



## Post-Operative Instructions for Follicular Unit Hair Transplants

### PLEASE READ ALL OF THESE PAGES CAREFULLY!

The success of the procedure we have just performed is not solely determined by the abilities of the physician and the transplant team, but is also determined by the degree to which our patients follow the post-operative instructions. If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please contact the office and a nurse will be happy to explain the process in greater detail. Thank you for your cooperation and patience in following these instructions.

### THE FIRST NIGHT AFTER SURGERY:

#### PAIN

You have been given medications for discomfort. This discomfort may be present for 24-72 hours following the procedure; however it should diminish with time and healing. You have been supplied with a pain reliever (**Motrin 800 mg**) for mild pain, as well as a narcotic pain reliever for moderate pain. Follow the instructions on the “medicine instruction sheet” and DO NOT drink alcohol while taking these medications. If you are suffering from discomfort that is not being relieved by the prescribed medications, or is past the 72-hour time frame, please contact the office.

#### BLEEDING

Your grafts may ooze during the night—this is normal. Do not try to clean them, as we will do this for you at your post-op appointment. It is normal for the stitches to ooze while lying on them. You have been provided with blue protectors for your pillow. We will clean up the stitches at your post-op appointment.

If, however, a graft, or the donor area, bleeds the night of surgery, apply pressure with gauze **moistened** with tap water. If bleeding does not stop with firm pressure applied for 10 minutes, call the office immediately.

#### NAUSEA

You have been given many medications. To avoid nausea, avoid eating greasy foods in combination with pain medications. You may want to eat lightly and drink lots of fluids.

If you continue to have persistent nausea, call the office immediately.

#### ICING

Ice your forehead the night of your surgery; this may reduce the risk of swelling. Apply ice packs, frozen peas or corn to your forehead (**not the transplanted area**). If you are experiencing any discomfort in the donor area, you may also apply the ice packs to this area.

You should apply the ice four to six times a day for 20 minutes a session.



## Post-Operative Instructions for Follicular Unit Hair Transplants continued

### THE WEEK FOLLOWING YOUR SURGERY:

A thin layer of Polysporin ointment should be applied to the stitches at the back of your head once a day with a cotton swab for 7 days following surgery. **This will be provided for you at your post-op visit.**

Shampooing gently may begin on the day after your post-operative appointment. This process should utilize a gentle stream of water and the transplanted area should not be manipulated with your fingernails. To avoid manipulating the area, lather the surrounding hair and allow the lather to gently cover the transplanted area. This allows the suds and the water to gently wash over the grafts. Please **do not** aggressively manipulate the transplanted area with fingertips or finger nails for **the first three days** after the procedure. You may shampoo gently in circular motion on the fourth day after surgery. Increase the circular motion pressure while shampooing for the remainder of the seven days. You should be back to washing your hair normally after seven days.

Crust **may** start to come off on the 4th or 5th day. It may take up to 7 days for all of the crust to be completely gone.

Hair combing may resume the day after surgery; however the comb should not touch the grafts themselves. Hairspray and hair products can be utilized the day after surgery; however, Rogaine should be started on the 3rd day after surgery (**as long as you're not allergic to Rogaine**). It may be applied with a Q-tip or cotton ball. Do not use the Rogaine pressure applicator on the grafts for 7days. If you are using the Rogaine Foam use as directed being gentle when massaging the grafts with the product.

Hairpieces can be worn shortly after the procedure in limited amounts of time, and the adhesive must **never** be applied on the transplanted area at any time, not even after the procedure has completely healed.

There is less than a 2 in 100 chance of swelling, but should it occur it is not harmful to the grafts. Several mechanisms are suggested to minimize the likelihood of swelling, however **even if you follow all of these suggestions, you may still experience swelling.**

- Medications: During surgery you have been given an injection of Depo medrol, a medication to help reduce swelling.
- We urge you to **begin icing the forehead (NOT THE TRANSPLANTED AREA) with icepacks immediately after surgery.** You should apply ice **four to six times a day for 20 minutes a session.** You should continue this regimen for **three days** after the procedure.

