WATERFRONT
PRIVATE HOSPITAL

PATIENT INFORMATION · AFTERCARE

Dermal Filler Aftercare

Quick-reference guide for aftercare following dermal filler treatment at Waterfront Private Hospital. This is a non-surgical cosmetic procedure with minimal downtime. Always follow the specific instructions provided by your practitioner.

Typical recovery: Minimal downtime, full results visible in 2 weeks · Reviewed 4 July 2026 · Version 1.0

When to get help — your traffic light guide

RED

Call 999 or go to A&E now if you have:

These can be life-threatening. Do not wait to call the hospital first.

- Vision changes or pain around the eyes
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing

AMBER

Contact us now — do not wait — if you have:

- Skin blanching or white patches (sign of vascular occlusion — a blocked blood vessel) — call us immediately, including out of hours
- Severe increasing pain that doesn't improve with rest or medication
- Signs of infection: increasing redness, warmth, pus, or fever

Office hours (Mon–Fri 9am–5pm): 0131 376 3785

Evenings and weekends during your early recovery: Out-of-Hours Nurse Advice Line 07405322689 — our nurse can advise you, contact your surgeon, or direct you to NHS services.

After your early recovery period: call the hospital in office hours, or NHS 24 on 111.

Had your surgery at Spire Shawfair Park (overnight stay)? Contact Spire directly using the number on your discharge paperwork — not the Waterfront advice line.

GREEN

Tell us at your next appointment:

Anything else that is niggling or worrying you — no concern is too small. Mention it at your next appointment, or call us during office hours.

CRITICAL: Vascular Occlusion Emergency

Vascular occlusion occurs when dermal filler blocks a blood vessel. This is a medical emergency requiring immediate attention.

Watch for these warning signs:

- **Skin blanching or white patches** at or near the injection site
- **Severe, increasing pain** that doesn't improve with rest
- **Vision changes or eye pain** (especially after treatment around eyes)
- **If you experience ANY of these symptoms, call us immediately, including out of hours:** 07405322689. Or go to your nearest A&E department without delay.

What to Expect After Treatment

Dermal filler is a quick, non-surgical procedure with minimal recovery time. Most people return to normal activities immediately. Here's what you might experience in the hours and days following treatment:

- **Redness at injection sites** — Usually improves within hours
- **Swelling** — Peaks at 24–48 hours, then gradually reduces. Treated areas may look slightly overcorrected initially.
- **Bruising or discoloration** — May develop and is typically most visible 3–7 days post-treatment
- **Tenderness or mild discomfort** — Paracetamol is suitable for relief
- **Small lumps or bumps** — May be felt under the skin; these typically settle within 2 weeks
- **Pain Relief:** Paracetamol is suitable for any discomfort. **Avoid ibuprofen and other NSAIDs for the first 24 hours** as they can increase bruising.

Your Care Routine: First 24 Hours

The first 24 hours are crucial for optimal results. Follow these guidelines to allow the filler to settle properly:

- **Hands Off — For the First Day or Two:** Avoid pressing or massaging the treated area yourself. If you feel a small lump, don't try to squeeze or massage it away — contact us, as we may recommend a gentle massage technique or review it for you.
- **About Your Face — Skincare & Makeup:** Avoid makeup for the first 12 hours to allow the skin to breathe. If it's comfortable, try not to press the treated area into the pillow on the first night — there's no strong evidence sleep position changes your result.
- **Managing Swelling - Cold Therapy:** Apply cool pads or ice packs wrapped in a clean cloth. Use for 15 minutes at a time with breaks in between. Never apply ice directly to skin—always use a cloth barrier. This helps reduce swelling, which typically peaks at 24–48 hours.
- **Temperature - Keep It Cool — Avoid heat for 24 hours:** Avoid hot baths or hot showers (cool or lukewarm water only). Avoid saunas, steam rooms, and hot tubs. Avoid very cold temperatures or ice directly on skin. Heat increases swelling and can affect filler placement.
- **Physical Activity - Keep It Light:** Avoid vigorous exercise or anything that significantly increases heart rate. Avoid activities that cause facial flushing or redness. Light walking is fine; heavy exercise, gym work, and running should be avoided. Increased blood flow can worsen swelling and may affect filler distribution.

