

# Dissolving Fat with Kybella®

*This article series has previously discussed the common complaint "I hate my neck," but recently a new, non-surgical option has been added to the available methods to improve neck contour.*

So, we will again focus on the neck.

**Kybella® is a fat-dissolving injection** for use under the chin which was recently approved by the FDA.

Kybella® works by chemically dissolving fat cells. After the injection, the body removes the dissolved fat cell components over the next several weeks. Most patients can expect some swelling after treatment. The **results are not instant**, but rather appear gradually over several months after the treatment. This has some advantages, since most people who look at you will not be able to detect the slow change as it occurs. Patients who have had fat reduction in the neck, by any method, are commonly asked if they have lost weight since the neck is so visible. This may be especially true for men who wear ties.

**A minimum of two treatment sessions is usually required**, but more may be necessary. For this reason, we have bundled the first two treatments into a package in our office. Treatments are performed about six weeks apart and each session requires only a few minutes. Small quantities of Kybella® are injected in a grid pattern under the chin. Most patients experience some minor discomfort after the treatment which can be successfully managed without narcotics. As with most plastic surgery procedures, photographs are used to monitor the treatment results and help determine if more treatment sessions are required.

Although Kybella® is a new product, it has been under extensive study for several years. More than 2600 patients worldwide have been treated. In the Phase III clinical trial, many patients achieved visible results in 2-4 treatment sessions, with **79% of patients reporting satisfaction** with the treatment.

Just like liposuction, when the fat cells have been destroyed or removed,



Photos courtesy of Allergan, Inc.

we believe they are gone permanently. However, weight changes after treatment can have an impact on the contour of the area since not every fat cell in the treatment zone is dissolved. **Loose skin and muscle bands** may also have a significant effect on neck contour. Since Kybella® only addresses the fat component, patients whose neck contour is mostly due to fat excess are the best candidates. Folks with loose skin and muscle laxity will only benefit from surgical procedures to address the skin or muscle.

**How does Kybella® compare to liposuction?** Both are designed to remove fat and neither is capable of addressing skin laxity or muscle bands. Kybella® is not a surgical procedure and does not require anesthesia. Although liposuction is surgical, very frequently, we perform liposuction under the chin in the office with numbing medicine. A period of swelling, where the area may look worse after the treatment than before, is expected with both procedures. After liposuction, patients wear a chin strap for a few days to support the neck. A chin strap is not required for Kybella®.

Liposuction is a single treatment, whereas more than one treatment is anticipated with Kybella®.

To successfully remove extra skin from the neck and/or tighten the muscle, a neck lift or facelift procedure is necessary. If you want to learn more about those options, please see my September 2014 article in TOPS available on our website [kirnplasticsurgery.com/articles](http://kirnplasticsurgery.com/articles). Kybella® adds a new non-surgical option to the choices for neck rejuvenation.

Currently, Kybella® is only approved for treatment of neck fat, not other body areas. A discussion of your treatment goals and an exam of the neck by your physician is the first step to determine if Kybella® is right for you.

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Dr. David Kirn is a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon who is devoted to advanced techniques in Cosmetic Surgery of the Face, Breast, and Body. In private practice since 1998, he is located in a state of the art facility which includes a full service skin care center. The practice is focused on personalized patient care and attention to detail. Where possible, Dr. Kirn utilizes minimally invasive procedures. The goal is to deliver quality clinical results while minimizing patient recovery time. Examples of this include a no-drain tummy tuck, armpit incision breast augmentation with gel or saline implants, fat grafting, and a short scar facelift. In addition, Dr. Kirn and nurse-injectors Carey Sanders, RN and Shirley Ramsey DNP, APRN, offer a full spectrum of non-surgical treatments such as Botox®, Dysport®, Restylane®, Juvederm®, Voluma®, Radiesse®, Kybella® & laser.