



HAIR DISORDERS

FOLLICULAR UNIT EXTRACTION IN PRIMARY CICATRICIAL ALOPECIA- A FEASIBLE OPTION AND A RAY OF HOPE

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Introduction: Cicatricial alopecia encompasses a diverse group of disorders characterized by permanent destruction of hair follicles and irreversible hair loss wherein medical management has very limited role.

Traditional surgical treatments for secondary cicatricial alopecia often result in unfavourable scarring. However, in 1959, Orentreich described the phenomenon of donor dominance, thus paving the way for hair transplantation. Hair Transplant surgeons have attempted Follicular Unit Extraction successfully in cases of secondary cicatricial alopecia. However, they are hesitant in cases of primary cicatricial alopecia due to poor prognosis and risk of reactivating the disease.

Objective: To assess the survival of grafts post transplantation in primary cicatricial alopecia

Material and Methods: After approval from the Institutional Ethics committee, fifty-one patients with Primary cicatricial alopecia in the inactive stage for a period of six-twelve months, were enrolled. Inactivity was judged clinically and with the help of dermoscope. A 5cm² recipient area was tattooed and the follicular unit density of the transplanted area was kept at 20-25FU/cm². Postoperative follow-up was conducted at three, six and nine months. Density of hair in the recipient area was calculated at each follow up visit.

Results/Observations: Age of the patients ranged from 18 to 45 (mean-31.5). Of the 51 patients, 45 were cases of lichen planopilaris, five of discoid lupus erythematosus and one of central centrifugal cicatricial alopecia. The number of hair follicles implanted on an average in each patient were 140, of which mean number of hair follicles at the end of 6 months were 84.7 (56.8%), and 9 months were 90.87 (68.78%). Also, excellent repigmentation of the depigmented patches of discoid lupus erythematosus was observed in as early as 4months.

Conclusion: Follicular Unit Extraction is a good method for treating primary cicatricial alopecia as the end result is satisfying to both, the patient as well as the doctor.

