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## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAIR TRANSPLANT PATIENTS**

*Hair restoration is a delicate process. Your adherence to the following instructions will help assure that you get the very best results.*

### **Medications** – Take as prescribed

- \_\_\_ **Keflex** - antibiotic to prevent infection. Take 1 pill twice a day for 3 days.
- \_\_\_ **Tylenol #3** - mild pain pill containing codeine. Take 1 to 2 pills every 4 to 6 hours as needed. Advil (Ibuprofen), Aleve (Naproxen), and Tylenol are also very effective and do not cause sedation. They should be taken at the earliest sign of discomfort.
- \_\_\_ **Prednisone** -to prevent swelling. Take 1 pill (50 mgs) with food once a day for 2 days.
- \_\_\_ **Other** - \_\_\_\_\_

### **Sleeping and Activity**

- Sleep with your head elevated on several pillows or in a recliner chair to prevent swelling. Place a towel under your head the first night for possible oozing.
- If there is any swelling of the forehead on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, keep on the tape that has been applied to your forehead continually for three days.
- Avoid any strenuous physical activity the first 2 days to prevent loss of grafts or increased swelling. After 5 days, weight lifting, heavy exercise, etc. may be resumed, with swimming able to be resumed at 10 days.
- No direct sun exposure to the scalp for more than 30 minutes at a time for the first 5 days. Wearing a hat provides adequate protection.

### **Caring for and Cleaning the Scalp**

- Your scalp will be cleaned before leaving the office the day of your procedure. Often there is some slight bleeding from several graft sites the first 24 hours. Simply apply light pressure with a clean cloth or gauze for 10 minutes.
- Most patients return to the office the first or second day after the procedure to have a hair wash. Your appointment is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.
- If you are not coming to the office to have your hair washed, you may gently clean it on the second day as follows:
  - **Wet your head** in the shower with cool to warm water, pouring it over the scalp (top, sides, and back) using a bowl.
  - **Using a mild shampoo, lather** it in your hands, and gently pat it onto the graft areas, while lightly rubbing it into the other parts of the scalp, including the sides and back of the scalp. Be sure to wash well the sutured areas.
  - **Gently rinse off** the shampoo, then pat dry.



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- **Combing**, as long as it is performed gently, is permitted on the third day.
- **Continue** this routine daily for the first 5 days. After this, you may begin to *lightly* rub the graft area to help remove crusts, and shower normally, letting the water hit your scalp normally.
- **Any remaining crusts** after 8 days should be rubbed off. Stop if there is any pain or bleeding, then wait 2 more days to begin rubbing.
- **Many of our out-of-town patients** can receive absorbable sutures, thus do not have to have them removed as they will dissolve. If **nonabsorbable** sutures were used, they can be removed on the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> day using the kit provided by my office. Otherwise, you are to return to the office on the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> day for suture removal.

### **GraftCyte for Post-Procedure Care**

GraftCyte may accelerate the healing of the graft areas, due to a combination of the copper it contains and its ability to keep the area moist.

- Spray the GraftCyte spray to the graft areas every 30 to 60 minutes while awake for the first 3 days.

### **What to Expect**

- **Numbness** at the graft sites and above the suture line is common and normal. It will take several weeks, occasionally several months to resolve.
- **The transplanted hairs** often will fall out as the crusts fall off at 5 to 7 days. Most of the hairs fall out at 3 weeks. **DO NOT PANIC** for these are only the hair shafts, while the hair follicles remain in the scalp. In as soon as 2 ½ to 3 months, the new hair shafts will begin to grow *in a natural fashion* and will continue to grow at the normal rate of ½ to 1 inch a month. It can take 6 to 9 months for all the hairs to grow in, occasionally longer.
- **To accelerate the growth of the new hairs** I recommend all male patients begin applying 5% minoxidil (Rogaine® foam is a favorite) once or twice a day starting three weeks after the procedure. Female patients should use 2% minoxidil. **If the minoxidil should cause redness or irritation of the scalp, stop using it for one week then resume once every other day.** Once the hairs are growing in, at around 5 months, the minoxidil can be stopped, and the transplanted hairs will continue to grow. The occasional patient is sensitive to minoxidil (scalp itching, chest palpitations, lightheadedness) in which case it should be stopped.
- To accelerate healing and speed up hair regrowth, patients who have had transplants are offered, **at no charge, low level laser light therapy** for the first month. This therapy can be started as soon as the day after the procedure when the hair wash is performed in the office. It consists of once or twice weekly (completely painless) 20 minute treatments spent under the laser hood. Studies have shown that this therapy may also have some benefit with long term use in helping to slow down the progression of hair loss in the future.



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- **Be patient** for the hairs to grow in. As they emerge from the scalp, occasionally there will be a few acne-like pimples. If this happens, apply warm soaks and antibiotic ointment several times a day for 3 days. If not resolved, please call the office so we can phone in a prescription for an antibiotic.
- **The first week there are several ways** to camouflage any evidence you have had a procedure. You will be given a bandana to wear out of the office, and can begin to wear a hat as soon as the first day. If you already have some hair, the crusts can usually be effectively concealed using **Toppik®**, a powder that is sprinkled onto the grafted area. Provided by the office, Toppik® can be applied as soon as the third day after the procedure, once you are completed with the GraftCyte spray. For most patients, there is some mild pinkness, which usually resolves within a week.
- You may have your hair cut as soon as the sutures have been removed. Hair coloring is permitted 3 weeks after your procedure.

*Please do not hesitate to contact the office with any questions or concerns. After hours and on weekends, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ can be reached by calling ( ) \_\_\_\_\_. Everyone in the office is here to help you and make sure your post-procedure course goes as smoothly as your procedure.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge receipt of these instructions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature for the office

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date