

## **Hair Transplant Surgery - Dr. M. May**

This is my account of Hair Transplant Surgery carried out by Dr Michael W. May FRCS, at the Wimpole Hair Restoration Clinic. As far as I am aware the surgery is only carried out privately.

### **Surgical Referral**

Dr. May does not require a surgical referral for a hair transplant.

### **Consultation**

The initial consultation with Dr May is provided without charge. During the consultation Dr May will explain how the transplant operation works and explain how the current technique, micro-grafts, differs from the previous “tufted doll” look. Provide that you explain your transsexual status, he will dispense with a lot of the advice given to males, regarding di-hydro-testosterone action on the hair follicles. He will also show you before and after pictures of other TS clients, (just the hairline not the face), showing how the new hairline is built up with two or three operations. You then get taken to a small room where he marks your forehead with red pencil so you can pick the hairline you want. Finally he gives you a quote for the operation. Mine was GBP 1,650 for 600 individual grafts. The actual number of grafts may vary, depending on how many follicles are found in the donor strip. The first time I went they had about 600 follicles, the second time they found more - about 690 so the fee was increased, the last time they only got about 520 so this time the fee was reduced.

I booked the surgery for the 11.30 am slot on a Friday. The plan was to have a couple of hours shopping on Oxford Street before surgery, leave the clinic around 6.30 pm, with the whole of the weekend to recover.

### **Surgery**

When I arrived I was met by Dr May’s assistant, Bill, who looks after you during your stay. I was taken down into the basement of the building and shown to a room with two recovery couches in it. There I got changed into a towelling bathrobe. I was then given some sedatives and an antibiotic to take. These took an hour or so to work during which time I sat on the couch reading and watching TV. At about 1.00 pm I was walked through to a small room where Dr May marked on my head, in red pencil, the limit of the area where the grafts were being placed. I then had my head photographed. Then I was taken to the operating room and given an injection into my left arm. I felt very little pain after this.

The operation itself is a bit like planting grass seedlings. Three strips of "turf" are cut from the back of your head, the donor strips, and the wounds then sutured up. Subsequent operations take strips from the same place so there are always just three scars. The "turf" is then put under a microscope and each follicle of hair is separately removed. Two nurses and Bill undertake this process. Whilst the follicles are being extracted, Dr May punches rows of small holes into the scalp. I felt a little pain at this stage, but nothing much. After this Dr May normally leaves the operating room and a nurse then literally plants each hair seedling into the hole. By separating each hair follicle in this way it prevents the "tufted doll" look of 1980's transplants. The operation lasted until about 4.30pm. I was then walked back to the couch and slept until about 6.00pm. When I woke up, I was offered tea and a sandwich. I was then given a bag of tablets and lotions, together with a set of written instructions to take home. I was well enough to walk back to Euston Station and take catch a train home. By the time I arrived at my home station I was fit enough to drive.

Bill will probably tell you this at the consultation stage, but as it's not on the pre-surgery list, remember to take a ladies baseball/tennis hat with you. This is to wear over the wounded and transplanted area when you leave, otherwise your head can look quite messy.

## **Post-surgery**

The area where the three cuts are made is quite sore for about three days as is the front of the head. You will therefore need to sleep on your side. The head bleeds or oozes plasma at the back for about three days until the wounds seal up. I was able to wear my wig again after two days and found that it actually helped the healing process as it stopped scratching and accidental knocks. Alternatively, if you have long hair you can brush it over the grafted area. The first three days you cannot wash the hair, then for the next ten days you wash with special shampoo – very similar to Betadine. After about 10 days the scabs on the planted area start to fall off or come loose, I also started loosing shafts of the planted hair at this stage. This is the worst stage for itchiness. After 14 days you move on to cleaning the area twice a week with a pink solution – 0.1% Aqueous Hibitane.

After about 4 to 5 weeks most of the hair shafts will have fallen out - do not panic !! It is just the old shaft of hair falling out, not the follicle.

I found that on each of the three occasion the new hair shafts started appearing after 12 weeks, although Dr May normally quotes 4 to 5 months. It appears that the absence of dihydro-testosterone may assist this. – at the time I was taking Finasteride.

## **Conclusion**

Dr May has lots of TS clients, so you can expect to be treated well. His assistant, Bill, in particular will treat you like a lady.

The area covered by each transplant is quite small; otherwise the hairs will be too thinly spaced out and not look natural in appearance. So do not expect a miracle the first time round; it does take three or four operations, over a period of two years to get a good result.

## **Contact Details**

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A full profile of the clinic and the staff can be found at:-

<http://www.medcent.co.uk>

## **Disclaimer**

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the facts included in this paper are accurate, any errors or omissions are my own and not those of the medical professionals involved. The views and opinions in the paper are solely my own. This paper does not constitute a recommendation or advice to either take or refrain from a particular course of action.

Kim E. Humberstone  
9<sup>th</sup> May 2000