



Getting Younger Every Day - with Smylist

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Abstract

There are multiple avenues which have been suggested for reversing the process of ageing. It is a given fact that the cellular process of ageing cannot be stopped. It is a natural process every living being goes through. This article explores the aspect of early onset ageing where the look on the face is a decade or more elder than the natural biological age of the patient. The reasons for this early onset ageing are explored and enumerated. Muscles tend to lose their tone adding to the aged look and the reason for this loss of tonicity is also explained.

Methods to stop and reverse this condition of early onset ageing are then explained. The connection between a rotated mandible and early onset ageing is established. Cases are presented which clearly demonstrates how this process can be effectively reversed.

Keywords: Smile Design; Smylist®; Facial; Midline; Aesthetic; Design; Software; Face Analysis; Parameters; Face; Geometry; Ageing; Gnathoageing; Wrinkles; Folds

Introduction

One of the oldest desires of human beings is to search for the elixir of youth for the entire life time. Men and women always desire to keep their youthful look and always want to stay young in body, mind and spirit. People keep trying various vitamin supplements, antioxidants, specialized diets, pills, yoga, herbal juices and medicines, face creams, exercises and so many remedies which may or may not have any impact on the aged look. In fact, the market abounds with such anti ageing products. People even opt for facial surgical procedures in the quest to look younger.

The traditional definition of ageing has been the process of growing older. This has been challenged and now ageing has been defined as the process of a systems deterioration over time. The key is "time". If is an acceptable process if it happens at the appropriate time. It is when this process occurs before time, that it is perceived as a problem.

A look into the literature on the subject of ageing reveals that a lot of work focuses on the various processes at the cellular level and organ level. The process of ageing at this cellular level happens because of a continuous damage to the cell or due to a built in genetic code which has pre-determined information leading to cellular dysfunction. The cellular level changes get reflected on the tissues of the body and thus the macroscopic signs of ageing.

The focus of this article is not to deliberate on the various theories of ageing at the cellular level but rather focuses on the macroscopic signs of ageing which are reflected on the face. It is quite natural, that these macroscopic signs are an outcome of the cellular level change to a considerable extent.

What is facial ageing ?

It has to be accepted that all humans start growing up from the moment they are born. The process of life proceeds from childhood to youth and from youth to middle age and then middle age to fur-

ther on. As humans pass through all these stages there are changes that come up in the entire body and specifically on the face which indicate that the face is not of a child but an adult. Also the body's internal process from cellular turnover to recovery slows down. One of the signs is the development of wrinkles on the skin. If they occur earlier than expected the term "premature" ageing has been used.

The signs of facial ageing can be attributed to:

- A. An aged look due to changes in the dentition
- B. A change in the faceform
- C. Loss of skin tonicity
- D. Development of wrinkles on the face
- E. Micro wrinkles on the skin
- F. Patches and marks on the skin
- G. Disuse hypotrophy of certain muscles
- H. Receding hairline.

All of the above will happen at some level at some point of time in age. The issue is when these sign come up severely at a young age, usually between 35 and 40. This phenomenon is termed as early onset ageing. One of the most important factor that keeps a person looking young is the tonicity of the skin. A good and tight skin tone contributes significantly to a younger look in contrast with a flaccid skin tone which is a strong contributory factor for early onset ageing. The basic reason for this is the activity of the muscle under the skin. If the muscle activity reduces for any reason, the skin tends to get a reduced blood supply which causes toxin collections at a cellular level which in turn leads to a lack of tonicity and development of wrinkles and thus an aged look.

One of the very known and sought after methodology to combat the above is a surgical approach called the facelift which is carried out by plastic surgeons. This surgical approach does give an altered and younger look to the face, but it does not usually last for long. The reason is, this approach only treats the symptoms and not the cause of the early onset ageing (Figure1).

There is a paucity of reasons/causes which can explain the early onset ageing process. The Smylist concept explains very lucidly and logically how the signs and symptoms of early onset ageing develop. Not only does the concept explain how this early onset ageing take place but also presents a very clear method of how this process can be reversed. This explanation called as "Gnatho-

ageing" by Smylist, clearly links aberrations in the mandible with the ageing process. Due to the asymmetrical movement of the mandible, teeth can migrate which makes the movement more asymmetrical leading to muscular imbalances which in turn lead to signs of pre mature ageing.



