

GLAMOUR

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Skincare



Ever since YouTube star Michelle Phan claimed to use [microneedling to plump her lips](#), we've been curious to know if it works. Sure you don't have to get lip injections with the treatment, but it still involves the use of needles—lots of tiny ones that get rolled across the skin with a dermaroller to slightly injure it and produce collagen. It's often used to reduce acne scars, tighten the skin, and even reduce stretch marks, but whether it can plump your lips—that's a whole other question. That's why we turned to [New York dermatologist Judith Hellman, M.D.](#), to find out if it works. Her short answer: No. Read on to find out why.

A lot of women want larger lips. Is microneedling a good way to get them?

The actual lips (the pink part) is one of the most sensitive parts of the body and full of nerve endings. Microneedling it without numbing would be pure torture. If someone microneedles their lips, the result would be tremendous swelling and a widely distorted look, which would look horrible for two to three days, then for another two to three days would look very swollen, after which the lips would go back to exactly the same size as before. The lips have many more blood vessels and glands than the regular skin, and are much less given to collagen production, so there won't be a similar collagen build-up to what we see in the facial skin. In the end, microneedling the lips is an exceedingly painful process, and the results look distorted and unnatural and go away within a few days. So no, I don't think it works very well.

What are the potential complications of microneedling your lips?

Microneedling the skin in general, but especially the lips, hurts a lot. Just look at some YouTube videos on cosmetic tattooing (permanent makeup) for the lips. It's painful, results in asymmetrical and exaggerated swelling for a few days, and only the color remains in the end. Thin lips stay thin with the look of lipstick. With Microneedling, not even the color remains—just memories of the pain. Of course, getting infections from the device is a very relevant danger too. Also, injury to the lips can reactivate cold sores (due to the herpes virus), which can spread onto the entire microneedled surface and cause serious downtime.

Are at-home dermarollers safer to use for microneedling the lips?

Using those will yield the same short-lived and distorted looking results for plumping the lips...of course, if someone enjoys pain, they will work for that! The risk of herpes and bacterial infections do apply, and the Kylie Jenner look will still escape those with hopes for lasting fuller lips. I recommend that anyone seriously interested in lip plumping should seek out a dermatologist or plastic surgeon for filler injections, which are the only way to get visually pleasing results safely.

Is there a way microneedling can enhance the lips at all?

Microneedling for the lips would be best on the skin above and below the upper and lower lip for smoker's lines. The treatment hurts, so a topical numbing cream is a good idea.