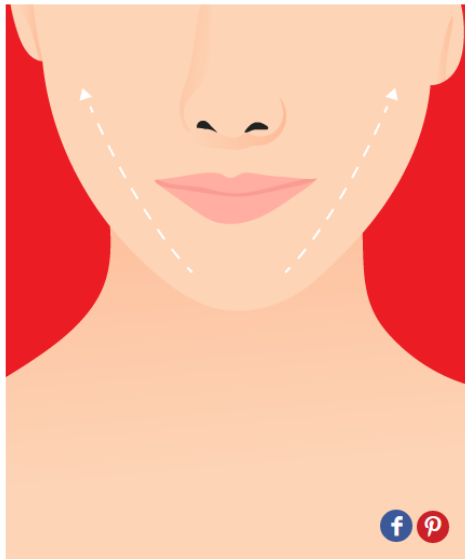




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The Beauty Industry Is Suddenly Obsessed With Your Chin



On the long list of features that women obsess over, the chin doesn't typically rank very high. Crow's feet, laugh lines, brow furrows — sure, we all get varying degrees of self-consciousness about those little aging reminders, but the chin? Not so much. Brace yourselves, because your chin is about to be barraged by a whole new category of beauty treatments. Let us introduce you to the V-Line.

Where It All Began

V-Line is a term that originated in South Korea and capitalized on the country's obsession with the "small face." While we here in the U.S. might fetishize a poreless, wrinkle-free visage, in Asia, the desire to have a delicate, small face is the beauty standard. The V-Line concept narrows down that ideal even more, specifically referring to

a chin shape that is more pointed and a jawline that is more defined. "Women in Korea were fearing the U-Line — a jawline that is more angled and squareish," says Sarah Lee, co-founder of K-beauty mecca [Glow Recipe](#). "A U-Line jaw was seen as a form of aging, and women became fixated on correcting it by any means necessary."

According to Lee, the actual phrase "V-Line," came from the most unlikely of places: A diet tea. Says Glow Recipe co-founder Christine Chang, the [visual in the tea ad](#) was the catalyst for V-Line's viral spread. "The woman [in the ad] put two of the tea bottles next to each other, about a hand's width apart, and then put her face between the two bottles without knocking them over," recounts Chang. It created a kind of small-face challenge where everyone was doing it — sitting in cafes, on YouTube videos — trying to see if they could literally fit their face into this new beauty standard.

The Product Frenzy

Ever the savvy marketers, South Korean beauty brands took the concept and ran with it, debuting everything from face masks to serums with a V-Line focus. There are even at-home tools designed to help you massage your way to a more defined jawline. According to Lee and Chang, the current big trend is [Yves Saint Laurent's Youth Liberator](#), a Y-shaped massaging tool. "Most women in South Korea either own that, or the [Refa Carat](#) — a massager that was a huge hit on home shopping," says Lee.

The non-surgical V-Line treatments vary, with everything from face masks that physically pull up the chin and hold it, to serums with tightening and lifting ingredients. Many Korean spas offer a [V-Line massage](#), which multiple sources have told us was one of the most painful beauty experiences of their lives. For the truly hardcore, there are always surgical options — Lee outlined a procedure to us that involves implanting a thread under the skin of the jawline and then pulling it to lift up the chin like a marionette. We'll let that visual settle in for a moment.

Headed Our Way

Knowing how hot U.S. consumers are for K-beauty innovations, brands are now introducing products with the V-Line messaging. While wrinkles continue to be the number one anti-aging concern of American women, according to our sources' research, the next one on the list is sagging — e.g., jowls and a less-defined jawline.

"The need for firming products that target the neck and jawline area is global," says Tiina Isohanni, vice-president of innovations and development at beauty brand [Lumene](#). While V-Line may have originated in Asia, the brand's V-Shaping Serum will be the first product released for the U.S. market with V-Line messaging.

