequently for the product being used. Accordingly, I have found, without exception, that my patients have always allowed me to select that filler for use, and there has never been a discussion about celebrity-endorsed products – the latter being intelligent marketing to the consumer by the pharmaceutical firms, but with zero effect on my purchasing- and alignment-decisions."

Dermafill

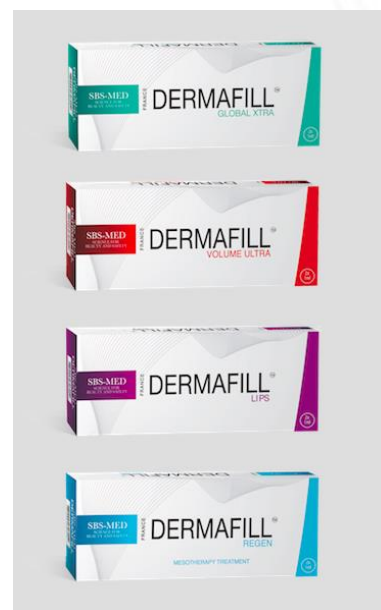
Samantha Gustard is an independent nurse prescriber and owner of Simply Aesthetics in Durham. She has been practicing non-surgical facial aesthetic treatments for 7 years.

She told us why Dermafill, a Canadian manufactured product (distributed in the UK by Breit Aesthetics) is her preferred HA dermal filler brand.

"DERMAFILL is a range of HA products that exceed my clinical expectations, both in terms of safety and efficacy, as well as performance, durability and optimal aesthetic result. Having used it since it's UK launch 12 months ago, it continues to stand out as my product of choice.

The DERMAFILL range is presented as 4 products, each specific to the indications being treated: DERMAFILL Global Xtra - for fine lines and wrinkles, DERMAFILL Volume Ultra - for the correction of deep wrinkles and restoration of facial volume, DERMAFILL Lips - to redraw the lip contour and enhance volume and DERMAFILL Regen - for optimal hydration of cutaneous skin tissue.

DERMAFILL has become my first line injectable HA. My clients are impressed with the aesthetic result and longer term consistency of the product(s). Finding a great product can often be difficult when few companies dominate the market. My clients rely on me to search through new innovations to find the very best products available, rather than sit behind the companies who constrain choices by bundling toxins and fillers together. I have good experience with the Juvéderm, Boletero and Restylane range of products and have researched several others.



I am an independent professional who uses these products in my daily aesthetic practice. I am not a paid for voice nor consultant who speaks or trains or act as a key opinion leader for the company. I have used DERMAFILL as my first choice product from within a few months of it being available in the UK. I am consistently impressed by its advantages over the mainstream product offerings and the support I have received has been commendable. In return for their efforts the company ask that their practitioners share their treatment successes with their professional industry colleagues. I find this very fair, and as with many other DERMAFILL users I am supportive of this honourable approach to sharing best practices.

This monophasic product arrives as a three-dimensional pure gel made of very strong chains of HA making it very easy to inject, allowing precise tissue placement without compromising tissue integration or G-Prime characteristic whichever technique is employed. It is remarkable that each of the range of DERMAFILL products is so well suited to its targeted indication. DERMAFILL is remarkably easy to master. Techniques taught with competing brands (e.g., The 8 Point lift, MD Codes and other facial contouring techniques) easily transfer to the DERMAFILL range. The 8-point lift can be easily mastered with DERMAFILL Volume, and the Lip product volumises and structures Lips perfectly. For the rest, I find the Global product works well in most other indications I treat. Durability has been shown to be 6-9 Months, 9-12 Months and patient satisfaction in my clinic has been 100%.

As an established aesthetic clinic, we have a broad patient group, DERMAFILL provides me with a good range of products to meet the needs of my injectable clients, both young and old, independent of ethnicity or past HA experience.

Due to the manufacturing process, each product within the range is created independently. So rather than just considering levels of HA mg/ml, DERMAFILL's Volume/Global/ Lips structure is bespoke manufactured for the specific indications it is targeted for. As an injector you get used to this as soon as you start using it and realise why it's such a better offering than the usual HAs that have dominated in recent years.

