

volume control

While lip enhancement without the need for regular top-ups is by far its most popular use, there's more to Aquamid than meets the eye, reports **Blanche Wilkie**.

Aquamid was launched in Australia nearly three years ago and has over ten years of research and development by Danish company Contura behind it. There are currently a dozen studies taking place in Europe and Australia looking at its long-term benefits and different applications. More than 150,000 syringes of Aquamid have been used all over the world and over 100 specially trained doctors have administered Aquamid to more than 7000 people in Australia.

Aquamid is a transparent and non-toxic polyacrylamide gel that is 97.5% water. It is injected beneath the skin and can be gently manipulated by the doctor to help create the desired shape. Once in place the gel stays put for years.

'Aquamid is effectively being used to enhance the cheeks and chin, and for improvement just about anywhere with hollows needing to be filled or volume created'

For those already accustomed to dermal fillers it can be a relief to discover there is no longer a need to book in for 'top-ups' every six months to achieve the desired result of fuller lips. Simone Matt was so impressed by her lip augmentation with Aquamid (administered by Sydney



cosmetic surgeon Dr Michael Zacharia) that she told all her friends about it. 'With Aquamid I've now got the lips I want without the discomfort and inconvenience of regular maintenance injections and the results are still natural looking,' she says.

The properties that make Aquamid suitable for lip augmentation also apply to its successful use in a variety of other applications. Both cosmetic surgery television series *The Body Specialists* and *Bodyworks* featured different uses of Aquamid.

Aquamid is an effective treatment for deep wrinkles (such as the nasolabial folds) and scars. By filling the area beneath the skin with Aquamid, the deep wrinkle or scar line is raised, thus giving the appearance of it being smoothed out.

Working with the same principle of injecting in specified

areas beneath the skin, Aquamid is also being used to enhance cheeks, the chin, and just about anywhere with hollows needing to be filled or volume created.

The development of Aquamid Reconstruct – essentially the same product but with a higher concentration of polyacrylamide gel (making it more viscous) – has further extended the applications possible with Aquamid.

Sunken and hollow facial features, or lipodystrophy, can result from the anti-viral treatments now available for people with HIV. According to Sydney plastic surgeon Dr William Pouw, 'This marked physical appearance can be socially disruptive for these people who now have a normal life expectancy.'

Aside from using Aquamid for lips, lines, cheeks and chin, Dr Pouw has been helping restore the fullness in facial features for those with lipodystrophy.

'Patients have been really pleased with the results and feel they stand out less in social situations.'

Meanwhile Sydney cosmetic surgeon Dr Andrew Le has pioneered a nonsurgical rhinoplasty procedure with Aquamid that is increasingly popular. In just one year, Dr Le has performed over 100 of these procedures in Australia and 200 worldwide. He has held workshops and seminars in Japan, Korea, The Phillipines and Hong Kong, and has been invited to train doctors in Europe and the USA.

'Many people want to have their noses reshaped but do not want to have surgery. A lot of people tell me that they've been waiting all their lives for this,' he says. 'If you touch an Aquamid nose, it feels like a normal nose – you'd be surprised it feels so natural.'

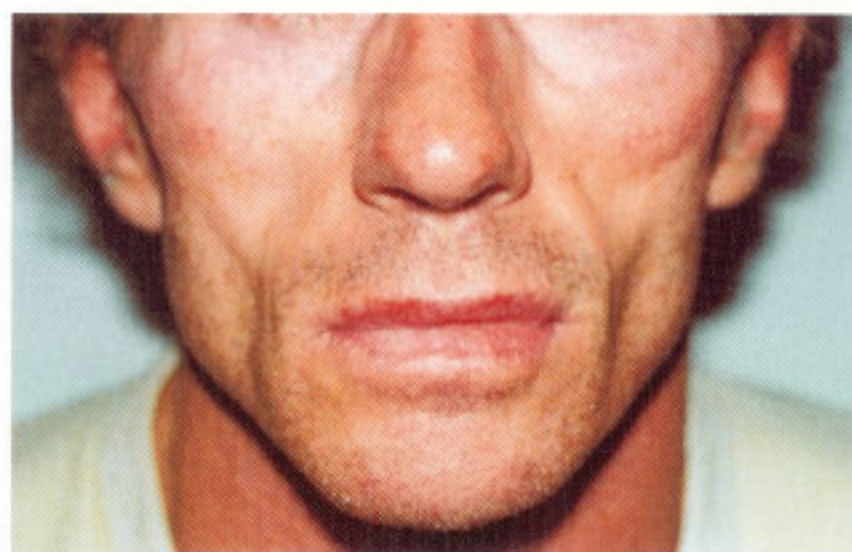
Dr Le also uses Aquamid for a variety of procedures – a patient presented with thin and distorted earlobes that, after filling with Aquamid, now appear normal.

The President of the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery, Dr John Flynn, uses a variety of dermal fillers in his Gold Coast practice. He has treated over 200 of his patients with Aquamid – most commonly for lip augmentation and deep wrinkle treatments, cheeks, chin and facial restructuring. He has also used Aquamid to alleviate the effects of sagging eyebrows.

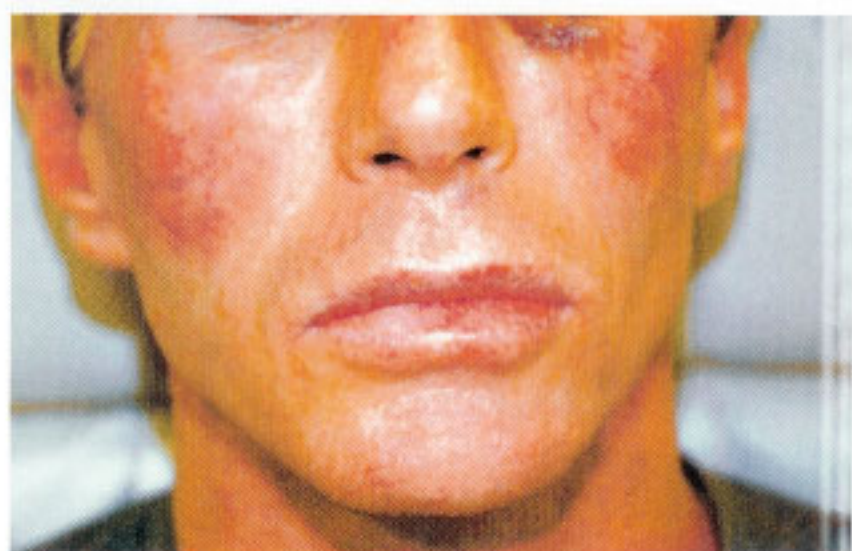
'One of the things that happens as we grow older is our skin loosens. In many people the area around the eyes becomes hollow and eyebrows sag. An eyebrow lift is effective but to enhance that or as a procedure on its own I use Aquamid.'

When it comes to dermal fillers, Sydney cosmetic and laser surgeon Dr Jack Ting uses Aquamid exclusively. Dr Ting believes there are four areas that give away a person's age: neck, eyes, skin and facial fullness. He uses laser treatments to tighten and renew the skin and he uses Aquamid to create volume. 'I use Aquamid for the finishing touches in my facial rejuvenation treatments,' he says.

It appears that Aquamid is effectively being used to enhance the cheeks and chin, and for improvement just about anywhere with hollows needing to be filled or volume created. **acsm**



BEFORE



AFTER treatment of lipodystrophy with Aquamid reconstruct by Dr Pouw



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty with Aquamid by Dr Le



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty with Aquamid by Dr Le