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## **PRE & POST CARE FOR FOLLICULAR UNIT EXTRACTION (FUE) HAIR TRANSPLANTATION**

We are excited you have chosen to treat with FUE! We want to ensure you are fully informed of all treatment details and expectations. Please review the following information and let your provider know if you have any questions or concerns.

### **HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR TREATMENT**

- There are several over the counter medications that should be avoided prior to surgery. DO NOT take aspirin, Vitamins E & B, Advil®, Alka-Seltzer®, Bufferin®, Excedrin®, Empirin®, Motrin®, Ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory medications. In addition, do not take any herbal products such as Gingko, Ginseng, or weight-lifting formulas for 1 week prior to the procedure. If you are on any of these medications, please stop them 1 week prior to surgery. If another physician has directed you to take the medication, please contact them to check that it is OK to discontinue them for 1 week.
- Do not drink alcohol for 3 days prior to the procedure.
- Please avoid foods with a large number of herbs and spices for 1 week prior to surgery. These tend to cause excess bleeding.
- Please avoid smoking or using nicotine products for at least one week before and at least one week after your procedure. These may slow your healing process and contribute to less than optimal graft growth.
- If you use minoxidil (Rogaine®) stop for 1 week before and 4 weeks after the procedure.
- Depending on your health we may ask you to have blood work or a medical clearance to be performed prior to your procedure. The results should be forwarded to our office at least 2 weeks prior to surgery.
- Wash your hair, neck, and face well the night before and morning of the

procedure. Lather for at least 3 minutes with the soap. If you wear a hairpiece or hair system, please make sure it is removed prior to your shower the evening before surgery and not replaced before your procedure. Please remove all glue products from your scalp prior to arriving.

- Be sure to eat a good breakfast the morning of the procedure. Please avoid caffeine as this may raise your blood pressure. If you are scheduled in the afternoon, have a light lunch before you arrive. If you have any particular snacks, lunch items, or drinks that you prefer, please bring them as you will have plenty of opportunity to eat and drink throughout the day.
- On the night before the procedure, get a good night's sleep.
- Wear comfortable clothing the day of your procedure. Do not bring any valuables to the office on the day of surgery, and please wear a button down, zippered, or wide necked shirt that can be easily taken off. Do not wear clothes that you have to worry about getting soiled.
- If you plan to wear a hat after the procedure, please bring a few with you so we can help you select the one that fits best after the procedure.
- For sleeping after the procedure, an airplane "U" shaped pillow or rolled up towel placed behind your head and around your shoulders will help with comfort and to protect the surgical area.
- Avoid excessive exercise and sweating (such as a sauna) the day before surgery to avoid dehydration. If you have been exercising a lot during the week before, be sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- If you have been sick during the week before the planned surgery, please notify us to determine whether or not the procedure needs to be rescheduled.
- We will keep you comfortable and relaxed during the procedure and the day actually goes by very quickly. We recommend bringing earbud style headphones to listen to audio books or music on your phone during the procedure to help pass the time.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

It is recommended that you do not drive yourself home after surgery, so make arrangements for transportation to and from the office. When you arrive at the office, please provide the staff with the name of the person whom you have made the arrangements with. Following the procedure, the office will call the person to pick you up.

## **ITEMS TO HAVE READY AT HOME**

Prior to the procedure, please obtain the following items and medications:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Johnson and Johnson's Baby Shampoo
- Travel "U" shaped pillow if desired.
- Mineral Oil
- Vaseline or Aquaphor

## **DESCRIPTION OF MEDICATIONS PROVIDED ON DAY OF SURGERY**

Prescriptions for the procedure will be provided to you on the day of surgery. Check with the office as to continuing or discontinuing any other medications that you take regularly. Please notify the office of any allergies to medications. We will also need to have a list of your current medications.

- Cephalexin (Keflex) or Clindamycin (Cleocin): This is an antibiotic to reduce the risk of infection. You will take one capsule twice a day for 5 days. After the procedure, follow the directions on the bottle until finished. If you are allergic to Keflex, a different antibiotic will be used.
- Diazepam (Valium): This is a relaxant. We may administer this medication prior to the procedure for relaxation.
- Tramadol (Ultram): This is a pain medication that can be taken every 4 – 6 hours as needed for pain after the procedure.
- Prednisone: This helps minimize swelling during the postoperative period. After the day of surgery, take the medication as directed on the bottle.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®): This is an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication that you need to purchase prior to the procedure. You will only use this after the procedure, not before. After surgery, take 2 tablets (400 mg) with a meal,

followed by 2 tablets twice a day for three days after the procedure. Do not exceed 12 tablets in one 24-hour period.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR TREATMENT**

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.

## **CARE OF THE TRANSPLANT GRAFT & DONOR SITES**

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.

Use Johnson and Johnson's Baby Shampoo following surgery for the first week. After this time, you may resume your regular shampoo except for anti-dandruff shampoos which may be resumed after 3 weeks. DO NOT use haircare and styling products including gels, hair sprays, and mousses for 2 weeks.

## **EVENING OF HAIR TRANSPLANT (DAY 0):**

Make sure you eat a meal after surgery as taking medication on an empty stomach may cause nausea. Take two tablets of Tylenol when you get home. If you have more pain, take the pain medication that was prescribed. Do not wash or wet your hair the night of surgery. Allow the grafts to heal in place. Apply cool packs to the 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 prior to bedtime.

