

HAIR TRANSPLANTS

Notes for guidance

Hair transplants can give self-confidence back to men or women, who may be distressed by the early stages of baldness, or those suffering advanced stages of hair loss. Only hair transplants are a possible permanent solution, but transplants are not right for every patient. Discuss with your physician the likelihood that a hair transplant may work for you.

What is hair loss and why do people need hair transplants?

Hair loss is from a medical condition arising from genetics or hormones. It is called male or female pattern baldness, also known as Androgenic Alopecia. The resulting hair loss is usually at the crown of the head or the front of the scalp. These hairs are the types that are short-term, meaning that they are prone to susceptibility to the effects of dihydrotestosterone or DHT. This is a hormone that causes the hair to progressively thin until it eventually falls out. There are some hairs at the back of the head (the "donor area") which are resistant to DHT, and these are used in modern hair transplants.

Medical technology has advanced significantly since the 1970's and 80s, when "hair plugs" were more common - and unfortunately more noticeable. Advances in the technology of the superior microscopes that are used now, as well as the general surgical techniques, have made hair transplanting a much more fulfilling and successful process.

Am I a candidate for a hair transplant or have I lost too much hair?

Physicians recommend that patients discuss the possibility of having a hair transplant before they are completely bald. Often hair can be transplanted from the donor area (the back of the head), and placed between existing hair follicles, to fill in thinning areas and offset the signs of balding. There are several methods for hair transplants. One of the newest is FIT (Follicular Isolation Technique). Using the follicular isolation technique, there is little to no scarring. It is also called the "Cole Technique," named after Dr. John P. Cole, who practices in the Eastern United States.

This breakthrough method thins out the donor area and adds the follicles to the balding or thinning areas in the front of the head. This method is also well-known for not leaving extensive scarring, and is

also known to give a better donor supply and restore the hair more quickly to balding areas.

There are a few different procedures for hair transplant surgery. Older versions of the surgery are procedures such as scalp reduction, punch grafting, and scalp flaps. Scalp reduction is the procedure where a bald portion of the scalp is surgically removed, then sewn together which results in less scalp area; however, this often leaves large amounts of scar tissue, and the scalp may stretch and leave the same bald area as before. Punch grafting is an older procedure, no longer really used, that often results in "corn rows" or the infamous "doll" look.

Small sections of donor hair are punched out and then placed in the desired balding scalp area. Scalp flaps are procedures where flaps of donor skin and tissue are moved into the balding area, and surgically held in place. Often partial or complete loss of these flaps happened due to problems with the blood supply, or there was substantial scarring due to multiple flaps being used. Most procedures take one to three hours, sometimes with multiple sessions before conclusion.

Recovery: when can I show off my hair?

Most patients are able to return to work within a few days, and to resume their more strenuous activities anywhere from one to three weeks. It could take as long as two years before the final effects are fully recognizable and complete, depending on what type of transplant was performed. This is a good thing, as your hair grows back gradually and not all at once, resulting in a completely natural-looking full head of healthy hair.

Are there any risks with hair transplantation?

The older versions of hair transplant surgery had a higher risk for excessive scarring, and the partial or complete loss of the scalp or donor hair. The risks for infection were also higher. But with newer technology allowing hair follicles to be carefully separated and then implanted, there is a reduced amount of the loss of donor hair. With the newer methods, there are also much fewer risks. Fewer surgeons are using surgical procedures, subsequently with a reduction of lost pieces of scalp or tissue. There are also fewer patients who have transplants that refuse to “take”, therefore there are fewer people who have multiple transplants in an attempt to complete the procedure successfully. With the more modern procedures there is also a reduced possibility of having unnatural looking scalp or hair growth patterns.

How will my results affect me?

Few procedures affect a person more positively than having their hair restored. Many patients are happier with the more modern, safer methods that have proven to be more efficient. These methods can be done quickly and more successfully. Some patients may still need to use older methods, or even a combination of transplants to get the natural looking results that they want. An experienced physician can discuss the procedures and help to decide if you are a viable candidate and which procedure is the right one for you.

Further Information

This brochure has been prepared to give a basic understanding of the procedure before a consultation takes place, and to cover many of the questions frequently asked about this type of cosmetic surgery. Final decisions should not be made until an individual assessment has taken place with the surgeon.

There is no obligation on the part of the patient to undergo surgery by attending for consultation.

If you have any further questions or would like to arrange a consultation please fill in the online form on our website at www.surgeryone.co.uk. All enquiries are always treated confidentially.