two treatments will also be used for patients with acne scarring, but at the time of her presentation some of these patients had not yet received their second treatment. The average overall improvement in these patients was about 1.5-1.8 on a scale of 1-4, but the improvement scores may continue to rise with additional follow-up, said Dr. Hale, who had no financial conflicts to disclose.

The series of 30 patients reported by Dr. Rahman included patients treated at three locations in California. All patients were treated for photodamage and were included in the data submitted by Reliant to the FDA. Dr. Rahman previously reported preliminary data on these 30 patients at an international symposium on cosmetic and laser surgery in Las Vegas (Skin & Allergy News, Feb. 2007, p. 16).

All patients received a single treatment, with a dose of 10.20 ml and a density of about 400-1,600 microthermal zones/cm² on the face, with about half that density for treatment on the neck. The patients rescheduled within 48 hours, and none has shown hyperpigmentation during follow-up that has extended up to 12 months in 9 patients (the other 21 patients have been followed for 3 months). The efficacy of the cosmetic effect was comparable with what is usually achieved with an ablative treatment with a conventional CO₂ laser, said Dr. Rahman.

**Complications With Fillers, Botox Injections Can Be Avoided**

**BY DAMIAN McNAMARA
Miami Bureau

MIAMI BEACH — Inappropriate placement and potential sensitivity reactions are possible complications of fillers, and asymmetry, swelling, and bruising can occur after injections with botulinum toxin, Dr. Joel L. Cohen said at a symposium sponsored by the Florida Society of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery.

"Most people have moved away from injecting Radiesse in lips—it can migrate superficially and give a ‘popcorn’ appearance," he said. "Most of our patients are of the age that they think back to Goldie Hawn in the 'The First Wives Club.'"

Permanent fillers can be less forgiving and require more expertise to inject. ArteFill became the first nonresorbable, injectable filler implant approved for aesthetic use in the United States in October 2006. Complications reported with an earlier formulation outside the United States, ArteColl, might apply to ArteFill as well. "If placed too superficially, like any filler, it can cause nodules, but these are long-term nodules," said Dr. Cohen, a dermatologist in Englewood, Colo.

Adverse events associated with poly-L-lactic acid (Sculptra) include granulomas reported in several studies, especially from the European experience (Dermatol. Surg. 2005;31:772-6), and infections. "Infraorbital skin can be thinner, so infraorbital area injections with Sculptra can be problematic," Dr. Cohen said. To avoid pitfalls, "inject deeper and use higher volume reconstitutions. When hyaluronic acid fillers are not injected deeply enough, especially in the tear-trough area, there can be a Tyndall effect, he said. Treatment of this adverse event is to nick the skin and try to express the product, or treat with a laser, or try to dissolve the product with hyaluronidase."

Dr. Cohen treated a woman who had previously been injected with a hyaluronic acid product and then developed erythematous nodules (Dermatol. Surg. 2006;32:426-34). It is hard to know if this was an infection or a type of sensitivity. Three negative cultures were performed, and her indurated nodules finally cleared after a few courses of antibiotics over several months, he added.

Other adverse scenarios with fillers include the potential of inducing a herpes simplex virus (HSV) sore. "Think about prophylaxis [for HSV] when doing lip augmentation or injecting etched in lip lines, especially in patients with a significant history of cold sores," though, fortunately, he has not yet seen a postprocedure HSV flare with an aesthetic patient, he said. "I did see this in one of my Mohs surgery patients a few days after a lip repair," he said. "The etiology is really the complication of most concern. This process can occur from excessive product placement compressing arterioles or from frank intravascular placement of product, Dr. Cohen said. To avoid this complication, know the facial vasculature of the areas being injected, he advised. "I have participated in treatment of three patients that received hyaluronic acid fillers who were diagnosed by their injecting physicians with ‘impending necrosis’ a few hours later. The skin was involved (browned area of patchy purple to reddish dis-colored [visible] on photos sent to me. I recommended hyaluronidase injections in and around the area to try to decompress the vessels and to facilitate flow, and fortunately this was successful."

There are fewer adverse events reported with use of botulinum toxin, compared with fillers, but asymmetry, unwanted migration, swelling, and bruising have all been seen and have been reported to the FDA after botulinum toxin injections (J. Am. Acad. Dermatol. 2007;57:107-15).

"Complications from fillers, botulinum toxins, and lasers are very often related to inexperienced injectors/providers or . unsupervised and inadequately trained nonphysicians," the physicians who are supposed to be supervising these procedures are rarely present and ‘have no training or experience themselves in the procedures in which