

### **Pre and Post-Operative Instructions for Hair Transplants**

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

#### **1. Before your procedure**

- **For 10 days prior to your procedure**, do not take aspirin or Vitamin E, ginkgo biloba, or any multivitamins (these contain Vitamin E). Many medications contain aspirin, so please be sure to read all medication labels. You may take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) in place of aspirin.
- **For 3 days prior to your procedure**, do not take anti-inflammatories (e.g. ibuprofen), avoid drinking alcohol, and do not get a sunburn.
- **Make arrangements for transportation** home if you will be receiving any sedation during the procedure. The type of sedation you receive will be up to you and your Foundation For Hair Restoration surgeon, but most patients choose to take an oral sedative for a relaxing experience. Procedures typically take 3 to 5 hours, depending upon the number of grafts.
- **If you live out of town**, make arrangements with the office for transportation and hotel accommodations.
- **If you have gray hair and you color it**, make sure it gets colored within 3 days prior to your procedure to permit better visualization of the hairs. You will be able to color it again 2 weeks after the procedure.
- **To help cover the donor site sutures**, the hair in the back of your head only needs to be one-half inch (2 cms) in length. The hair on the rest of your head can be any length.
- **For best healing**, please refrain from smoking for 1 week prior to and 1 week after your procedure.
- **Vitamin C** (1000 to 2000 mg a day) for 1 week prior to your procedure may help with healing.

#### **2. The day of your procedure**

- Have a light breakfast, but no caffeine in the morning. You will be provided lunch and offered snack breaks during your procedure.
- Routine prescribed medicines (e.g. blood pressure) should be taken in the morning.
- Wear a shirt that can be buttoned in the front rather than a pull-over. Remove all jewelry, watches, etc.
- Be prepared to remove contact lenses before your procedure if you normally remove them to sleep.
- Please feel free to bring any music on CDs or MP3 players to which you wish to listen during your procedure. Our procedure rooms are also equipped with satellite radio.

### 3. After your procedure

**Medications** – These are the medications that will be provided by the office. If you are not able to take any of them (ie. due to allergies) please let us know **before** your procedure. This will allow us to phone in your prescription to your local pharmacy.

\_\_\_ **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 for discomfort that may be felt in the donor area.

Advil (Ibuprofen), Aleve (Naproxen), and Tylenol are also very effective and do not cause sedation, and 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** - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Please let us know if you would like a prescription for a sleeping pill.

### Sleeping and Activity

- The first night sleep with your head elevated on several pillows or in a recliner chair to prevent swelling. Place a towel under your head if there is any bleeding.
- A narrow band of tape will be applied across your forehead to help prevent swelling. You may cover this tape with a hat, shower with it, and remove it on the third day. If there is any swelling of the forehead below the level of the tape on the second or third day, apply the elastic headband and leave it on **continually** for 3 days, except to shower.
- 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 after your procedure. Occasionally 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 their hair washed. 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 warm water, using a bowl to pour it over the scalp (top, sides, and back).

- **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. Be sure to wash well the sutured areas.
- **Gently rinse off** the shampoo, then pat dry.
- **Combing**, performed gently, is permitted on the third day.
- **Continue** this routine daily for the first 5 days. After this, you may begin to shower normally, letting the water hit your scalp.
- **Any remaining crusts** after 8 or 9 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 accelerates 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 that is provided by the office to the graft areas every 30 minutes while awake for the first 3 days.

### What to Expect

- **Some numbness** at the graft sites and above the suture line is normal. It will take several weeks, occasionally several months to resolve.
- **Some of the transplanted hairs** will fall off with the crusts at 5 to 7 days. DO NOT PANIC for these are only the hair shafts, while the hair follicles remain in the scalp. Most of the rest of the transplanted hairs will fall out over the next 2 weeks. In as soon as 2½ 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 one half to 1 inch a month. Rarely it can take 6 to 9 months for all the hairs to grow in.
- **To accelerate the growth of the new hairs** I recommend all male patients begin applying 5% minoxidil (extra strength Rogaine®) once or twice a day starting two 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 1 week then resume once every other day.** Once the hairs are growing in, at around 3 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.
- **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.
- **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

