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Fat grafting in cranio-maxillofacial region

Jed Bouguila

Sahloul Hospital, Tunisia

Objective: Fat graft is now part of the armamentarium in face plastic surgery. It is successfully used in burn scars, trauma, and congenital malformation. The aim of our study is the discussion of the value of this technique in optimizing cosmetic result in cranio-maxillofacial region.

Material and Method: Twenty-seven adult patients with facial asymmetry due to onchological resection, congenital anomaly, or craniofacial traumatism were selected. The patients were treated by injection of adipose tissue harvested from abdominal subcutaneous fat and processed according to Coleman's technique. Two to three injections were administered at the dermohypodermal junction. Ages, sexes, aetiology of facial deformity, recipient sites, quantity of fat injected, aesthetic results are discussed.

Results: Patient age ranged from 14 to 75 (average 34). Indications for grafts included volumetric defects derived from traumatic sequelae (11 patients), congenital facial anomalies (6 patients), scleroderma (5 patients), oncological resections (4 patients) and radiation injury (2 patients). The clinical appearance, discussed by 3 surgeons and subjective patient feelings, after a 6-month follow-up period suggest considerable improvement in the mimic features, skin texture, and thickness. The result is good in 82% of cases and acceptable in the other cases.

Conclusion: This technique is easily reproducible and provides excellent results. The application of this technology in facial asymmetry may help to obtain good cosmetic results. The technique for harvesting fat from the donor site and reinjecting it into recipient sites can be easily done and easily taught. There is no significant morbidity, and there are no significant complications. Lipostructure seems to complete and improve the results of the standard surgical approach in facial surgery.

bouguila_jed@yahoo.fr