Figure 1: A classic figurative presentation of early onset ageing features and characteristics.

The Smylist gnatho-ageing process

The Smylist concept is the only proposition that has elucidated that the mandibular position is not always proper and can be deviated, more appropriately termed "rotated", to either the left or the right side. In addition it may also over close which is termed as "Over-rotated". The over-rotation can happen independently or may happen in conjunction with the mandible being rotated to either the right or the left. If the mandible is rotated to the left or right or is over-rotated, some of the muscles involved with the mandible do not remain balanced and will be either over stretched or contracted on one side. This discrepancy in the state of the muscles can lead to a variety of issues in the musculo skeletal system which further leads to negative circumstances which can cause a host of negative conditions in the human body. One of these is early onset ageing. This negative progression of events is explained as the process of "Gnatho-ageing" by Smylist.

As just mentioned, a rotated mandible causes some muscles associated with the mandible to get unilaterally over used or under

utilized. This imbalanced situation leads to a chain reaction which over a period of time, culminates in all the signs of an aged facial appearance. This chain reaction is “underutilized muscle” - “hypotrophy of the muscle” - “reduced blood supply and lymphatic drainage” - “constant build up of toxins” - “loss of skin tone” - “loss of skin smoothness” - “development of wrinkles” - “pigmentation of the skin”. This chain reaction makes the face look old. The muscles playing a key role are the zygomaticus, the mentalis and the masseter.

There are certain changes in the dentition that take place leading to a natural early onset ageing process. The teeth tend to migrate with the mandible getting a dispositioned mandible. This leads to phenomenon of what Smylist terms as “Self Ortho”, which essentially means a repositioning of the teeth due to constant load applied by an improperly positioned mandible. Migrated anterior maxillary teeth with a slightly forward displayed mandible leads to a typical aged look. Such a situation many a times gets further reinforced by dental therapy which places teeth in a protruded position either due to Orthodontic treatment or even crowns and veneers.

The response of the muscles, which includes the masticatory muscles, the mimic muscles and the tongue, to the incorrect mandibular position cause the mandible to get rotated to one side. This is an asymmetrical position of the mandible and also an imbalanced position. This further contributes to the aged look. It should be realized that the tongue is also a collection of muscles and it can exert a lot of load on the teeth. Forces generated from the tongue play a very significant role in the “Self-Ortho” phenomenon. This becomes a vicious circle, with one thing leading to the other and so on. This causes a pulling effect on the face, overstretching some muscles which causes the face to lose its youth fullness.

Thus the imbalanced and asymmetrical muscles are overstretched in some places making its surface go flat causing the skin to get overstretched. Some muscles will get unduly contracted creating folds and wrinkles that also contributes significantly to the aged appearance of the face.

Another effect of a disused muscle is that the skin over the muscle does not have as good a blood supply as in normal circumstances. This leads to the skin being deprived of the very important and necessary oxygen. This in turn leads to a collection of toxins and waste products under the dermis and also a reduced turnover of the top epidermal layer. This chain of events makes the skin lose

it glow and vibrant appearance. This is yet another sign of an aged look. Yet one more effect of the reduced blood supply is that the toxic build up and collection of debris causes the skin to get marked and develop dark spots. This adds to the aged look on the face.

Over a period of time, even the muscles lose their tonicity and become haggard and loose under the skin. This produces micro wrinkles on the skin and deepens all the folds associated with the particular muscle. The face contour changes and becomes bulky and flat, a double chin develops and the masseters become asymmetric. Thus, the entire chain of events take place starting with a rotated mandible. This early onset ageing is a resultant of this chain of events. Since it is the mandible which is the initiating point the term “Gnath ageing” has been appropriately used.

Fortunately if this condition is identified and then therapy provided using the Smylist method, most of these signs will reverse themselves and the patient will definitely start looking much younger in age and this will by default make the individual feel younger and revitalize the energy levels in the body.

