



## AFTER CARE

# Post-Operative Instructions for FUE

Please follow all postoperative instructions. They will aid in your comfort and help promote the best possible healing and results. If you have questions regarding these directions, please call the office to have them answered.

### Care of the transplanted area:

Care should be taken while cleaning the transplanted site during the week following hair transplant surgery because it is during this period that the healing mechanisms of your body secure the grafts firmly in place. Appropriate care of the recipient area will minimize crusting and make the transplant less noticeable and the healing more rapid. We will provide you with shampoo for use after surgery. Use this shampoo following surgery until it is gone. After this time, you may resume your own shampoo. Avoid dandruff, herbal or medicated shampoos for three weeks after the transplant.

**Evening of FUE (Day 0):** Do not wash or wet your hair the night of surgery. Allow the grafts to heal in place. Apply cool packs to forehead for 10 – 15 minute intervals a few times prior to bedtime to help with swelling. If a bandage was placed on your head after surgery, remove this carefully as directed by the staff the next morning after procedure. Make sure you eat a meal after surgery as taking medication on an empty stomach may cause nausea. Take Ibuprofen or Tylenol when you get home.

**Days 1-2:** DO NOT ALLOW THE SHOWER TO SPRAY ON THE GRAFTED AREA for one week and DO NOT RUB THE TRANSPLANTED AREA. Add a dime size amount of shampoo to a plastic cup and fill the cup with warm water. Pour this over your transplanted area several times to clean the transplanted area. After the shower blot your face and non-grafted area of your head with a towel (or if able allow it to air dry). Do not rub your hair dry or brush your hair near the grafted area as this may dislodge the grafts. The hair may be blow-dried using a cool setting. Apply Vaseline or Aquaphor to the donor area daily until healed.

**Days 3- 6 following surgery:** Continue to shower once a day as described above until the shampoo given to you runs out and then you may resume using your regular shampoo (do not use dandruff, herbal or medicated shampoo). If itching occurs, once or twice a day, gently spray the transplanted area using the spray solution we provided to you. Continue to apply a light layer of Vaseline or Aquaphor to the donor area daily.

**IMPORTANT:** At 1 – 4 weeks post-op, you can expect that some transplanted hair will begin to shed. This is a normal process and should not be a concern as all the transplanted grafts will shed during this time.



**Day 6-13:** Continue to monitor sites for proper healing. Continue to gently wash the grafted area. So not scrub or pick at any remaining scabs.

**Day 14:** All the grafts at this point should be firmly seeded. You may now go back to your normal showering and hair styling routine.

## Quick Reference & FAQs for FUE

**Bandages:** You will go home with a “wrap around the head” bandage that you will take off before you go to bed on the evening of surgery. If you feel the bandage may rub the grafted area, remove it. If you have any concerns about the possibility of needing a bandage for more than one day, please ask.

**Bleeding:** It is normal to have some light drainage from the transplant and donor sites the evening of the procedure. You may want to place an old pillowcase or towel on your pillow the night following your procedure.

**Sleeping:** If the grafting was placed into frontal area of the scalp it is recommended to lay flat immediately after you get home from procedure and as much as tolerated the next day. This will greatly reduce the risk of facial swelling. If grafting was placed on the crown/back of scalp you can use an airplane “U” shaped pillow or rolled up towels placed behind your head will help to keep your head in an upright and central position. Do not allow anything to rub against the grafted area. It is OK to rest the donor area on the pillows or towels.

**Swelling:** Some patients have a puffiness or swelling over the forehead at about the third or fourth day, which usually only lasts for two to three days. It may even spread down to around the eyes and nose causing significant, temporary swelling around the eyes.

- Apply cold packs two to three times a day for 15-minute periods to the forehead and temples to reduce swelling. Plastic bags of frozen peas work well for this.
- Avoid foods that have high sodium content. Salty foods will aggravate any swelling that may occur.

**Infection** – TO AVOID INFECTION, DO THE FOLLOWING: Clean your scalp and transplanted area before and after surgery as directed in this booklet. For the first week, avoid dirty environments, heavy lifting, or sporting activities that cause you to perspire.

**Healing:** Immediately after surgery, you should take it easy. The best thing to do is to sit in a comfortable lounge chair and read, watch TV, or nap. Try to keep your head upright during the day. It is important not to exert yourself for at least two weeks after surgery.

- Refrain from alcoholic beverages for one week.