The product range is refreshingly easy to inject. Extrusion force is well balanced due to the particle configuration and its pairing with a premium glass syringe. Feeling for tissue integration is remarkably satisfying and DERMAFILL gives confidence to both injector and patient instantly.

DERMAFILL does not suffer the typical post injection swelling nor follow the complication profile of traditional HA fillers as its BDDE levels are minimised and its HA is composed from a purified manufacturing source. DERMAFILL Lip really injects like butter, integrating within the soft tissue without creating excessive swelling or disturbance. I have had no issues with any of the treatments that I have performed with this product range. As with most HA based products, they can be reversed, if the need should ever arise and clinical support is easy to access.

It is important to realize that DERMAFILL is the first of a new 4th generation of safer, and more effective pure, monophasic injectable dermal fillers with very low level BDDE. Each product's three dimensional manufacturing process is unique, this generation of HA no longer relies on molecular size to govern durability or volumisation profiles.

Well known to be a premium priced product across Europe, Breit Aesthetics has intelligently positioned DERMAFILL in the UK market typically at a 30% saving over its major competitors. This allows flexibility in pricing for both new and existing clients whilst supporting a fairer revenue structure for the aesthetic practitioners' business model. This is a real plus for the industry and has clear advantages."

Emervel

Dr. Ravi Jain is an aesthetic physician who has been practicing in medical aesthetics for approximately ten years from his Riverbanks Clinic in Harpenden and London. Ravi is a brand ambassador, key opinion leader and trainer for Galderma.

He told us why Emervel, from Galderma, has been his preferred HA dermal filler brand since 2012.

"I find it gives me the best qualities of the best fillers in one product line. It is suitable for all patient types. I have experience of using Restylane and Perlane (including Skinboosters), Teosyal, Juvéderm, Radiesse and Sculptra. I don't necessarily use it by default, but it is used in 95% of my patients. I always assess each patient individually and choose the best matched product. I use Emervel for all indications except skin hydration; I use Restylane Vital for skinboosting. Cannulae are used in the majority of patients but I do use sharp needles as well.



Emervel is a sophisticated range of soft fillers with a unique technology, designed to match the individual treatment experiences and outcomes you are looking for. Galderma have called it "Optimal Balance Technology" and it offers you a variety of calibration and cross-linking levels around a fixed HA concentration of 20mg/mL for safety and longevity. It offers 4 degrees of cross-linking for 4 degrees of resistance to deformation, and 3 degrees of gel particle calibration for 3 depths of injection. The range comprises 5 varieties: Touch, Classic, Lip, Deep and Volume. All except Touch, come with lidocaine.

Emervel integrates smoothly depending on tissue quality and characteristics, which match specific depths of

injection. My patients love how the product integrates into their face and very quickly feels entirely natural delivering natural results.

Emervel stands head to head with the market leaders. In two, split-face, randomised and evaluator-blinded comparison studies Emervel showed comparable safety profiles and non-inferiority to Restylane.

The Emervel product range comes with specially designed ergonomic syringes. Emervel syringes are supplied with Ultra-thin Wall needles. The larger inner diameter offers a low extrusion force and injection comfort. The double bevelled tip and silicone coating provides easy skin penetration and patient comfort. The syringes also fit most cannula brands on the market and I have used them with the PixL and TSK products.

Emervel Touch, Classic and lips each come in a 1ml syringe and extrude through 30 Gauge needles. Emervel Deep a 1ml syringe and 27 Gauge needle and Emervel Volume both 1ml and 2ml syringes using a 23 Gauge needle.

Because Emervel uses Optimal Balance Technology it has no added free HA. 100% of Emervel is available for filling. It degrades evenly over time. Oedema is minimal on injection. In Cartier H et al, 2013 Emervel was associated with minimal swelling.

Emervel lip offers long-lasting softness, improved lip fullness with high patient satisfaction. 72.7% fullness is maintained 6 months after treatment. I also carried out an audit on my patients and achieved very similar results.

