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OPEN PEER REVIEW

A 52-Week Split-Face Study on the Efficacy and Safety of a New-Type Hyaluronic Acid Injectable Filler for Nasolabial Wrinkles

Eleftheria Tampouratzi, Maria Kostaki, Kyriakos Talaiporou, Ioannis Katsantonis

SUBMITTED	REVISED	ACCEPTED	DOI
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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

More about open peer review: brieflands.com/knowledgebase/opr

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1 Original submission

4 comments · 13 Aug 2023 – 14 Aug 2023

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 13 Aug 2023

Dear authors,
Thank you very much for submitting the paper. Please consider the following comments in order to enhance the quality/clarity of the article.
1. Line 23-24: The phrase "results were decisive" implies a strong preference or significant difference, but this isn't reflected in the subsequent data ($p<0.05$).
2. Line 57-59: While the classification of monophasic fillers is important, the introduction might benefit from a clearer transition or explanation of why this division is relevant to the study's focus.
3. Line 60-63: The sentence starting with "Since the forementioned structural differences..." is quite lengthy and could be broken down for better readability.
4. Line 70-71: It would be beneficial to provide more details on the information given to the participants. For instance, risks, benefits, and potential side effects of the treatment should be explicitly mentioned if they were part of the consent process.
5. Line 72: The age range is provided, but the standard deviation of 2.42 seems quite low for a range of 30 years. This might need verification or further explanation.
6. Line 73-74: The exclusion criteria regarding previous surgeries or filler injections could be presented more clearly. As it stands, the parentheses placement makes the sentence structure somewhat confusing.
7. Line 85: The sentence "Base line photos were taken in standardized settings with a high-resolution camera, while each one esthetic patient, was asked to keep the same non-moving expression (smiling etc.)." is a bit awkward. It might be clearer to separate the points about standardized settings and patient expressions into two sentences.
8. Line 102-106: Any control for potential confounding variables or how the data were cleaned and preprocessed should be discussed.
9. The sample size is relatively small. While this is typical for aesthetic clinical trials, it limits the generalizability of the results.
10. Line 111-113: The statement "a picture paints a thousand words" is colloquial and might not be considered appropriate for a scientific article. Furthermore, while visual representation is useful, it should complement, not replace, detailed written analysis.
11. Line 112: Reference to Table 1b, 1c, and 1d without detailing the results contained in these tables leaves readers without a clear understanding of the findings.
12. Line 114-115: The phrasing "one more time for both sides" is informal and somewhat vague in its meaning. Clarity and precision are essential in scientific reporting.
13. Line 116-118: Tables 1e, 1b, 1c, and 1d are mentioned in close proximity without a clear indication of what each table specifically presents.
14. Line 119-123: The interpretation of the FACE-Q questionnaire results leans heavily on visual representation (bar chart in Table 1f and Figure 4). While visual aids are valuable, the text should also provide a clear and detailed summary of these findings.
15. Throughout the section, the results are often referred to as being in tables or figures without those results being described in the text.
16. Line 133: The statement "This was somehow expected" introduces bias, as it makes it seem like the results were predetermined.
17. Line 136: The phrase "in our hands" is informal and could be replaced with a more objective statement, such as "in this study" or "based on our findings".

18. Line 142-143: While patient satisfaction is certainly important in aesthetic procedures, the phrase "we should seriously take in account" seems informal. It might be more fitting to state something like "patient satisfaction should be a primary consideration."
19. There are numerous English editing errors throughout the text, necessitating a thorough revision of the English.

Referee 2 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 14 Aug 2023

Dear AE,
Here are some potential flaws and areas for improvement in the manuscript:
Patient selection criteria need to be more detailed. For instance, why were females selected? Were there any inclusion/exclusion criteria related to medical history or skin conditions?
The method of selecting which side of the face to treat with which filler should be described in more detail. Was it randomized? How were potential biases mitigated?
The description of the HA molecules being compared is quite technical. Simplify this explanation for readers who may not have a deep understanding of the subject.

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 14 Aug 2023

Dear EIC,
I thank the authors and express my appreciation to the researchers. The manuscript is a valuable piece of research. But some revisions are needed. The authors should revise it based on the comments.

Abstract:
The study design should be mentioned in the first line of the method section of the abstract.
Discussion:
The authors should address potential limitations more thoroughly. They mention that there are limitations regarding the subjectivity of answers, but they don't elaborate on what these limitations are or how they might impact the study's conclusions.

General Writing and Clarity:
The manuscript contains several grammatical errors, awkward phrasings, and missing words that need to be corrected.

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 14 Aug 2023

Dear Author,
Thank you for submitting the article. It needs some revision. Please revise it based on the reviewers' and AE's comments.

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Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to thank the Associate Editor and the Reviewers for these constructive comments which we have addressed below. We greatly appreciate the time and effort put forth by reviewers and editor to improve our paper. In this letter we include a point-by-point response to the reviewers in addition to making the requested changes in the text which are noted.

