

**“Dear Dr. McCollough”...**  
**Practical Answers for Every Body**  
Dr. E. Gaylon McCollough Helps Clear Up The “Hype”  
On Non-Invasive Cosmetic Treatments

*Dear Dr. McCollough: I received one of your books and certainly learned much. I have recently quit smoking and I have the "smoker's lines" above my upper lip. What kind of procedure would help this?*

Dear Reader: In recent years there has been a lot of talk about lasers as a treatment for wrinkles. However, after using lasers, chemical peeling, and dermabrasion over a period of 34 years, I have found that, in most cases, the best long term results are obtained with chemical peels that take at least two weeks to heal.

A “chemical peel” involves the careful application of a scientifically formulated solution to the skin which later causes the top layer to separate and shed (like a blister) taking with it the sun-damaged and wrinkled layers. Swelling of the peeled area may be pronounced for the first few days but subsides dramatically after 5-7 days.

The peel procedure is much like having a sunburn or a blister, in that the top layer of skin begins to “peel off” over a 4-5 day period revealing the fresh new deep pink layer underneath. Makeup may be used approximately three weeks after the application of the peeling solution; therefore most patients may return to work or go out socially at this time. When instructions and precautions are heeded by the patient, the redness of the skin slowly subsides over the ensuing six (6) to eight (8) weeks, but can ordinarily be camouflaged by makeup during this time.

*Neither surgery nor resurfacing can correct wrinkles that occur only during facial expressions.* The creases around the eyes produced by smiling, the forehead creases that occur with frowning, and the vertical lines in the upper lip that occur with puckering the lips for the most part are due to the contraction of the muscles of facial expression.

**Injection** treatments with “fillers” only **temporarily** eliminate lines or wrinkles. *If wrinkles and creases are present, resurfacing combined with surgery to implant one’s own collagen from another part of the body may improve them.*

In our experience the resurfacing and tissue grafting techniques have generally been very good. The degree of improvement for a surgical skin peel is not transient, lasting for a period of time measured in years.

If you would like any more information on this or other health related topics, call the McCollough Institute for Appearance and Health at 251-967-7600, email [info@mccolloughinstitute.com](mailto:info@mccolloughinstitute.com) or visit our website [www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com](http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com). If you would like to ask Dr. McCollough a question, please submit the question using our online contact form at <http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com/contactus.html>.