Emervel shows a lasting effect in the mid-face area, with a long lasting effect of up to 18 months. I also carried out an audit on my patients and achieved very similar results. So it is reassuring to see official study results being duplicated in practice.

Using Emervel I have been able to develop the 3 Layer Lip Technique to treat lips using Emervel Classic for the more conservative patient and Emervel Lip for the routine lip patient. Also, my R-Lift generally uses Emervel Volume to treat temples, mid face and lower face from 3 points.

We audit our work every year. Our patients reported higher satisfaction rates with Emervel Lip and Volume compared to any other product we have used in the past. We have not had a single nodule, DTH reaction or granuloma with any of the Emervel range in 4 years. (Touch wood!)"

Juvéderm

Dr. David Eccleston is an aesthetic physician with a specialist interest in Cosmetic Dermatology. He is also an Advisor to Consulting Room and has been practicing in medical aesthetics for over 20 years, more recently at his clinic MediZen in Sutton Coldfield. He is a member of the *UK Allergan Medical Institute Faculty*, and has been teaching and training on the product range both nationally and internationally for 5 years.

He told us why Juvéderm (Vycross), from Allergan, is his preferred HA dermal filler brand. He has been using the range since the launch of Voluma in 2009, and the subsequent launches of Volbella and Volift to complete the range.

"I have trialled at least 6 or 7 other main brands of HA, but I like Juvéderm because of the ease of injection, the smooth, long-lasting results, the minimal swelling, patient satisfaction and the excellent company support. It is my default choice, unless patients request other products for budgetary reasons. I will always advise the use of the Juvéderm Vycross range.

I use both cannulas and needles, depending on the site of injection and what I am trying to achieve with the product. The product range allows me to treat a wide range of indications. I use Voluma for reshaping cheeks, chin and temples, Volift for mid-face, lips and forehead, and Volbella for tear trough and lips.

The product range combines high cohesivity with low extrusion forces, allowing smooth product delivery and predictable tissue distribution. Due to the use of predominantly short-chain HA, the chains lie close together, allowing more effective cross-linking with BDDE, minimising swelling after injection and maximising duration of effect. The addition of lidocaine means injection is much more comfortable for the patient. Voluma, Volift and Volbella allow me to treat all facial areas with predictable results and therefore with increased confidence.



Studies have shown Voluma lasting 18 months or more, Volift 15+ and Volbella 12+ months. A study I performed comparing Volbella to Restylane in the lips showed superior longevity, less pain on injection and higher patient satisfaction for Volbella.

The ease of injection means less trauma for the patient, as smaller needles can be used. There is therefore less bruising, pain and swelling. I have seen no side effects in my patients, other than occasional bruising and short-lived swelling. In my opinion, this product range is suitable for all patient types and ethnicities and both sexes. The product range allows me to achieve almost surgical results in the right patients. The use of techniques such as the '8-point lift' using predefined injection points is one example, and the use of cannulas in the lower face allows me to reshape the entire lower face and jaw area.

Since introducing the Juvéderm Vycross range to my clinic, the demand for fillers has accelerated significantly, mostly due to treated patients recommending the Juvéderm range to their friends and family. I did not see this with other brands.

The product range is premium priced, but due to its high lift characteristics, less product is required to achieve results, making it an affordable option.

I have performed and had published clinical trials on Voluma and Volbella, and there are countless other studies on the product range. Safety and efficacy are well proven.

Allergan have focussed on real patients and the accessibility of the product to all. The media and marketing campaign has been based on 'The Natural Look' and 'Real Expressions', using normal everyday men and women of all ages before and after treatment.

Clinical support is beyond comparison. Allergan have created a worldwide educational faculty called the 'Allergan Medical Institute', which delivers the highest quality training using the world's top injectors. The training of the company's product specialists is of the highest order, and the degree of customer support is far superior."

Perfectha

Dr. Kathryn Taylor-Barnes has been practicing in medical aesthetics since 2004 and has carried out over 20,000 treatments. She is owner of the Real You Clinics in Surrey and also works as a NHS GP in Richmond.

She told us why Perfectha, from Sinclair IS Pharma, is her preferred HA dermal filler brand.

