Cosmetology-2013

OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery

2nd International Conference and Exhibition on
Cosmetology & Trichology

November 12-14, 2013 DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Chicago - North Shore, USA

Rejuvenation of the irradiated neck by autologous lipotransfer

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Abstract

There is great importance attached to the youthful appearance of the neck and décolletage. After irradiation to these areas, and particularly when in combination with surgery, fibrosis of the skin and underlying tissues occurs. Additionally, function, healing, and repair are significantly impaired, which may result in considerable morbidity.

Tissues typically have an unhealthy appearance, and may fuse to produce constrictive and unsightly bands. Fixed-posture-deformities may result, which together with aesthetic compromise may greatly affect the quality of life.

Patients who had oncosurgical intervention more than five years previously with self-reported dissatisfaction had standard Coleman fat-grafting performed on them. Objective evaluation of tissue-quality was assessed pre-operatively and at 3-months post-operatively. There was improvement in all measured indices and reported improvement in subjective measures such as pain and quality-of-life scores. Patient-satisfaction was high and there were no donor-site complications.

Autologous lipotransfer addresses the aforementioned problems by functioning as a filler to address contour discrepancies to improve aesthetics, and by providing a lubricating interface between tissues to improve function. The delivery of pluripotent mesenchymal adipose-derived stem cells may enhance angiogenesis to cause regeneration and rejuvenation of ischaemic tissues.

This surgical modality for aesthetic- and functional- improvement has proven utility in various other anatomical sites. Our results support its use within the determined criteria in the head and neck areas.

Biography

Niroshan Sivathasan completed his bachelor's and medical degrees at the age of 23 from King's College London and University College London, respectively. Postgraduate qualifications in surgery and aesthetic medicine were also gained in London. He has published 30 articles, and is a reviewer and editorial committee-member for various medical journals. Sivathasan has a particular interest in cosmesis, and is about to commence a fellowship in cosmetic surgery in Australia.