

## Deep Furrows Around the Mouth

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A 53-year-old female smoker presents with deep furrows around her mouth. She is wondering about the cause and what her treatment options are.

### What is your diagnosis?

- Anetoderma
- Perioral rhytides
- Cutis laxa
- Scleroderma
- Leonine facies

### Answer

Perioral rhytides (**answer b**) or wrinkles, are a common sign in longstanding smokers. Smokers have premature and increased facial wrinkling compared to nonsmokers, and women are more susceptible than men. In many smokers, the threat of facial wrinkling is a greater motivator to quit than the threat of lung cancer or other life-threatening smoking-related diseases. Since not all smokers have a smoker's face, genetic factors may also be involved.

Sun exposure also plays a significant role in the development of wrinkles. Exposure to ultraviolet light, UVA or UVB, from sunlight accounts for 90% of the symptoms of premature skin aging, including wrinkles. Despite all the advertising for cosmetic products and procedures, the most important skin-care product available to prevent wrinkles is sunscreen. Both UVA and UVB radiation cause wrinkles by breaking down collagen, creating free radicals, and inhibiting the natural repair mechanisms of the skin.



Figure 1: Deep Furrows Around the Mouth

The presence of such deep wrinkling should be a reminder to educate patients about sun awareness and protection, and to discuss the many options and benefits to quitting smoking.

Treatment options include laser resurfacing and the use of botulinum toxin, often in combination with dermal fillers.

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