"I was introduced to Perfectha in June 2014 when I attended the FACE conference. Having already used and become very familiar with Ellanse and Sculptra, it seemed an obvious choice to try the new dermal filler offering from Sinclair Pharma's aesthetic portfolio. After all I trust and respect the company and have high regard for their other two other injectable products.



Perfectha on the surface may seem like 'just another one of those HA fillers'. However when looking at it more closely Perfectha comes in all shapes and sizes to perfectly suit each area of the face that I would consider treating. I like the variety on offer. I also like the packaging; the needles the easy way in which each product glides out of the needle with gentle pressure on the syringe. This means my hands are not feeling clumsy and I can put a lot of concentration on following the facial lines I am chasing with my needle or the hollows I am trying to fill and revolumise. Perfectha's E-Brid technology is unique in having its gel composed of a highly covalent bonded elastic gel combined with a small amount of non-cross linked HA. This mixture allows for a streamlined injection, as well as an impressive volumising and lifting capacity where the filler is placed.

I quickly realised that my patients were clearly delighted with the results from their Perfectha treatment. Less swelling than with other ranges available means shorter downtime, and the natural looking results where my clients face moves in an 'undone way' instead of 'stiff' reinforced the message of quality and modernity that Perfectha offers.

I really like using Perfectha Deep on small thin lips as it gives a support that exceeds other ranges for this type of lip. Subskin is brilliant at getting a natural, yet very effective lift, in the cheeks and its G prime exceeds that of top ranked competitor fillers in the market.

The long lasting results are essential when my clients are wanting value for money. The Perfectha range delivers this and in turn reflects me as a practitioner in a good light.

Perfectha is a safe range of fillers. This is extremely important to me. I am reassured by the fact that since 2007 over 2.5 million syringes have been sold worldwide and has an extremely low risk of side effects.

The word has spread in the press and celebrity endorsement allows for my client to feel at ease when they realise that someone whom they identify with has been very happy with her injection experience. In fact, I am now seeing patients in my clinic who ask for Perfectha by name. This is impressive for a dermal filler range which is still considered a youngster in the UK market.

I hope that Perfectha will evolve to bring out a dedicated version for lips and also incorporate lidocaine. Currently I add lidocaine to my Perfectha syringe and I can envisage that a pre mixed LA/ HA version would be popular. Anything to save me time in my busy clinic is a bonus!

With Perfectha I feel confident I can hit my target 100% of the time [or near enough!]. After having immersed my clinic with Perfectha over the past 9 months I haven't looked back and certainly feel that my dermal filler patient results have improved. Without a doubt Perfectha has a lot to do with this but I like to think maybe my injectables experience [and a dose of talent] has something to do with it too!"

Restylane

Claudia McGloin is an aesthetic nurse practitioner who has been practicing in medical aesthetics for the last five years from her clinic in Sligo, Ireland and also in London.

She told us why Restylane, from Galderma, is her preferred HA dermal filler brand.

"I think Restylane offers great results with no downtime and good longevity. Although I have experience in using Belotero, Perfectha, Juvéderm and Hyabell, I now use Restylane almost exclusively in my clinic, varying only to use Emervel, also from Galderma, for treating the cheeks. Otherwise I feel that Restylane can be used to treat all facial lines and wrinkles, lips and tear troughs.

The Restylane syringe is easy to use and the delivery of the HA filler is easier than other syringes. The syringes come in 0.5ml which is great for treating smaller areas and there's no need to waste product. Comparing Restylane with other HA fillers, the viscosity is better.

Restylane also comes 'with' or 'without' lidocaine. With lidocaine is great as some patients will opt not to have a topical anaesthetic applied before administration, and this means the procedure is more comfortable and painless for the patient. Without lidocaine is good if someone had a potential reaction previously, or if they didn't want to have lidocaine and be numb. Usually I use with lidocaine. Prices are the same with Restylane for both products and I would imagine in time 'without' won't be as widely available as practitioners will opt for 'with'.

There is a great product variant range within the Restylane brand and there is longevity with this compared to other brands, apart from the lips, patients will get 12 months from a treatment.

