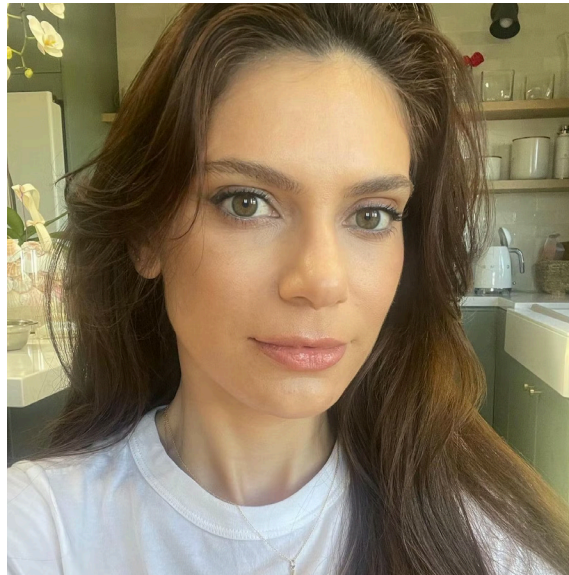


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I Tried EmFace — The New Skin Treatment That Lifts Without Needles

Jessica Ourisman | October 25, 2022



Radio frequency treatments for skin tightening are all the rage, thanks to their ability to increase collagen and elastin in the skin with little-to-no downtime. But the fact is, skin quality addresses only one element of the natural aging process. "As we get older, we also get laxity in our [facial] muscles, which, combined with loss of collagen and elasticity in our skin, leads to sagging skin and an aged appearance," says board-certified plastic surgeon **Kimberly Lee**. Think: muscle atrophy, loss of volume, deepening of hollows beneath the eyes and temples, and reduced definition along the contours of the face and edge of the jawline. Hence, the latest non-surgical advancements in facial rejuvenation address both skin quality *and* muscle tone. Enter: EmFace — the buzziest new muscle-toning treatment for your face.

BTL Aesthetics spent seven years developing and testing EmFace, a combination therapy that uses radio frequency and high intensity electromagnetic stimulation (HIFES) to target the skin and muscles of the face. You might have heard about EmSculpt Neo — the muscle-strengthening device that puts body contouring on the map — and EmFace is basically that, but for the face. But adapting the technology to be suitable for the much-smaller muscles and anatomy of the face required additional development and testing. The result is a device that emits radiofrequency to tighten the skin, while also simultaneously strengthening the

underlying musculature of the face; expect skin tightening and a pronounced lift that comes with no pain or downtime.

Below, learn everything you need to know about EmFace, the new facial treatment the aesthetics space is buzzing over.

Before/After EmFace



Dr. Jennifer Levine

What Is EmFace?

"EmFace uses a combination of HIFES, or high intensity focused electrical stimulation, to restore muscle tone, and radio frequency (RF) to build collagen and elastin [in your skin]," says board-certified dermatologist Arash Akhavan, who is based in New York City. "This rejuvenates your face in a completely natural way [by] treating both aspects of facial aging: loss of collagen, and muscle volume."

Beverly Hills-based, double board-certified plastic surgeon Ben Talei corroborates the importance of both skin thickness (or density) and facial muscle volume (or tone). "Facial musculature can have a substantial effect on the face," he says of the aging process. For instance, around the brows, he notes that thin skin and strong muscles can yield drooping over time due to continual expressions and smiling. On the other hand, he adds that a thicker-skinned patient with less muscle tone can potentially have a higher brow, but less expressiveness. General expressiveness, stress levels, fat content, skin density, and muscle tone thus can all impact the lifted appearance on the face over time.

Unlike lasers or microneedling treatments that may require numbing and downtime, the EmFace device works completely non-invasively and painlessly. A practitioner will simply adhere the device's three electrodes onto strategic points of the face to target the muscles that are responsible for lifting your brows and cheeks — so, one on the forehead, and one on each cheek. Each treatment lasts roughly 20 to 30 minutes and is painless; you will feel a warming

sensation as the radiofrequency is emitted, and the involuntary scrunching of your face as the HIFES energy contracts your muscles. There is no downtime or discomfort following the treatment.



Dr. Jennifer Levine

Benefits Of EmFace

The results of this combined therapy yield a lifted appearance to the face and skin — particularly in the brow and corners of the mouth — as well as providing definition along the contours of the face, like the cheekbones, jawline, and chin. Based on yet-to-be-published nine clinical trials, patients saw an increase of 30% in muscle tone, 37% in wrinkle reduction, 23% in lifting effect, 26% in collagen, 200% in elastin, 92.8% in volume, 92.5% in skin evenness. Overall, there was a 92.3% patient satisfaction rate.

But how? "As we age, our facial muscles become weaker, which [also] leads to sagging skin," Dr. Akhavan says. "EmFace works to strengthen the muscle tone, thereby lifting facial structures. This is something we could previously only do with injectables." He goes on to explain that the radiofrequency uses heat to cue the dermis' production of collagen and elastin, which the skin needs to combat wrinkles, sagging, and creping. Meanwhile, the HIFES technology works out your facial muscles by contracting them — sort of like a microcurrent facial on steroids.

The energy is delivered via electrodes that are placed on the face. "For most patients, three pads are utilized — one for the forehead, and one for each cheek," says double board-certified plastic surgeon Yael Halaas, who practices in New York City. The key placement of these three electrodes lifts the entire face due to the specifics of facial anatomy. "EmFace contracts the muscles responsible for elevating the brow and cheek, [but] anatomically the muscles are connected to the bone and skin with ligaments," explains double board-certified plastic surgeon Jennifer Levine. "So the HIFES with radiofrequency affects both the skin and the structural components, as well."



