



Screen rhytides

the cosmetic legacy of COVID-19

Searle, Tamara; Ali, Faisal R; Al-Niaimi, Firas

Published in:
Dermatologic Therapy

DOI (link to publication from Publisher):
[10.1111/dth.14211](https://doi.org/10.1111/dth.14211)

Creative Commons License
CC BY-NC 4.0

Publication date:
2020

Document Version
Accepted author manuscript, peer reviewed version

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Searle, T., Ali, F. R., & Al-Niaimi, F. (2020). Screen rhytides: the cosmetic legacy of COVID-19. *Dermatologic Therapy*, 33(6), Article e14211. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dth.14211>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Screen rhytides: the cosmetic legacy of COVID-19

Authors: Tamara Searle¹; Faisal R. Ali; ^{2,3} Firas Al-Niaimi⁴

Institutions: ¹University of Birmingham Medical School, Birmingham, UK

²St John's Institute of Dermatology, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, Great Maze Pond, London SE1 9RS, UK.

³Vernova Healthcare Community Interest Company, Macclesfield, UK.

⁴Department of Dermatology, Aalborg University Hospital, Aalborg, Denmark.

*Corresponding author: Dr Firas Al-Niaimi: firas55@hotmail.com

Keywords: aesthetics, botulinum, botox®, cosmetic dermatology, COVID-19, rhytides

Running head: screen rhytides and COVID-19

Word count (excluding title page and references): 266

This article has been accepted for publication and undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process which may lead to differences between this version and the Version of Record. Please cite this article as doi: [10.1111/dth.14211](https://doi.org/10.1111/dth.14211)

Consent for publication: All authors have approved this final submitted version of the manuscript and consent to its submission for consideration of publication

Conflicts of interest: none

Funding: None

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

Dear Professor Lotti,

COVID-19 and the resulting lockdown has brought in a new digital era in which meetings are regularly scheduled on online platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Neologisms such as 'zoom fatigue' have entered everyday vocabulary describing the prolonged use of screens and need for online productivity.¹ This may lead to increased squinting and ocular straining and has resulted in increased glabellar straining and prolonged orbicularis oculi muscle contraction, causing worsening of glabellar wrinkles and crow's feet. Furthermore, exposure to blue light from electronic devices can increase the generation of reactive oxygen species leading to aging and wrinkles and can result in damage to the eyes and skin.² After months of scrutinising one's appearance through video conferencing platforms including deepening wrinkles, there may be an emerging demand for neurotoxins as individual country's lockdown restrictions are lifted. Increased straining and muscle

Accepted Article

contraction may reduce the length of time that botulinum toxin exerts its effects, resulting in an increased demand for more sessions of botulinum toxin with shorter intervals between each treatment. The authors are observing a sharp increase and awareness of glabellar and lateral canthal lines with patients directly referring the effects to increased “screen activity”.

Emerging reports of patients self-administering botulinum toxin with black-market at home kits demonstrates some patients’ desperation, with devastating potential adverse effects.³ COVID-19 lockdown restrictions necessarily prohibited access to most aesthetic injectable treatments and as cosmetic clinics start to reopen, cosmetic dermatologists are likely to have a backlog of patients.⁴ We suggest cosmetic practitioners should assess for and treat wrinkles and other facial changes resulting from prolonged screen activities.

References

- (1) Richter A. Locked-down digital work. *Int J Inf Manage*. 2020:102157. doi: 10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102157.
- (2) Arjmandi N, Mortazavi G, Zarei S, Faraz M, Mortazavi SAR. Can Light Emitted from Smartphone Screens and Taking Selfies Cause Premature Aging and Wrinkles? *J Biomed Phys Eng*. 2018;8(4):447-452.

- (3) Haria S. 'Desperate' people turning to backstreet botox and face fillers to keep up appearances in lockdown. [Internet]. 2020. [cited 23 July 2020]. Available from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/beauty/face/inquiry-desperate-people-injecting-face-fillers-keep-appearances/>.
- (4) Arora G, Jafferany M, Arora S. Balancing aesthetic and conventional dermatology practice in the COVID-19 era. *Dermatol Ther*. 2020;19:e13620.