I rarely see any swelling with Restylane compared to other HA fillers and rarely need to massage the product to reduce lumps, as I would have to do with other brands like Perfectha Deep for lips.

Restylane is safe and Galderma have clinical trials and research. Currently Sharon Stone is the brand ambassador for the range and is receiving a lot of media coverage.

I find it can be used for the majority of patients. I have not experienced any problems or side effects and my patients are more satisfied with the result and longevity when compared to any of the other brands I have tried. I have also found that it can be used successfully with Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP).

The Galderma team are also excellent for providing regular training and updates throughout the year."

Stylage

Dr. Aamer Khan is a cosmetic doctor, who practices at Harley Street Skin Clinic in London. He has been working in facial aesthetics for fifteen years.

He told us why Stylage, from Laboratoire VIVACY in France (distributed in the UK by Rosmetics) is his preferred HA dermal filler brand.



"I have been using Stylage, almost exclusively, for about a year now, having used approximately four other HA filler brands. I like its ease of use, smooth injection, stable syringe and the patient satisfaction that it gives me. I mainly use cannulas, with occasional needle use.

Stylage is suited to facial volumisation, with a four-point approach and skin hydration in all patient types. I use Macrolane, where indicated, as my HA product choice for body sculpting though. I receive high levels of patient satisfaction, compared to other HA filler brands that I use. I have not experienced any problems or side effects with the range."

Dr. Adil Sarwar is also a cosmetic doctor practicing with Dr. Khan at Harley Street Skin Clinic. He's been working in aesthetics for four years and using Stylage for the last year, having experience with approximately three other HA brands.

"I prefer using Stylage because it contains mannitol and thus there is reduced bruising for the patient. I use both needle and cannula in my treatment approach. I get excellent results for cheek contouring with Stylage XL.

The product range is suitable for all facial aesthetic indications and has excellent ease of use, product variety and characteristics. The longevity of the product is reasonable with little downtime and a cost-effective price for the patient. On a downside, I would say that the clinical and marketing support from the distributor could be improved upon. I have not experienced any problems or side effects from my use of Stylage."

Teosyal

Professor Syed Haq has been practicing in facial aesthetics both directly and indirectly, through research, for over 17 years. He is Director of Invictus Humanus Limited in Harley Street, London and is a Key Opinion Leader for Teoxane.

He told us why Teosyal from Teoxane is his preferred HA dermal filler brand.

“Teosyal is my preferred brand owing to its cohesive, visco-elastic, pliable and long-lasting properties. I use this brand not as a default option, but based on the clinical and aesthetic needs of the patient so as to achieve optimal results. I use, at times, three other brand name HAs.

I particularly prefer using Teosyal in the tear trough area, when wanting to use an HA that provides better projection, as well as in lip augmentation. I have not found this particular brand limited in its ability to be used in any area.

I primarily use needles. I do use cannulas, when indicated, based on my clinical judgement. More recently, I have started to use the Teoxane Injecting Pen which I find results in less subjective pain during the injection as described by my patients.

Teosyal has a low extrusion force when injecting. Its rheologic properties are unique and quite distinct from the other brands in its ability to provide a visco-elastic gel that is highly cohesive, thus integrating with the surrounding tissue. This greater pliability results in better macroscopic results through microscopic tissue integration. This fundamentally has a bearing in the product delivering a more aesthetically natural result.

The method of manufacture is based on the delivery of any monophasic hyaluronic acid gel which is BDDE cross-linked (with or without lidocaine), and contains only a low-level of both protein and bacterial endotoxin.

The Teosyal brand contains a broad spectrum of dermal fillers for use in a variety of clinical indications. One of the most universally used being Global Action which can be used by the busy practitioner as a versatile tool when tackling a face with multiple issues.



I have found that in general the patient satisfaction levels are excellent. In particular, when describing longevity, as this has been a problem with some of the other brands. I have not found any issues or problems when using Teosyal. The brand is longer lasting, cost-effective, with minimal downtime following treatment, and has an excellent support mechanism of training and professional advice.

