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Pearl Archives: Fillers/Injectables

Mini-block offers painless injection without hours of numbness

When patients are being treated with lip injection, pain reduction is of the utmost importance, but nerve blocks, while deadening pain, leave the patient's face numb for hours, which can also be undesirable.

As an alternative, Joe Niamtu, D.M.D., developed a "mini-block" technique that keeps patients comfortable for the duration of the procedure, but also leaves them comfortable when they leave by wearing off quickly.

"This has expedited appointments for lip filler injection



and has been a welcome change

"After experimenting with various topical and local anesthesia infiltration techniques, I have eliminated the use of trigeminal nerve blocks and use the (mini-block)," Dr. Niamtu wrote. "This has expedited appointments for lip filler injection and has been a welcome change on the part of the patient." (*Dermatol Surg.* 2005 Oct;31(10):1330-2).

When patients arrive, Dr. Niamtu first treats them with a topical anesthesia intraorally on the skin or mucosa, followed by ice for further anesthesia. He then uses his mini-block injection technique, in which he uses a 1 cc syringe and a 32 gauge needle.

Increments of 0.3 cc of local anesthetic solution are injected in four to five areas between the

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Jobless turning to

on the part of the patient."

- Joe Niamtu, D.M.D.

canine teeth," he said. "The injection is submucosal, just above the sulcus in the upper lip and just below the sulcus in the lower lip." (see below)

Since the injection is in soft tissue, the needle does not need to touch the bone, and the same injection is performed on the lower vestibule if both lips are to be injected, Dr. Niamtu explained.

"The surgeon can experiment with either of these injection locations to determine which is most preferable for the injector and the patient. After several minutes, the lips and perioral areas are adequately anesthetized for filler injection."

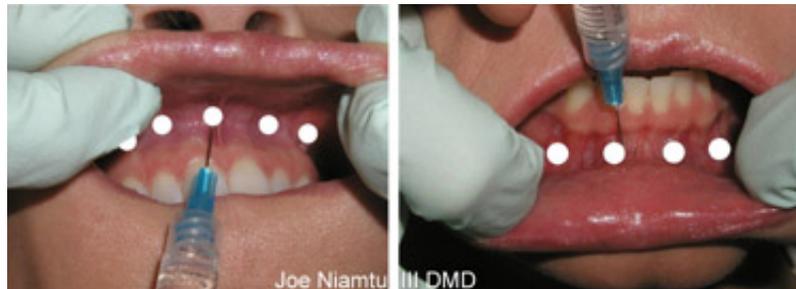
Sensation in the area typically returns between 30 and 60 minutes after the procedure, and Dr. Niamtu said he had not experienced any complications in the thousands of mini-blocks he has performed.

Providing patients with a painless experience is perhaps one of the most important means of leaving a lasting, positive impression on a patient, Dr. Niamtu said.

"Painless filler injection is the absolute best marketing that any doctor can perform. You have to compare the experience to going to the dentist," he said. "A patient may not know how technically proficient the dentist is, but if the experience is painless, the patient loves that dentist."

"This is very similar in the filler practice," Dr. Niamtu added. "No one likes needles and anything that can mitigate that experience will increase future business for all injectors."

Dr. Niamtu reported no significant interest with commercial supporters for the study.



Miniblock injection points

Photos courtesy of Joe Niamtu, D.M.D.

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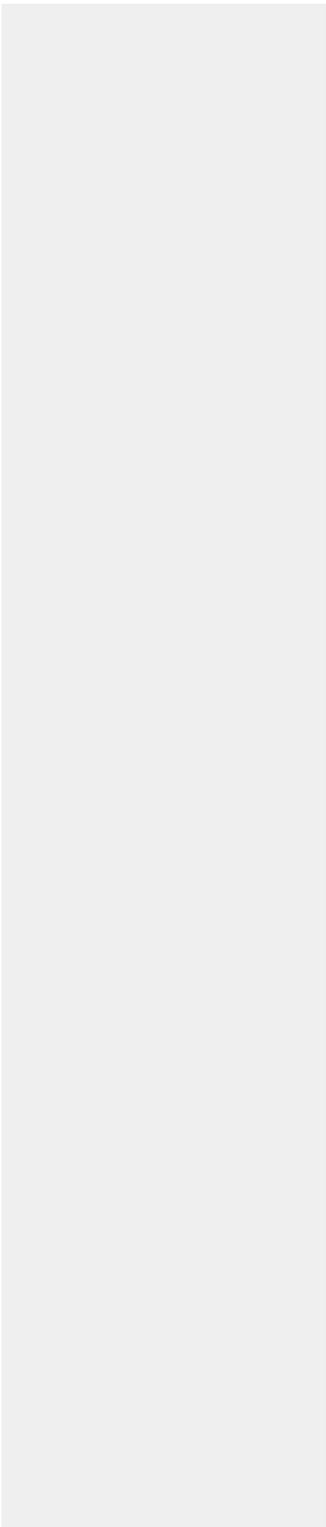
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