## **DAYS 1-2:**

**DO NOT ALLOW THE SHOWER TO SPRAY ON THE GRAFTED AREA and DO NOT RUB THE TRANSPLANTED AREA.** Add a dime size amount of baby shampoo to a plastic cup and fill the cup with warm water. Pour this over the transplanted area several times to clean the transplanted area.

After the shower blot your hair with a towel (or allow it to air dry or use a blow dryer on a cool setting). DO NOT RUB YOUR HAIR DRY or the grafts can become dislodged. Brush the hair in the back of the scalp gently. Apply Vaseline or Aquaphor to the donor area

on the back of the scalp.

### **DAYS 3-6 FOLLOWING TRANSPLANT:**

Continue to shower once a day as described above, but you may allow the transplanted area to be sprayed with a low pressure/gentle shower but still DO NOT RUB the transplanted area. Additionally, once or twice a day, gently dab mineral oil onto the transplanted area using cotton balls and continue to apply Vaseline or Aquaphor to the donor area daily.

### **HAIR SHEDDING:**

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.

- 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 the procedure.
- 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.
- DO NOT sleep with your head tilted in a downward position. This may contribute to facial swelling. Sleep with your head elevated approximately 20 degrees for three nights following the procedure. You can use a recliner chair or several pillows. 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 back of the scalp on pillows or towels.
- 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 for at least 48 hours following the procedure to minimize 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. Taking a Benadryl prior to bedtime can help reduce swelling.

- Follow the scalp cleaning procedures described in these instructions. For the first week, avoid dirty environments, heavy lifting, or sporting activities that cause you to perspire. Leave your head open to air as much as possible. Avoid using hair pieces unless absolutely necessary for 3 weeks after surgery. If you plan to wear these, let us know so we can instruct you on proper positioning.
- The transplanted area should not be exposed to direct prolonged sunlight for 3 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. Sunscreen may be applied to the area after 3 weeks, and should be a mineral-based (zinc oxide) sensitive skin sunscreen with SPF30+.
- Immediately after surgery, you should take it easy and rest.
- Refrain from alcoholic beverages and using aspirin and blood thinners for one week, unless you are advised otherwise by your physician.
- AVOID combing or brushing over the transplanted area for 1 week and after that be very careful not to catch the comb on the grafts. The donor area on the back of the scalp can be combed immediately.
- You will most likely experience numbness at and around the area that has been transplanted. Sensation will begin to return in approximately 6 to 8 weeks following the procedure, but numbness may last several months.
- The crusts will fall off in 1 - 2 weeks. DO NOT pick them off. Following the cleaning instructions will help minimize prolonged crusting.
- Temporary hair loss or shock loss may occur along the incision lines or other areas of the scalp. This is due to the irritation of the hair root from the procedure. Hair growth will start to return around 3 months, around the same time the grafts should be starting to grow.
- A temporary red hue to the scalp can be expected and will resolve over time.
- 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 back of the scalp at the donor area, which will be controlled with Tylenol or prescription pain medication. Do not drive or operate machinery while taking prescription pain medications.

- You may experience some scalp itching following your hair restoration procedure. Itching is a normal part of the healing process, and you may experience it as new hairs grow in as well.
- A common contributing factor may be dryness, which can be prevented with the mineral oil on the donor site and Vaseline or Aquaphor on the graft transplant site starting on the 3rd day after the procedure. If the itching at the donor site is bothersome to you, purchase over the counter Hydrocortisone Ointment 1%. This medication must be in an ointment form (like Vaseline), not a cream. This may be applied to the donor areas in the back of the scalp that itch, as needed, up to four times a day. Do not apply to the transplant grafted areas
- **DO NOT SCRATCH THE SCALP** as this may dislodge grafts.
- Remember, new hair growth will not start for at least 3 months. Prior to this, the transplanted hairs will shed and the grafted area will look bare. Be patient during the growth process. It may take a full year or more to see the full and final results from your FUE hair transplantation procedure. The final result will be well worth the wait!

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- How long does it take for the grafts to start growing?
  - o The hair that we transplant goes into a resting phase and will not start to grow for 3 to 6 months. Some hairs may begin to grow from the start, but these are the exceptions.
- I'm seeing hairs come out with the scabs, have I lost those grafts?
  - o When the small scabs from the transplanted grafts fall off, the short hairs that are in the scab usually fall off also. This does not mean that you have lost that hair or that graft unit.
- I'm getting pimples and cysts in the transplant sites, what's going on?
  - o 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. One to two months after surgery, you may develop a few small, swollen pimples or cysts under the graft sites. This is not uncommon after FUE; virtually everyone will develop a few pimples in the recipient area and this may last several months. This happens because new hairs are trying to break through the skin. These pimples tend to resolve on their own in 3 – 4 days and do not require treatment. Pustules can be drained with a clean needle at home. If more than just a few develop at one time or the skin becomes swollen, red, tender, and hot, then you should call the clinic (281-332-9681) to be evaluated by our physician.

## OUR PROMISE TO YOU

Our goal is to make you the most comfortable and informed before, during and after your treatment. However, we cannot provide exact timelines for how long it will take to see results or predict exactly how you will respond. Each person is unique, and your response will be as well. Additional treatments or services may be needed to achieve your final goal.

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If your provider has given you instructions deviating from the general recommendations in this document, please follow your provider's personalized instructions.

**Questions or concerns?** Please securely send a direct message to your provider or call the office 281-332-9682.