Yours sincerely,
Maria Kostaki

>Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:
Dear authors,
Thank you very much for submitting the paper. Please consider the following comment in order to enhance the quality/clarity of the article.
1. Line 23-24: The phrase "results were decisive" implies a strong preference or significant difference, but this isn't reflected in the subsequent data ($p<0.05$).
Thank you for your comment. Please see the updated wording in the document.
2. Line 57-59: While the classification of monophasic fillers is important, the introduction might benefit from a clearer transition or explanation of why this division is relevant to the study's focus.
Thank you very much for this comment. Please see the updated document.
3. Line 60-63: The sentence starting with "Since the forementioned structural differences..." is quite lengthy and could be broken down for better readability.
Thank you for your comment. Please see the updated wording in the document.
4. Line 70-71: It would be beneficial to provide more details on the information given to the participants. For instance, risks, benefits, and potential side effects of the treatment should be explicitly mentioned if they were part of the consent process.
Thank you for this useful comment. The section has been updated.
5. Line 72: The age range is provided, but the standard deviation of 2.42 seems quite low for a range of 30 years. This might need verification or further explanation.
Thank you very much for this comment. The number have been updated to capture the right information.
6. Line 73-74: The exclusion criteria regarding previous surgeries or filler injections could be presented more clearly. As it stands, the parentheses placement makes the sentence structure somewhat confusing.
Thank you for this useful comment. The section has been updated.
7. Line 85: The sentence "Base line photos were taken in standardized settings with a high-resolution camera, while each one esthetic patient, was asked to keep the same non-moving expression (smiling etc.)." is a bit awkward. It might be clearer to separate the points about standardized settings and patient expressions into two sentences.
We would like to thank the reviewer for this useful comment. The text has been updated.
8. Line 102-106: any control for potential confounding variables or how the data was cleaned and pre-processed should be discussed.
Thank you for this useful comment. The text has been updated.
9. The sample size is relatively small. While this is typical for aesthetic clinical trials, it limits the generalizability of the results.

We would like to thank the reviewer for this useful comment. The text has been updated, including a respective limitation.

10. Line 111-113: The statement "a picture paints a thousand words" is colloquial and might not be considered appropriate for a scientific article. Furthermore, while visual representation is useful, it should complement, not replace, detailed written analysis.

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated.

11. Line 112: Reference to Table 1b, 1c, and 1d without detailing the results contained in these tables leaves readers without a clear understanding of the findings.

Thank you for this comment. The whole section has been updated.

12. Line 114-115: The phrasing "one more time for both sides" is informal and somewhat vague in its meaning. Clarity and precision are essential in scientific reporting.

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated.

13. Line 116-118: Tables 1e, 1b, 1c, and 1d are mentioned in close proximity without a clear distinction of what each table specifically presents.

Thank you for this comment. The whole section has been updated.

14. Line 119-123: The interpretation of the FACE-Q questionnaire results leans heavily on visual representation (bar chart in Table 1f and Figure 4). While visual aids are valuable, the text should also provide a clear and detailed summary of these findings.

We would like to thank the Reviewer for this useful comment. All the numbers of the visual elements of the manuscript have been updated in order for the data and results to be clearly depicted.

15. Throughout the section, the results are often referred to as being in tables or figures without those results being described in the text.

Thank you for this comment. The whole section has been updated.

16. Line 133: The statement "This was somehow expected" introduces bias, as it makes it seem like the results were pre-determined

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated.

17. Line 136: The phrase "in our hands" is informal and could be replaced with a more objective statement, such as "in this study" or "based on our findings".

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated.

18. Line 142-143: While patient satisfaction is certainly important in aesthetic procedures, the phrase "we should seriously take in account" seems informal. It might be more fitting to state something like "patient satisfaction should be a primary consideration."

Thank you once again for this comment. The text has been updated.

19. There are numerous English editing errors all over the text, necessitating a prime English revision.

Thank you for this comment. The whole text has been updated.

Reviewer 2:

Dear AE,

Here are some potential flaws and areas for improvement in the manuscript:

Patient selection criteria need to be more detailed. For instance, why were females selected?

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated explaining this.

Were there any inclusion/exclusion criteria related to medical history or skin conditions?

Thank you for this comment. The text has been updated including this.

The method of selecting which side of the face to treat with which filler should be described in more detail. Was it randomized? How were potential biases mitigated?

We would like to thank the Reviewer for this comment. The text was updated with clarifying all these comments

The description of the HA molecules being compared is quite technical. Simplify this explanation for readers who may not have a deep understanding of the subject.

We would like to thank the Reviewer for this comment. The text was updated using a new wording.

> Associate Editor's Comments:

Associate Editor 1:
Dear EIC,
Thanks to the authors and appreciation to the researchers. The manuscript is valuable research. But some revisions are needed. Authors should revise it based on comments.

Abstract:
Study design should be mentioned in first line of method section of abstract.

Thank you for this comment. Text is updated.

Discussion:
Address potential limitations more thoroughly. You mention that there are limitations regarding the subjectivity of answers, but you don't elaborate on what these limitations are or how they might impact the study's conclusions.

Thank you for this comment. The Discussion section is updated.

General Writing and Clarity:
The manuscript contains several grammatical errors, awkward phrasings, and missing words that need to be corrected.

We would like to thank the Associate Editor for this comment. The whole manuscript was updated.

2 Revision 1

4 comments · 31 Oct 2023 – 1 Nov 2023

Referee 1 Reviewer

ACCEPT 31 Oct 2023

Dear authors,
Thank you very much for the revisions.
Best regards
Reviewer

Referee 2 Reviewer

ACCEPT 1 Nov 2023

Dear AE,
I reviewed the manuscript again. The great effort in improving the manuscript is highly appreciated.
The authors have addressed all comments.
Thank you

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 1 Nov 2023

Dear Author,
Thank you for your explanation, and I find your manuscript acceptable.

Editor-in-Chief

ACCEPT 1 Nov 2023

Dear Author,
Thank you for paying attention and responding to the reviewer's comments.