

# PREFACE

Hair restoration surgery has interested me for many years not only as a plastic surgeon but personally as a man experiencing hair loss who was searching for a solution that was both subtle and natural. For me micrografts and minigrafts have provided that solution, and they have become my preferred approach for hair restoration.

The use of single hair grafts is not a new concept. It was described as early as 1943 by Tamura from Japan, who successfully transplanted pubic hair. In 1953 Fujita, also from Japan, reconstructed the eyebrows. Orentreich in New York popularized hair transplantation after introducing the use of punch grafts in 1959. In addition, he described the “donor dominance” concept over 40 years ago, which is key to successful hair transplantation. The basic principle of donor dominance is that each individual hair follicle has its own unique genetic makeup. When hair follicles are transplanted to another site, these unique genetic properties are preserved regardless of the transplantation site, enabling the hair to grow at the recipient area while preserving the characteristics and longevity of the donor site hair.

Most individuals with male pattern baldness tend to lose their hair only on the top of the scalp and crown, with the temporal and occipital areas being spared. The idea of transplanting single hair grafts to the front hairline of the scalp was described in 1981 by Nordstrom. Subsequently in 1984 Marritt used this technique to camouflage the front hairline, feathering the hair to provide a natural appearance. It was such a tedious time-consuming effort at the time that it seemed unrealistic to think about transplanting the entire top of the head in this fashion. It was not until 1991 that Uebel of Brazil reported the use of micrografts and minigrafts to cover the entire area of baldness, transplanting well over a 1000 grafts in a single session. He had been perfecting this technique since the mid-1980s and had presented his work at various Brazilian meetings. Uebel deserves the title of father of modern-day hair transplantation.

Today the practice of transplanting very small grafts in large numbers is rapidly becoming the gold standard in hair transplantation because this technique produces safe and predictably natural results. Whatever we choose to call them—micrografts and minigrafts, follicular unit grafts, pilosebaceous units, family unit grafts, or cut-to-size grafts—these grafts are transforming the art of hair restoration. For the first time patients can realistically expect natural-looking

hair after transplantation procedures. The unnatural clumps, rows, strips, or flap configurations so typical of earlier procedures have now been replaced by hairlines with random yet uniform patterns of one-, two-, three-, or four-hair follicular units with a feathered transition at their boundaries. In view of the natural results that can be obtained with micrografts and minigrafts and their safety and predictability, this technique for hair restoration has become my procedure of choice for hair restoration. In addition patients can expect minimal scarring from this procedure with little down time required (only for the one or two megasessions required). Furthermore, for patients who continue to lose hair and undergo additional hair transplantation, there is generally only one small residual scar since I excise the previous scar. Other techniques of hair restoration would leave significantly more scarring. Because of the versatility and reliability of minigrafts and micrografts, I rarely use other hair restoration procedures any longer, such as scalp flaps, tissue expansion, and scalp reduction. These techniques, however, should remain as part of our armamentarium.

This book focuses primarily on my philosophy and technique for transplanting micrografts (one- to two-hair grafts) and minigrafts (three- to four-hair grafts) for the management of male pattern baldness and other hair loss problems. It provides the experienced surgeon and beginner with a graphic depiction of this technique and its various nuances. The novice is urged to read the prefatory chapter on hair anatomy and physiology carefully before beginning this treatment approach; it provides the basic foundation necessary before undertaking this procedure. Chapter 2 offers helpful information on patterns of hair loss and patient profiles to assist the surgeon in assessing individual patient problems and providing the most effective solutions. Chapter 3 describes basic instruments and equipment needed for performing the procedure as well as tips on preoperative planning and patient education. A fully illustrated step-by-step description of the technique I use is presented in Chapter 4 followed by case examples demonstrating the range of results that can be achieved for specific hair loss problems. As the surgeon becomes more efficient he will begin to feel comfortable combining hair transplantation with face lift, as described in Chapter 5, and undertaking the more demanding challenges of reoperative surgery (Chapter 6). In Chapter 7 other applications for which I have found micrografts and minigrafts useful in aesthetic and reconstructive plastic surgery are discussed, such as camouflaging scalp scars, correction of sideburns after face-lift procedures, restoration of eyebrows, mustache, and beard, treatment of burn alopecia, and eyelash reconstruction.

It is my hope that this book will provide the surgeon with a basic understanding of micrografting and minigrafting techniques and the valuable role that they can play in a cosmetic surgery practice. Whether camouflaging a scar, restoring a receding hairline, or improving the appearance of the temporal hairline and sideburns after face lift, this unique hair replacement technique offers the surgeon a tool that adds finesse to his results while providing patients with

a simple yet remarkably effective solution to common hair loss problems. In our attempts to address the signs of aging so troubling to many of our patients, and particularly our male patients concerned about receding hairlines, mini-grafting and micrografting hair restoration procedures can offer restoration of a youthful hairline and a rejuvenated appearance as well as a useful adjunct to many of the other cosmetic procedures so popular today.

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