The effects of correction will be on the muscles which will return to their normal size and tone without any flaccidity, the wrinkles on the face which will start becoming lesser and lesser, the face contour and form will change into a much younger look, the eye sockets and the will even out and overall present a much younger look.



Figure 2: A classical change observed in this patient. The square face changes into a much younger oval face in a matter of weeks.

Reversing gnath ageing

The Smylist concept provides one of the most simplistic and minimally invasive (no facial surgery or injection of fillers) method to reverse such an ageing process. Complex reconstructions can

be achieved with aligner based orthodontic treatment, non prep veneers, table tops and the Smylist positioner. All of this will essentially bring the mandible back into harmony and reverse the ageing process. The most important part of this reversal is to make the correct and accurate diagnosis based on the Smylist concept regarding the rotation of the mandible. If this can be identified, the rest of the therapy will be easy to implement. It will not be critical as to what are the materials used or what kind of lab work is opted for. Composites as well as Zirconia will provide effective end results. The key will be to ensure that the maxillary teeth provide the right stop to the mandibular teeth and that the mandible gets properly related to the maxilla.

This relationship is established by deprogramming the mandible and then recording the deprogrammed position in what is termed as the “Smylist Bite”. The process of deprogramming and recoding the “Smylist Bite” does not take very long and can be accomplished in 15 to 20 minutes. This is a very revolutionary method and literally polar opposite conventional deprogramming which is carried out with some or the other form of occlusal splint which is slowly and painstakingly adjusted over month which may or may not bring the mandible into a stable position. The Smylist deprogramming method cuts short this elaborate process by manually deprogramming the muscles involved with mandibular movement and bringing the condyles into a most favourable position and a complete balance in the involved muscles. All of this is achieved in one short sitting of 30 minutes.

This deprogramming technique is completely unique to Smylist and one of the most original thoughts in dentistry.

Of course this requires training and practice on how to identify the rotation and then manipulate and deprogram the mandible. In the deprogrammed state, all the muscles of mastication as well as the mimic muscles will be bilaterally symmetrical and will neither be over stretched or in a state of spasm. While the Smylist bite will accurately create the relationship of the maxilla and the mandible the dentition also has to be harmonized with the face. This is also a very critical step to reverse the early onset ageing.

Pictures of the face have to be taken and loaded onto the Smylist Aesthetic Design Software. Once specific landmarks are identified on the face picture in the software (this takes less than 10 minutes once mastered), the entire maxillary teeth design is virtually generated by the software. The software design considers all the indi-

vidual facial characteristics, the individual midline and the facial geometry to arrive at the ideal tooth shape, morphology and position. When all the rules are followed the dentition also harmonizes with the face and makes a very favourable impact on the youthful look of the face.

This software along with the lab software will generate STIL files for all the maxillary teeth. In conjunction with the Smylist bite, the entire dentition can be rehabilitated by the clinician. Once rehabilitated in this stable balanced position, the reversal process will start.



Figure 3: A patient desiring a younger look.



Figure 4: Facial lines plotted to define the midline.



Figure 5: A dramatic result observed after deprogramming and rehabilitating the teeth based on Smylist® planning.

The balancing of the muscles is literally instantaneous and this will eliminate some wrinkles and folds. After completion of the dental work, in a short period of a few weeks, the muscles will settle down since the mandible will now function and move in a symmetrical and balanced way. Since the muscles will settle down, the wrinkles and folds causing the aged look will start disappearing slowly. Subsequently the muscles will all be in normo function, thereby restoring the blood supply which will revitalize the skin. In another couple of weeks these changes will be remarkably visible and the patient will start looking much more younger than before. The face contour and shape will improve, there will be no hanging skin, the eyes will look brighter and more radiant, the eyebrows will display a young elevated contour and overall the face will present a youthful appearance [1-15].

Conclusions

In fact, Smylist strongly recommends that if any surgical procedures are being done for the purpose of a younger look by a plastic surgeon, it should be done in conjunction with the minimally invasive Smylist recommended corrections for a longer, more predictable as well as a far more beneficial end result. Thus the application of the Smylist “Gnatho Ageing” concept makes it possible to make patients actually get younger, not only in just looks but also in mind, body and spirit.

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