The Next Two Weeks: What to Avoid

To ensure optimal results and allow the filler to fully settle, avoid the following professional treatments during the first 2 weeks:

- **Other facial procedures** — Facials, chemical peels, microdermabrasion can irritate treated areas
- **Laser treatments** — Can interact with treated areas and affect results
- **Intense facial massage** — May cause filler migration and uneven results
- **Routine dental work** — Reschedule if possible, as dental procedures can affect treated areas
- **Blood-thinning medications and supplements** — Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, and vitamin E supplements (increases bruising)

Results Timeline

Dermal filler results develop over the first 2 weeks as swelling reduces and the filler settles. Here's what to expect:

- **Immediately After Treatment** — Redness and slight swelling at injection sites. Results are visible but may look slightly overcorrected.
- **24-48 Hours: Peak Swelling** — Swelling reaches its peak. Bruising may develop and become more visible. Treated areas may still look overcorrected as the filler settles. This is normal—don't be alarmed.
- **3-7 Days** — Swelling starts to noticeably decrease, redness fades, and bruising becomes more visible (though it will continue to fade). Results begin to look more natural.
- **2 Weeks** — Most swelling has resolved, bruising has faded significantly, and results look much more natural. Full integration of the filler is underway.
- **4 Weeks: Final Results** — Final results are fully visible. The filler has completely settled and integrated. You can now see the true outcome of your treatment.

General Aftercare Tips

- **Stay Hydrated** — Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support healing and maintain skin health.
- **Sun Protection (from Day 2)** — Wear SPF 30+ sunscreen daily, even on cloudy days. UV exposure can affect filler longevity and skin healing.
- **Sleep Position** — If it's comfortable, try not to press the treated area into the pillow on the first night. There's no strong evidence that sleep position changes your result.
- **Avoid Alcohol (First 24 Hours)** — Alcohol increases swelling and bruising, so avoid it for at least 24 hours after treatment.
- **Be Patient With Results** — Full results take 2 weeks as swelling settles. Don't judge your results until this time has passed.
- **Gentle Skincare (After 24 Hours)** — Resume normal skincare after 24 hours, but be gentle. Avoid aggressive scrubbing, chemical peels, and retinoids for at least 1 week.

Remember

Remember: Dermal filler results are temporary and will gradually fade as your body naturally absorbs the product over 6–12 months. Most patients choose to schedule maintenance

treatments to maintain their desired results. We're here to help you achieve and maintain your aesthetic goals.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long do fillers last?

Results typically last 6–12 months depending on the product type, your metabolism, and the treatment area. Hyaluronic acid fillers generally last 6–9 months, while premium products may last 12–18 months.

When should I schedule a top-up treatment?

Schedule your next appointment when you notice the results starting to fade, usually around 6–8 months after treatment. Regular top-ups help maintain your results, and some patients find that repeated treatments may last slightly longer over time.

Is bruising normal?

Yes, bruising is a common side effect and varies from person to person. It typically fades within 7–10 days. We can advise on makeup techniques and products to camouflage bruising during this time.

Can dermal filler be dissolved?

Hyaluronic acid fillers can be dissolved using an enzyme called hyaluronidase, which works within days. However, other types of fillers may not be reversible. Discuss your options with your practitioner if you have concerns.

Can I fly after treatment?

Flying is fine. If you can, leave it 24 hours so any early swelling or bruising has started to settle before you travel — there's no strong evidence that flying affects your result. Stay well hydrated during your flight.

Will this affect my normal skincare routine?

You can resume your normal skincare routine after 24 hours, but be gentle with treated areas. Avoid aggressive scrubbing, chemical peels, and retinoid products for at least a week. Apply SPF 30+ sunscreen from day 2 onwards.

Will I look unnatural?

Our goal is to enhance your natural features with subtle, natural-looking results. The treatment is designed to complement your existing features. Results will settle and improve over 2 weeks as swelling reduces.