Photo via Dr. Yael Halaas

How Does EmFace Work?

"I believe that the treatment of the facial muscles represents an innovative and promising development in facial aesthetics," Dr. Levine says. She is enthusiastic about its ability to address aging that goes beyond just the skin; namely, the elevator muscles within the submuscular aponeurotic system (SMAS), a deeper layer of tissue that is lifted during surgical facelifts.

"When you strengthen the correct muscles, you can see a lifting effect of the entire system, the overlying skin, and the neck," Dr. Halaas says. "This is why we see tightening of the brow, lifting of the cheeks, improvement of the jawline, and of the submentum/neck. It's really a cosmetic physical therapy to fight the aging process."

While there are other devices offering facial rejuvenation by addressing the facial muscles — for instance, TriLift by Lumenis alternates radiofrequency microneedling with sessions of Dynamic Muscle Stimulation (DMSt) — Dr. Levine strongly favors EmFace. "This is the first and only device that is using high intensity electrical stimulation of the face, [while also using] RF to maximize the effect of the muscle stimulation to produce the lifting effect. Combining these two technologies in this way is very difficult," she says. It is also very effective. As Dr. Akhavan points out, the results of EmFace were previously only achieved with injectables.

EmFace vs. Botox

It might feel counterintuitive to seek out a treatment that works the muscles of the face when so much money is spent on a class of injectable to do the opposite — neuromodulators like Botox and Dysport work by paralyzing certain muscles of the face to prevent skin creasing that leads to deep wrinkles. But experts insist that EmFace and neurotoxins are, in fact, complementary, largely because each targets a different type of muscle.

Specifically, EmFace targets the muscles that lift the components of the face as a matter of function. Conversely, Dr. Levin notes that, "Most neurotoxins are placed in the facial muscles that are depressors of the face, like the corrugator or the platysma." She also adds that in some instances, too much neuromodulator in the frontalis — the muscle that causes horizontal forehead lines — results in the appearance of a heavy brow. EmFace can actually help to correct this, as it is meant to elevate the brow, while smoothing wrinkles.



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EmFace: Cost and Frequency

To see full results, it's recommended that patients receive a series of four 20- to 30-minute EmFace sessions spaced two to 10 days apart. Full effects will be visible in 12 weeks (or six weeks after your last appointment) and last for one year. "Many patients love the effect and look for further improvement, so they may do another treatment sooner," Dr. Levin adds.

Each session costs between \$1,200 to \$1,500, but may be sold in a package of four for a slight discount. This is also a great incentive to ensure you finish the full course of the treatment and get the best results. "The average price for four sessions is \$4,500," says Dr. Halaas.

EmFace: My Personal Review

At the beginning of my EmFace appointment, the first step was to have my "before" photos taken in order to establish a baseline and keep track of my end results. Then I washed my face and the practitioners affixed three electrodes with sticky backs onto my forehead and each cheek, along with a grounding patch on my back. (Note: Be sure to wash your face thoroughly as any residual oil, makeup, or sunscreen can cause the stickers to become unstuck from the surface of the face.)

The treatment truly feels like having your cheeks gently but repeatedly pinched by your grandmother over the course of 20 minutes. This is just the way it feels as the energy causes your muscles to contract, involuntarily contorting your face into a scrunched position and then releasing it. I personally laughed a lot because I couldn't help imagining what it must look like.

I experienced no discomfort whatsoever, aside from when a piece of my unruly hair fell onto my face and got stuck under the sticker. Then, when it pulsed, I felt a gentle tug until it was removed. But the patches themselves were painless and warmed gradually during the treatment due to the radiofrequency energy. Immediately following the treatment, I experienced some boost in volume and lift, but this is temporary — like the way body muscles tend to mildly swell with blood flow for hours or days following a hard workout. I knew that my full, long-term results would come six to 12 weeks later, and I was in it for the long game. (Note: I'll update this with my results after six weeks.)

Emface vs. Microcurrent

You might be wondering if EmFace feels similar in any way to a microcurrent treatment, but it honestly does not. While with microcurrent you might feel a gentle twitching at the corner of your mouth, EmFace pulses the face with full-on muscular contractions — like doing crunches with your cheeks. Basically, if you have tried EmSculpt Neo on any part of your body, it is the exact same sensation, just gentler. Plus, microcurrent is used along different muscles and facial contours, from the chin, along the jaw, up and beyond, whereas EmFace targets only the specific elevator muscles on the top of the face using strong pulses. Additionally, it becomes warm as the radiofrequency energy is sent into the face. So, while it is a similar sort of idea in that the technologies both use energies to tone facial muscles, the energy, muscles, and application are all different — as are the outcomes (one year with EmFace vs. two weeks to a month for microcurrent) and the price points (thousands with EmFace vs. hundreds for microcurrent). At the end of the day, it's a personal preference based on your needs and lifestyle.

Should You Try EmFace?

There is no denying that the combined effect of radiofrequency and HIFES harnessed by EmFace achieves a much sought-after treatment goal in facial rejuvenation, prejuvenation, and beyond. In all instances, EmFace is proving itself to be quite a versatile addition to providers' toolkits. "EmFace is fantastic to fight pre-aging, to maintain surgical results, to restore volume, and to help patients scared of fillers or needles," Dr. Halaas says.

If you are considering the EmFace treatment for yourself, the only contraindications that would preclude it would be if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or have metal implants in the face or head. Otherwise, as Dr. Halas puts it, "EmFace is a predictable, hands-free, safe, reliable therapy that is comfortable with no downtime. There is an extensive amount of scientific studies proving the efficacy and safety, and a lack of any adverse side effects or unwanted aesthetic effects."

<https://www.thezoereport.com/beauty/emface-review>