- Refrain from using aspirin and/or related drugs for one week. Tylenol is an approved medication during this time. The day after the procedure, you may go back to taking all your regular medications.
- Leave your head open to air as much as possible. Avoid the use of hairpieces unless absolutely necessary for 21 days after surgery.

The transplanted area should not be exposed to prolonged, direct sunlight for three months. You may use a hat to cover the transplanted area. Be careful putting the hat on and taking it off so it does not rub the transplanted area. Please ask the staff and we will demonstrate how to do this.

**Combing:** Avoid combing or brushing over the transplanted area for seven days, and after that be very careful not to catch the comb on the grafts. The donor area in the back can be combed immediately.

**Numbness:** You will most likely experience numbness at and around the area that has been transplanted. Sensation will begin to return in approximately six to eight weeks following surgery, numbness may last several months.

**Crusts:** The crusts will fall off in about one to two weeks. Do not pick them off. Following the cleaning instructions will help minimize prolonged crusting.

**Temporary hair loss (shock loss):** Temporary hair loss or shock loss may occur in the transplanted areas of the scalp. This is due to the irritation of the hair root from the surgical procedure. Hair growth will start to return around three months, the same time the grafts should be starting to grow.

**Loss of transplanted grafts:** The grafts take about two to three weeks to become part of the surrounding scalp. It is important not to bump or rub your head during this time as this could result in loss of the transplanted grafts.

**Redness to scalp:** There may be a red hue to the scalp at the transplanted site. This will resolve over time. This is completely normal, so please do not be concerned.

**Pain:** In most cases, there is usually only minimal discomfort after a transplant procedure - even after a large number of grafts have been placed. Occasionally, some patients will have a significant headache – most commonly in the donor area. We have found that patients who take ibuprofen or Tylenol as directed have very little discomfort following surgery.

**Itching:** You may experience some itching either in the transplanted area or in the donor area following your hair restoration procedure. In general, itching is part of the healing process and should not be a cause for concern.



A common contributing factor may be dryness. Keep Vaseline or Aquaphor on the donor area. If the itching at the donor site is bothersome to you, purchase Hydrocortisone ointment 1% over the counter. This medication must be in an ointment form, not a cream. This may be applied to the donor areas that itch, as needed, up to four times a day. Do not apply to the grafted area. As previously mentioned use provided spray bottle to relieve itching to the grafted area.

**DO NOT SCRATCH THE SCALP as this may dislodge grafts.** You may also experience itching as the new hairs grow in.

**Activities:** The day after your FUE, take it easy. You will be tired from the surgery and the medications received. If possible, spend this day at home, or in a comfortable place, and concentrate on showering properly and following the post-op instructions. Abstain from sexual activities and alcohol for three days after the procedure. If possible, it is best not to resume smoking for 1 week.

**Sun:** Please avoid unprotected exposure to sunlight for 3 months. Wear a hat when you are going to be outside for a prolonged period of time (greater than 20 minutes). The staff will show you how to put on and take off the hat to minimize any risk to the transplanted grafts. After three weeks, you may apply a strong sunscreen with a SPF of 30+ to the transplanted area.

**Growth of transplanted hairs:** Remember, new hair growth will not start for at least three months. Prior to this, the transplanted hairs will shed and the grafted area will look bare. Be patient during the growth process. It takes a full year or more to achieve a final result. The outcome will be well worth the wait.

### ***A few important notes:***

- The hair that we transplanted today goes into a “rest phase” and will not start to grow for about three to six months. Some hairs may take off and grow from the start, but these are the exception.
- When the small scabs from the transplanted grafts fall off, the short bristly hairs that are in the scab usually fall off also. This does not mean that you have lost that hair or that graft unit.
- It is important to keep your scalp clean in the weeks and months following surgery to allow the new hairs to come through the skin. Remember that you can shampoo as you normally have done three weeks after surgery. Two months after surgery, you may develop a small, swollen “cyst” under one of the graft sites (usually 2 – 3 months after the transplant). This is not uncommon after FUE; virtually everyone will develop a few pimples in the recipient area starting at about a month following hair transplant surgery and continue for several months. This happens because new hairs are trying to break through the skin. They occasionally can be confused with a true infection, but pimples tend to resolve on their own in 3 – 4 days. They generally do not require treatment. Larger pimples



can be unroofed by removing the thin top layer of skin with a sterile needle, and then any fluid can drain. If more than just a few develop at one time, or the skin in a larger area becomes swollen, red, tender, and hot, then you should call the office immediately as antibiotics or drainage by the provider may be necessary.

*If you have questions or concerns, please call the office at 603-742-5556.*