## **Post-Operative Instructions for Follicular Unit Hair Transplants** continued

- **If swelling occurs** continue the ice packs until the third day. This will loosen the fluid and allow you to “milk” or massage the fluid into the temples. **Do everything you can with massage and the use of a bandana tied around your forehead without touching the grafts to prevent the swelling from descending into your eyes. You may have been provided with a special tape that was applied to your forehead during surgery; this should be kept on your forehead for the three days after the surgery if possible. This will replace the use of the bandana.** Doing so will allow gravity to pull the fluid down into your lymph nodes instead of dropping into the bridge of your nose and eyes. Massaging the forehead will move fluid in the deep tissue across the forehead to the outer aspects of the eyes and down toward the neck. You must push hard to move it out.
- **If the swelling gets into your eyes and nose**, regardless of what you have done, the next step is trying to expedite its departure. Many patients have found that ice-cold **moist** compresses on the eyes helps best. **You can use a bowl of ice water to moisten your washcloth.** Place a squeezed moist cloth on your eyes until it warms. Repeat the procedure as often as possible. Gauzes may be used as well. Laying back will keep the fluid in the eyes, so the best position is sitting up. Warm, wet (but squeezed) tea bags will help soothe the tissues, however, place them in the evening after a day of iced compresses. Swelling in the eyes may cause some bruising. The amount is dependent on how swollen your eyes become. **Do not massage the eyes.**

Avoid exercising and raising your heart rate above 100 for 7 days. You should keep your head higher than your heart (**i.e. no bending over**) for 3 days as well. These measures will prevent a graft from being dislodged by a build-up of pressure in your head.

The stitches in the back of your head are absorbable. They may feel tight and uncomfortable for a week after the procedure. This is normal and simply means that the stitches are beginning to dissolve; continue to **clean the area well**. You should be applying the ointment provided to you to the stitches every day until the sutures are gone. You should not feel crust in this area. The sutures will not wash out if you have persistent crust and the area may become infected. If you experience significant pain, discomfort, or notice that the area feels hot to the touch, please contact the office immediately. If after 10 days, you still have stitches in place, please call our office to schedule a suture removal. **We do not want you to tolerate stitches past 10 days.**

The transplanted area will heal quickly, within two weeks. You may experience some dandruff-like scaling, redness or itching during the first month after the procedure. Over the counter hydrocortisone cream or lotion can be used in the area 2-4 times daily until it is cleared up. Some **“ingrown hair” type pimples** may occur during the re-growth phase 45-90 days after the procedure, you might experience 8-10 of these per 1000 grafts. **If there are significantly more of these ingrown hairs, please call the office.** Do not let these fester, as they can become points of infection requiring antibiotics.

## **Post-Operative Instructions for Follicular Unit Hair Transplants** continued

**Numbness** may occur for a short period of time after transplantation in the donor area as well as the transplanted areas. It will usually resolve on its own within 3-6 months.

### **SHOCK LOSS**

If we have transplanted through thinning hair, you may experience a temporary thinning out of this hair. Although it is temporary, **it may at times be severe and alarming**. Please call the office to let us know that this has happened. **The use of Rogaine, pre- and post-operative, will decrease this loss and hasten the regrowth.**

### **FINALLY, CONTACT THE OFFICE IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:**

- **Loss of grafts**
- **Stitches that are not dissolved past 10 days post-op**
- **Any sign of infection (redness, hot to touch, drainage)**
- **Severe swelling**
- **Severe shock loss**
- **Numbness beyond 10-12 months**

### **PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TIMETABLE WHEN PLANNING POST-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES:**

Normal activities may be resumed after the number of days indicated below.

Very gentle shampooing of the grafts	3 days
Light circular motion when shampooing of the grafts	4 days
Use of aspirin	1 day
Use of hairdryer	1 day
Use of hairspray	1 day
Use of mousse or gels	1 day
Gentle brushing of the grafts	7 days
Return to brushing normal non-grafted hair as usual	1 day
Use of hot rollers	7 days
Chemical hair treatment and perms	7 days
Light exercise (walking, etc.) heart rate under 100	1 day
Intense exercise (running, aerobics, etc.)	7 days
Swimming and other sports	7 days
Resume use of Rogaine (if not allergic to Rogaine)	3 days