

Practicing Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture in the age of Western Cosmetic Procedures

What you need to know and how you can position yourself to benefit from the boom in demand for cosmetic procedures

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the total expenditures for cosmetic procedures and surgeries in the United States in 2019 was a staggering 16.7 billion dollars and most areas of this market are growing yearly! In 2019 alone, there were 1.8 million cosmetic surgeries, and 16.3 million minimally invasive cosmetic procedures performed in the US. Wondering how you can tap into that market as an acupuncturist? Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture (FRA) could well be your ticket.

Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture is much more than a cosmetic procedure. For thousands of years, the Chinese and neighboring countries such as Korea and Japan have known that beauty originates from the inside and addressed it accordingly. The ancients knew that changes and deterioration in the skin, muscle tone, and appearance, tend to reflect the state of the *zang fu*, *qi*, blood, *yin* and *yang*. With the knowledge that many meridians either commence or terminate on the face, and that some internal branches go to the face, they were able to correlate the relationship of health and appearance. Efforts to restore balance and maintain health can simultaneously help to improve appearance.

Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture treats the root (*ben*) and the branch (*biao*) of signs of aging. Both local and distal points customized for the individual are needed based on differential diagnosis. The results are far more profound than what is merely visible on the face.

Although it may sound like a modern trendy technique, it has a place in the history and literature of acupuncture. You can search for the term “Mei Rong” in the Chinese literature. Mei Rong has been translated as Chinese Medical Cosmetology or TCM Cosmetology to denote its dual medical and esthetic

approach. You will currently find a *mei rong* department in most hospitals and universities in China.

Following the initial course of 12 sessions, maintenance sessions are administered seasonally or monthly which can prolong the results for many years. This encourages a continued relationship with your patient and gives you a chance to educate your patient on everything that regular acupuncture can do for them. Once they know all acupuncture can do for them, they will in all likelihood seek you out for any possible health conditions in the future. Unfortunately, vanity often motivates many people more than health does. FRA is a way that you can use this other motivation for the advantage of your patient by treating their underlying health at the same time as their appearance. It is the best way to build and boost a practice that I know of as you will get many patients who wouldn't otherwise come to you for acupuncture!

Advantages of Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture over allopathic cosmetic procedures and surgery

- FRA is relatively painless unlike many allopathic cosmetic procedures.
- It has a high rate of safety associated with it. There are few if any risks or deleterious side effects to Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture unlike so many Western medical esthetic practices. When practiced judiciously according to all the recommended safety parameters, it should be extremely safe for the patient. Be sure to study with a facial cosmetic acupuncture teacher approved by the American Acupuncture Council.
- Unlike those kinds of procedures which may require an extended recovery period with swelling and discoloration, there is no downtime necessary from having FRA treatments- no need to hide, stay home from work, or avoid being in front of a camera. Though cumulative in effect, the results are typically seen and felt right away. Having taught this subject since 1998 to acupuncturists internationally, I know of no instance of any dangerous or visible unseemly effect from this kind of treatment. Your patients dramatically improved appearance will be the source of many referrals!

- FRA can help to address the psycho-spiritual issues that often surround the ageing process and benefit self-esteem, particularly when the self-esteem is based on body image and appearance. Research has shown that many Western cosmetic procedures do not result in improved self-esteem despite an extreme difference in appearance as seen in a facelift.
- By addressing the *Shen* or spirit of the individual, the eyes will brighten and the skin develops a glow not possible by allopathic means. Treating at the spirit level allows the innate beauty and radiance of an individual to be brought forth.
- FRA treats the underlying cause of why someone is aging which is preferable to masking the outward symptoms and allowing further decline and dysfunction to continue within the body. FRA helps to bring all the bodily systems up to the optimum levels possible for that person while appeasing their appetite for a younger appearance.
- Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture is generally less costly than cosmetic surgery and many esthetic practices that are repeated.
- FRA is more cost effective- multiple signs of aging can be treated simultaneously as well as many health conditions.
- FRA provides a more natural look. The current trend is that people are moving away from facelifts opting for relatively less invasive procedures like Botox and fillers. FRA won't make you look frozen, excessively puffed up, pulled too tight, and it won't give you that permanently surprised look.