I would say that the most innovative techniques I have experienced using this brand of HA product can be identified into two indications. The first being in non-surgical rhinoplasty and the second in tear trough augmentation.

The introduction of the RHA range has further enhanced Teoxane's position as a leader in the field of HA dermal filler technology with its unique dynamic qualities in being able to follow tissue movement without the age old problem of tissue distortion which continues to plague less technologically advanced products in the aesthetic arena.”

Summary

Sometimes, it seems like the plethora of dermal filler products available to the practicing medical aesthetician is somewhere between mind-boggling and setting a child loose in a sweet shop! Some relish the opportunity to ‘try’, and to ‘play, or ‘combine’ and ‘test’, to see what works best and create their own techniques or treatment regime. Others, are simply baffled, confused and plump for the option that they perceive to have the best marketing, price, training, safety and efficacy and then stick rigidly to it. Like all things in life, there are products for all; let’s face it, we don’t all drive the same make of car and we can all give reasons why we prefer the make and manufacture of the type that we own. Some will always buy one make, others will enjoy ‘playing the field’ until they find their favourite – which may never happen as innovation leads to more and more to ‘try’.

Technology and developments don't stand still, research is ongoing and new products, upgrades and innovations come to market all the time to improve on existing products or create wholly new concepts.

Writing recently for *Cosmetic Surgery Times*, American Dermatologist and frequent visitor as a speaker at UK conferences, Dr. Hema Sundaram, talked about a new filler coming to the European market, which she hailed as a 'game changer for cosmetic surgeons and their patients in the U.S.'. She was talking about chemical-free, thermally cross-linked HA technology recently launched at IMCAS Paris by IBSA Farmaceutic in a brand called ProfHilo. She noted that the idea of HA fillers, free from BDDE, would be a very attractive option for American consumers. ProfHilo is the first BDDE-free HA product to receive European CE mark approval and is now available in the UK distributed by HA-Derma.

"This is the newest and most sophisticated addition to our toolbox of injectables," Dr. Sundaram says. "ProfHilo gives us the established restorative benefits of low molecular weight HA, without the disadvantage of inflammation which is removed by thermal linking to high molecular weight HA. The product produces even less inflammation than high molecular weight HA, which is known to be anti-inflammatory. Over 50,000 syringes of ProfHilo have been sold in Italy alone over the past 10 months. This is just the beginning, as the product is now being launched elsewhere in Europe and worldwide. There is also strong interest in bringing it to North America."; she concluded.

Exciting times ahead indeed. I started this article with the often touted phrase – *"It's just another HA filler"* – we hear it all the time, but having looked deeper at the range of products available and the feedback from practitioners, I think it's clear to see that the competitive nature of the HA dermal filler marketplace has led to increased product advancements and the generation of USPs by individual brands as a means of seriously staking a claim to market leadership. Competition has driven excellence in the field. The key players in this marketplace are a long way from the cheap and cheerful generic nonsense you can get in the post for the price of a self-addressed envelope!

In summarising the aims of the aesthetic practitioner, when it comes to facial injectable treatments with HA products and choosing what's right for you, Dr. Niro Sivathasan said; *"Common goals with aesthetic interventions include improving a patient's self-esteem and confidence, aiming for high patient-satisfaction; there are few black and white approaches, or absolutes, and it is ultimately about what works in a practitioner's hands."*



Lorna Jackson

Lorna has been Editor of The Consulting Room™, the UK's largest aesthetic information website, for over a decade, since 2003. She has become an industry commentator on a number of different areas related to the aesthetic industry, collating and evaluating statistics, plus researching, investigating and writing feature articles, blogs, newsletters and reports for The Consulting Room™ and various consumer and trade publications, including *Cosmetic News*, *Journal of Aesthetic Nursing*, *Body Language*, *PMFA News*, *Aesthetic Medicine* and *Aesthetic Dentistry Today*. Lorna has also been asked to present at various industry events, including Smart Ideas, BACN and Merz Aesthetics Business Workshops, the FACE Conference and the Clinical, Cosmetic & Reconstructive (CCR) Expo. She was awarded *Journalist of the Year* at the MyFaceMyBody Awards 2014.