

Research shows anti-aging techniques not yet viewed as acceptable

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Studies from the University of Toronto's psychology department show that people who use more invasive anti-aging methods such as Botox injections or surgery are viewed more negatively than those who use milder techniques such as sun-avoidance and facial creams and younger adults are more negative about using anti-aging methods than older adults.

"These results suggest that despite the rapid growth of the anti-aging cosmetic industry, age concealment has not yet become universally accepted," said lead author and associate professor, Alison Chasteen. "This is important because it shows that despite the emphasis on looking younger in society, there are possible negative social consequences to fighting the signs of aging by engaging in cosmetic age concealment."

The first study assessed the reactions of 122 younger (mean age 19) and 123 [older adults](#) (mean age 70) to middle aged (50-years-old) or older (60- to 70-years-old) people who used mild (facial creams) or major ([Botox](#)) anti-aging methods. They also assessed the participants' perceptions of the middle aged or older adults' vanity and typicality to their age group.

The study found that older adults had more [positive feelings](#) towards those who used any type of anti-aging techniques than the younger adults did. Both groups viewed mild methods more favourably than major methods and both groups considered middle aged people to be more "typical" of those using anti-aging techniques.

The second study broadened the age range of the age concealment users as well as the types of anti-aging methods used. A total of 51 younger (mean age 19) and 49 older adults (mean age 70) were randomly assigned to read about either four middle-aged adults (40s) or four older adults (60s) who used either natural (avoiding the sun), mild (facial creams), major (Botox) or extreme (brow lift) anti-aging methods. Participants again indicated their overall reaction, how vain they thought the individuals were, and also how typical they felt the adults were of their age group.

The study found similar results to the first, but also that younger adults considered those using the natural and mild methods to be vainer than older adults did. Older adult participants viewed older users of anti-aging methods as more typical than middle-aged users, but young adult participants viewed the middle-aged and older users as equally typical.

More information: The paper "Age and Antiaging Technique Influence Reactions to Age Concealment" was authored by Chasteen and co-authored by graduate student Nadia Bashir and undergraduate students Christina Gallucci and Anja Visekruna. It was published in the *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences* on July 12.

Provided by University of Toronto

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