What FRA does in relation to Western cosmetic procedures

Facelift Surgery 123,685 facelift procedures in 2019	FRA can through specific empirical points, massage techniques, needle technique, and motor points on the scalp, have a favorable effect on
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	<p>lifting the targeted cheek area and jowls.</p> <p>Acupuncture can also help with surgery in these ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * prepare the patient for surgery and prevent or treat anxiety which helps the patient tolerate the surgery better, and regulate blood pressure, as well as boosting immunity to diminish the chance of infection associated with surgical procedures. Less anesthesia can be employed than for surgery without the acupuncture. * alleviate side effects from surgery such as postoperative nausea and vomiting or opiate induced constipation, and bruising. * promote faster healing and recovery. * can enhance surgical esthetic effects and maintain them longer.
Forehead Lift Surgery 37,246 forehead lifts in 2019	<p>Certain motor points on the scalp needled with specific needle technique can work like a surgical forehead lift would.</p>
Eye Lid Surgeries 211,005 eyelid surgeries in 2019	<p>Specific points on the upper part of the face and scalp can lift sagging eyelids without invasive surgery.</p>

Neck Lift Surgeries 54,652 neck lift surgeries in 2019	FRA can define the jaw line through needling very specific muscle insertions and can lift and tone the skin under the chin, plus help neck posture (and associated pain). Double chins can be approached with acupuncture from a structural perspective, hormonal approach, from excess weight and phlegm and lymph accumulation in that area.
Botox Injections 7.7 million injections in 2019	FRA can treat wrinkles from muscle spasms such as the glabellar lines by relaxing the overactive corrugator supercilii muscles. It can also help those wrinkles caused by gravity such as the nasolabial lines via lifting sagging facial skin through needling empirical motor points on the scalp.
Dermal Filler Injectables 2.7 million filler injections in 2019	FRA initiates collagen production which can fill in wrinkles and hollowed areas. Needle insertion causes a microtrauma that helps to lay down collagen and elastin to plump up and firm the skin in treated areas.
PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) 139,230 PRP procedures in 2019	There is evidence that acupuncture causes increased blood circulation locally. Blood contains vital nutrients, hormones, oxygen and life force, revitalizing tissues that it infuses. From clinical experience, I would say FRA has more dramatic results than PRP alone.

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FRA: The Effects

Fine lines may be eliminated while deeper wrinkles tend to diminish considerably. Other likely results include eyebags and dark circles diminished or eliminated, puffiness of the face corrected, facial coloring equalized, and double chins minimized and eliminated in many cases. Drooping eyelids and eyebrows, jowls, and ‘turkey necks’ can be observed as having lifted. With the profound increase of local circulation of *qi* and blood to the face and stimulation of the movement of lymph, skin texture and coloring improves. Sebaceous secretions can be regulated aiding excessively dry or oily skin and acne, muscle tone can benefit, and pore size can be normalized. Visible stress and habitual expressions from the face melt away as memories and traumas are discharged from the connective tissue allowing even those who are young or born with perfect bone structure to look their best.

As with regular acupuncture, the results are manifold and include the health benefits of improved circulation, digestion, immunity, and hormonal balance, to name just a few. By virtue of the local needling, empirically it has been found to benefit the hair, the sense organs, thyroid, and brain.

About the author Virginia Doran, M.Ac., L.Ac., LMT

As an experienced teacher of Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture since 1998 and practitioner of FRA since 1995, Virginia Doran is a recognized international expert in the field. She holds a Master’s of Science in Acupuncture and is an NCCAOM Diplomate in both Acupuncture and Chinese Herbology. She has been practicing as a licensed massage therapist since 1979. Ms. Doran has been sought out by major television networks to demonstrate her method of

acupuncture and has been written about in multiple publications including the New York Times and Newsweek.

Ms. Doran is currently writing two books on Facial Rejuvenation. The first book is a textbook for acupuncture practitioners on Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture. The second book, which will be made available to both the public and practitioners, is about Facial Rejuvenation utilizing acupuncture and her Luminous Beauty program of various adjunctive modalities including acupressure and massage, Chinese and Western herbs, aromatherapy, supplements, nutrition, flower essences, and Energy Medicine.

Virginia hosts a monthly Facebook Live event for the American Acupuncture Council. She is one of the AAC's approved cosmetic acupuncture teachers and has taught most of the teachers on this subject in the West. Virginia's instructional DVD series on FRA, workshop schedule, and other articles can be found on her website, <http://luminousbeauty.com>