

# HAIR RESTORATION INSTRUCTIONS

## What Can I Expect After Surgery?

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There will be a mild to moderate amount of pain and discomfort associated with the surgery. This should be easily controlled with oral medications. Tylenol with codeine (or equivalent if allergy to codeine exists) is generally sufficient for pain control. The discomfort should begin to decrease within 48 hours after surgery and a significant increase in pain after this period should prompt you to call the office.

After surgery, you will have no dressings or bandages on your head. Bring a baseball type cap to wear when you leave the office.

The new hair growth will not start for 4 to 6 months. Prior to this the stubble will fall out and the grafts will look bare. This is completely normal so please do not be concerned. Most of all, be patient during the healing process. The outcome will be well worth the wait.

It is of utmost importance to tell Dr. Verret ahead of time if you have ever been on Accutane, received radiation therapy to the head or neck, or taken steroids or immunosuppressive agents. Immunosuppressed patients (HIV positive, chemotherapy, diabetes, etc.) and patients with certain autoimmune disorders may not be good candidates for this procedure as the risks of poor healing and infection leading to permanent scarring and poor esthetic results may be much higher. It is mandatory that you inform Dr. Verret if you have any of these conditions before surgery.

## Things To Remember

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- You may drive yourself home after the procedure. It is extremely rare that a patient needs or wants sedation during the procedure (less than 5%). If however, you do need or want sedation, someone will need to drive you home.
- Arrive for your surgery in loose, comfortable clothing. Your top should button or zip rather than pull over your head.
- Be sure to fill your prescriptions before your surgery since it means one less thing for you to worry about afterwards. Take the vitamins and antibiotics until your supply is exhausted; the prescriptions need not be refilled.
- If you are a smoker, you should not smoke for at least 2 weeks prior to surgery and 2 weeks after surgery. Smoking and chewing tobacco inhibit your circulation and can significantly compromise your surgical outcome.
- Do not take any aspirin or any anti-inflammatory compounds for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after your surgery unless you first discuss it with your surgeon.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages for 48 hours before and 48 hours after the procedure.



- Wash hair and scalp thoroughly using soap or shampoo on the morning of your procedure. **Do not** apply any hair preparation after shampooing.
- Have something light to eat before coming to the office.
- Bring a baseball style cap to wear after surgery.
- Usually you may return to work on the day following your surgery.
- Avoid bending or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating swelling, this may raise your blood pressure and start bleeding. No lifting over 5 pounds the first week, 25 pounds the second week. After two weeks you may return to all normal activities.
- Avoid straining at stool, which also raises your blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative, consult your local pharmacist as most stool softeners do not require a prescription.
- Leave the transplanted area open to the air as much as possible. If you plan to wear a hairpiece afterwards, let us know.
- Avoid excessive or prolonged sun exposure to the transplanted area for two weeks. When in the sun, avoid sunburn and use a #15 or higher sunscreen.
- Take only prescribed medication or Tylenol, never aspirin or other NSAIDS, as they promote bleeding.
- On the first night, you may notice a small amount of bleeding at the donor site or the recipient site. This is perfectly normal. To minimize any oozing at the donor site, it is helpful to lie on this area with a towel over your pillow for 2-3 hours when you get home. At the recipient site, just apply pressure with a gauze pad on any small area that is oozing. Significant postoperative bleeding is very rare, but if you suspect it, please call us.
- You may experience some temporary numbness at the donor site. This is completely normal.
- Sleep on your back with your head elevated using a recliner or several pillows for one night after surgery. Do not sleep with head or face in a down position for at least three days.
- The sides and the back of the scalp (including the donor area) may be gently shampooed the first day after surgery and every day thereafter. On the second day after surgery, a light tap water spray can run over the transplanted area. You may decrease the force of the shower spray by crisscrossing your fingers above the transplanted area. Beginning with the fourth day after surgery, you can shampoo the transplanted area just like the back and sides of the scalp. Use your fingertips to gently rub the shampoo in the transplanted area.
- A blow dryer is recommended to dry the hair. This will prevent rubbing the grafts with a towel. The sides and back can be rubbed with a towel. Be sure the setting of the dryer is on warm or cool for the first ten days. Care must be taken as you may have some numbness of your scalp which can cause a burn if the dryer is too hot. Putting your hand where the dryer is focused can prevent developing a burn.
- Sutures used to close the donor site should be removed in 10-14 days. If you live out of town, we can help you arrange for this to be done. At times, we can use dissolvable sutures which will fall out in 2-3 weeks but do not need to be removed. There is no need to be anxious about suture removal – it does not hurt.



- You can comb your hair the next day, just be careful not to scrape or brush the comb over the grafts. The donor area in the back can be combed immediately, but again, be careful not to catch the comb in the sutures.
- Don't go swimming, diving, or water skiing for at least one month after surgery.
- Do not apply hair coloring until three weeks have elapsed following your operation.
- In 7 - 10 days, the tiny crusts will fall off. Do not pick them. You can speed up this process by putting hydrogen peroxide in a spray bottle and spraying the grafts starting on the fifth day after surgery. Leave the hydrogen peroxide on for 5 minutes, then get in the shower and rinse it off.
- Infection is rare and when it does occur, it is usually very minor. Occasionally a graft will become red, swollen, and tender like a pimple. A topical antibiotic ointment, such as Polysporin (which can be purchased without a prescription), will usually take care of this. Let us know if this does not quickly resolve. An infected graft is a skin problem and does not mean the hair follicles will fail to grow.

## Contact the Office Immediately

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If you notice any of the following, please contact the office immediately at 972-608-0100:

- unusual bleeding or discharge from the incision.
- development of a temperature elevation exceeding 100.0 degrees.
- a significant progressive increase in pain which is not easily relieved by taking your prescribed medication.

If any of the above should occur after regular office hours, do not hesitate to call Dr. Verret at home at the number provided on the day of surgery or on his cell phone. For whatever reason, if you notice one of the above changes and cannot reach us at our office or through any of the alternate means, present yourself to the emergency department for evaluation.

## Recovery Timetable

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- **Day 1** Return Home. Take it easy.
- **Days 2** Return to work. Light activities
- **Days 10-14** Remove suture. Return to normal activity.
- **Months 1-4** Transplanted hair may fall out, new hair starts to grow.
- **Months 4-6** Results start to show. Enjoy your new hair.

## Remember

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If you have any questions at any time, do not hesitate to call. On the day of surgery, you will be provided with Dr. Verret's home and cellular phone numbers as well as the personal contact phone numbers of members of our staff. We do not like surprises and would much rather hear about a small annoyance before it becomes a big problem.



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