



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS STRIP PROCEDURE

Hair restoration is a delicate procedure. Your adherence to the following instructions is essential for optimal results.

SALINE SPRAY

Spray grafted area every 30 minutes while awake for the first 48 hours 3-4 days.

CLEANING AND SHAMPOOING

If the morning after your surgery is a business day, we invite you to come back and have one of our technicians give you your first shampoo. If you are unable to make it into the clinic for a next day shampoo, or if the clinic is not open, we suggest you wait until evening of the day after surgery to shampoo for the first time.

Starting the evening after surgery and for the first week, wash your hair as follows:

Wash your hair standing upright in the shower, but do not use the showerhead. It is too strong for your grafts. Instead, bring a plastic cup or bowl into the shower and wet your hair by gently pouring cool temperature water over your head until hair is saturated.

Lather shampoo in your hand (most drugstore shampoos are fine; avoid medicated shampoos or those with built-in conditioners for 10 days).

Gently pat the lather onto the grafted area. Do not rub. Let the shampoo sit on the grafts for 2 minutes. During this time you may apply shampoo to the donor area by massaging in small circular motions directly across sutures or staples. Rinse suds using warm water from a cup or bowl. Be sure to rinse thoroughly and carefully.

Air dry or gently pat hair dry with a towel. Do not rub grafts to dry them, if desired, a blow dryer on a cool or low setting can be used after 24 hours to dry the grafted area.

Bacitracin Ointment

After shampooing, apply a small amount of the Bacitracin Ointment provided to the suture or staple area using your fingertip. It is only necessary to apply Bacitracin Ointment to the donor area after shampooing for the first 5 days after surgery.

Starting 7 days after surgery:

After five days, your grafts are thoroughly adhered; however, wait until the 7th post op day to begin standing under the shower head (assuming that the water pressure is not usually strong). You may also begin using warmer water. At this time you may begin to help loosen the scabs that have formed around the grafts. Do not use finger nails to pick off the scabs, as this may result in scarring. Simply use the pads of your fingers to gently massage the soft scabs while shampooing. The longer you hydrate the scabs in the shower, the easier it will be to rub them off.

It is important to shampoo every day until all the scabs have fallen off. Once all the scabs are gone (10-14 days), you may resume your normal shampooing routine.

The suture line may be tender the first few shampoos. As the tenderness diminishes, you may wash the area more aggressively as there are no grafts in the donor area. The cleaner you keep this area, the less likely you are to have irritation and itching associated with scabbing of the area. Removal of the sutures or staples will be easier as well.

ROGAINE FOAM

Some studies indicate that use of Rogaine foam in conjunction with Propecia following surgery may improve the growth of the grafts. We suggest using the 5% Rogaine foam once a day instead of twice a day as recommended on the box for the first 2 to 3 months. Many patients find applying Rogaine foam at night to be the most convenient method. Once it's determined there's no sign of irritation to the skin, twice a day regimen can be achieved. Because of possible irritation to the scalp, we suggest starting the Rogaine 4 weeks after surgery.

EXERCISE AND ACTIVITY

It is important that you avoid exercise activities and sports for five days. Too much activity could cause swelling, bleeding and loss of grafts.

After five days you may resume MILD activities (approximately 50% of normal exercise routine), continuing to avoid heavy activity such as running and weight lifting, golfing and baseball.

After 10 days, regular activity can be resumed. If you are involved with contact sports or vigorous exercise regime, ask your doctor when it is safe to resume these activities.

Sleep with your head slightly elevated (two to three pillows) for three nights after surgery to prevent bleeding and swelling.

Bend at the knees instead of the waist when picking up objects and tying shoes.

Be careful not to bump your head. Your head will be numb. Some have a tendency to bump their head when getting in and out of the car.

HAIR COLORING

Hair coloring should be taken care of prior to surgery. If not, you must wait 1 month after surgery to do any hair coloring.

ATTIRE AFTER SURGERY

Wear a button down shirt for 5 days after surgery. Do not wear a shirt you have to pull on over your head as bumping the new grafts may cause them to loosen.

If wearing a baseball cap, carefully place the bill of the hat on your forehead, and then pull back down. To remove your hat, carefully lift the back of the hat up and off first. Remember to wear loose fitting hats.

Hats are not necessary unless you are in direct sunlight. In this case, a hat should be worn to prevent sunburn of the grafts.

BLEEDING

It is normal to bleed slightly overnight. To protect the bed linens, we provide two blue/white under pads. Position the white side up on your pillow for the first two nights after surgery. (Hotels appreciate patients using the pads on their pillow.) If slight bleeding occurs along the sutured donor area, apply firm pressure with the palm of your hand using the gauze provided. Hold pressure for a full five minutes without pause, and the bleeding should stop.

If one or more grafts start to bleed, spray saline spray and blot gently using gauze provided. Avoid using only one finger when blotting as this may result in graft popping up. Repeat if necessary.

SWELLING

Starting the evening of surgery, and for the next three days, you should apply an ice pack to your forehead (NOT to the grafted area) for fifteen minutes, AT LEAST four times a day.

Realizing that swelling may not appear for three days (72 hours), you should continue to ice even if you don't see any swelling. This is a preventative measure. However, if swelling does occur, the swelling will drain down the face for approximately 3 days. At this point, icing or other preventative measures will no longer be effective.

You may also apply ice to your sutured donor area if it is comforting. This may reduce swelling along the sutures and help relieve some pressure.

FOLLICULITIS

Folliculitis is one or more ingrown hairs that cause pimple like lesions. Occasionally, a patient may develop this as the new hair is beginning to grow through the surface.

If this happens, apply a warm, moist cloth to the area for several minutes, three times a day.

If the area does not improve after a few days of treatment, please call us, as the doctor may want to prescribe medication. Folliculitis will not affect your outcome.

SWIMMING AND SUN

Avoid swimming in pools or in the ocean for ten days. Avoid direct sun exposure on the grafted area for four weeks. For the next few months, if you are going to be in the sun for an extended period of time (golfing, beach, etc.) keep a hat on, or use sun block (after 10 days) on the grafted area. Sunburn may result in discoloration of the area.

ALCOHOL

DO NOT drink alcohol first night after surgery or for as long as you're on the pain medication. Alcohol thins the blood and may cause bleeding. The pain medication we provide cannot be combined with alcohol.

NUMBNESS

Some numbness at the suture line and at the grafted sites most likely will occur. This is normal and will begin to resolve in six to eight weeks. Some patients may notice small areas that remain numb for up to one year.

CIGARETTE SMOKING

Many scientific studies show that cigarette smoking impairs wound healing. To ensure the best healing and survival of the transplanted hairs we suggest that you discontinue smoking for at least one month prior to your surgery and not to smoke for at least two months after your surgery.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Tramadol (50mg): Take one or two tablet(s) every four to six hours for pain. This is a mild narcotic pain medication. It is recommended that you take as prescribed the first night of surgery. After the first night, you only need to take it if needed for pain not relieved by Tylenol or Ibuprophen. This medication should be taken with food.

SUTURE/ STAPLE REMOVAL

Sutures and or staples should be removed between 10 and 14 days after surgery.