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# Augmentation and eversion of lips without injections: The lip peel



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## SURGICAL CHALLENGE

Injectable hyaluronic acid fillers are the current standard for lip rejuvenation, but they fail to treat deep wrinkles and photodamage.

## SOLUTION

Lip enhancement is performed with phenol-croton oil chemical peel. A formula containing 0.4%-1.6% croton oil in 35% phenol<sup>1</sup> is applied with a moist cotton-tipped applicator over the entire vermilion surface: from the border to the wet-dry line (Video 1). This low-cost procedure can be performed in ~2 minutes. Patients usually feel a numbing sensation caused by the phenol. A mild burning sensation occurs after 20 minutes and subsides in a few hours, once maximum edema is reached. Petrolatum jelly is applied for occlusion and throughout the healing period. Valacyclovir 500 mg is taken every 8 hours for herpes prophylaxis until complete epithelialization occurs.

The degree of lip augmentation achieved depends mainly on the individual size of the lips and croton oil concentration. In other words, it depends on the treated surface area and concentration of the active ingredient of the formula. Actinic cheilitis can be addressed with this technique (Fig 1). In severe cases, 4% croton oil in 84.5% phenol might be used locally for a stronger peel to treat actinic dysplasia.<sup>2</sup> Increased volume and improvement in lip contour occurs from neocollagenesis and contraction of the vermilion skin causes lip

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**Fig 1.** Lip augmentation without injectable hyaluronic acid. Enhanced contour and improvement of actinic cheilitis areas (*arrows*) with a single phenol-croton oil peel with 0.8% croton oil in 35% phenol. Significant augmentation is clinically appreciated. The elevation of Glogau-Klein (G-K) lip point in the picture is prominent. The linear measurements of the height of the upper lip from the Glogau-Klein lip point (*vertical line*) and the height of the lower lip at midline to the vermilion border (*perpendicular lines*) in the before photograph (*top*) were projected in the after 6-month photograph (*bottom*) as comparison aids.

eversion. Long-lasting results are expected for >2 years (Fig 2). The lip peel can be performed in combination with perioral or full face peels. As any medical procedure, supervised training is required. Hands-on workshops are available through the International Peeling Society.



**Fig 2.** Volumization of lower and upper lips. Less lip contour and volume before treatment (*left*). Natural fullness, restoration of contour, and elevation of Glogau-Klein lip point are evident 14 days after a 1.2% croton oil in 35% phenol peel (*middle*). Persistent augmentation of lip volume is clinically appreciated at follow-up 2 years later (*right*).

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