[Clarins](#), on the other hand, launched its Shaping Facial Lift Serum in Asia almost 15 years ago, where, according to Marie-Hélène Lair, the brand's scientific communication director, it's the number one firming serum in China and Malaysia. Based on that success, the brand is finally releasing the serum here in the U.S. "It's impossible to talk about the signs of aging as just wrinkles and sagging," explains Lair. "This perception of facial definition is becoming a main concern linked to the aging process."

And since Clarins is a brand born from spas and the spa experience, it puts an emphasis not just on the product itself, but *how* you apply it.

As detailed in the video above, the application method involves leaning your head forward and placing its weight into your hands as you gently massage the product into the skin. According to Milana Knowles, Clarins senior director of spa development in the U.S., this massage technique helps with facial contouring through two approaches: lymphatic drainage and compression massage.

We know that massage can be helpful in creating a temporary lifting effect and allowing products to better absorb into the skin for increased effectiveness. Knowles says this concept of lymphatic drainage for the face can also temporarily reshape the jawline into a more defined appearance by removing excess fluid to reduce visible puffiness. While the jawline itself is not physically restructured, it appears more defined because you've removed the built-up fluid, "guiding" it toward the lymph nodes and speeding up the natural drainage process.

As for the compression, Knowles says that after this drainage occurs, "The spaces within the tissue that held the heavy fluid will naturally have 'dips.' Compression massage movements firm the tissue, which leads to a [temporary] visible lifting effect." Knowles says for maximum results, the treatment should be done daily or, at a minimum, once a month. Superstar makeup artist Robin Black is a **big fan of this technique** — she swears it makes her face look tighter, brighter, and less puffy.

Equal Opportunity Insecurity

Lest you think this is just another example of the double standard of aging for woman, we discovered that even men aren't safe from feelings of chin inadequacy. Says **Leslie Baumann MD**, "I have a large population of male patients that come for injections in the chin area to get a 'stronger' chin. A recessed chin in men is considered less masculine."

Men's brand **Lab Series** is capitalizing on that notion with the launch of its Max LS Age-Less Power V Lifting Cream — a chin-specific product targeted toward men.

Dermatologist and skin-care expert **Paul Jarrod Frank, MD**, sagely notes that in general, V-Line is just a marketing term, but he does say that it's also useful, helping consumers identify and target a concern more effectively.

Doesn't that just make a V-Line cream nothing more than a hyped up neck cream? "I don't consider the V-Line and the neck area as one and the same," says Dr. Frank. "The jawline is different from the skin on your neck — it's much thicker, particularly in males." He adds that unlike the neck, where the main concern is skin tightening, in the chin area there is also the issue of volume — there are fat pockets in the chin that aren't present in the neck.

Unfortunately, the reality is that topical creams aren't magical fat solvers. If you're looking to make a significant change to your chin, then you're going to need to go down the rabbit hole of professional procedures.

Going Pro

This year saw the introduction of a new injectable called **Kybella**, which according to Dr. Baumann, actually does dissolve fat — similar to the way a detergent removes grease from your dishes. "The fat is carried away and broken down into fatty acids that can be recycled by the body into beneficial things, such as cell membranes," she explains.

Kybella isn't the only one — there's also **Ultrashape**, focused ultrasound that destroys fat cells; **UltraTight**, a minimally invasive "**micro-liposuction**;" and a headset from **Coolsculpting** aimed at reducing double chins by freezing fat, which will launch later this year. Of course, these all come at a much higher price point (read: in the thousands), but the results will be much more dramatic and immediate.

That's not to say that the new cream options aren't useful for anyone looking to address or prevent a prematurely sagging jawline. Says Dr. Frank, "Topicals aren't going to do what procedures do, but the formulations in over-the-counter products are getting more advanced. Just because you get your teeth [professionally] cleaned every six months doesn't mean you don't floss every day. I believe the more small things you do, the biggest synergistic results you get."

Or you could just say screw it and go back to not giving a second thought to your chin. But if you're in the "I feel bad about my chin," camp, it's nice to know you've got plenty of options.