

HAIR TRANSPLANT PROCEDURE RISK & RECOVERY INFORMATION

This document provides general information about hair transplant procedures, including associated risks and recovery. It is intended for public access and does not replace a clinical consultation with a registered medical practitioner. All procedures at Gro Clinics are performed by registered medical practitioners. Individual outcomes, risks, and recovery timelines vary. Speak with your Gro doctor for information specific to your situation.

1. What Is a Hair Transplant Procedure?

A hair transplant is a medical procedure in which hair follicles are extracted from a donor area (typically the back or sides of the scalp) and implanted into areas experiencing hair thinning or loss. At Gro Clinics, this is performed using the Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE) technique.

The procedure involves the use of local anaesthetic, small circular incisions to extract individual follicular units, and their implantation into the recipient area. It is performed under sterile conditions by a registered medical practitioner.

Hair transplants are a higher risk non-surgical cosmetic procedure. They require careful consideration, a thorough clinical consultation, and informed decision-making. This document is designed to support that process.

2. Alternative Options

A hair transplant is not the only option for addressing hair loss. Alternatives include, but are not limited to:

- Hairpieces or hair systems
- Prescription medications such as minoxidil or finasteride (subject to clinical assessment and prescription)
- Other hair restoration procedures such as FUT (Follicular Unit Transplantation)
- No treatment — hair loss is a natural variation and does not require medical intervention

Your Gro doctor will discuss all relevant options with you during your consultation. A hair transplant may not be appropriate for everyone.

3. Common Side Effects

The following side effects are commonly experienced following a hair transplant procedure. They are generally temporary and resolve with time and appropriate aftercare.

Pain and Discomfort

Discomfort is common during and after the procedure. The degree varies between individuals. Local anaesthetic is administered to manage pain during the procedure.

Swelling

Swelling of the forehead or eyelids may develop and usually resolves within approximately one week.

Minor Bleeding and Bruising

Spot bleeding may occur at the donor or recipient site and is typically controllable with pressure.

Redness or Inflammation

Redness in the implanted area usually resolves within 3 months but may persist for up to 6 months or longer in some individuals.

Crusting and Scabbing

Small scabs may form in the recipient area, typically resolving within 7–10 days.

Itching, Numbness or Tingling

These sensations may occur and typically resolve within 6 to 9 months. In rare cases, nerve-related numbness or discomfort may persist for longer.

Ingrown Hairs

Ingrown hairs are possible as transplanted follicles regrow.

Pigmentation Changes

Temporary darkening or lightening of the skin in treated areas may occur, usually resolving within months.

Telogen Effluvium (Shock Loss)

Temporary shedding of native (non-transplanted) hairs may occur following the procedure and usually resolves over time.

4. Less Common and Rare Complications

The following complications are less common but possible. Some may require additional medical treatment.

Infection / Folliculitis

Infection risk is inherent to any procedure involving incisions. Folliculitis (inflammation of hair follicles) may occur and will be monitored. In rare cases, further medical intervention may be required.

Scarring

FUE involves small circular incisions which may leave tiny white scars in the donor area. Hypertrophic or keloid scarring is rare but possible, depending on individual healing.

Poor Graft Growth

In some cases, transplanted grafts may not grow as expected. Factors including smoking, underlying medical conditions, and non-compliance with aftercare can affect graft survival. There is no guarantee of complete or uniform growth.

Overharvesting and Donor Area Thinning

Excessive removal of grafts may lead to noticeable thinning in the donor area, particularly in individuals with limited donor hair.

Poor Angulation or Unnatural Appearance

If grafts are not implanted at the correct angle, direction, or density, hair may grow in an unnatural pattern. Corrective procedures may be required.

Reaction to Anaesthetics or Medications

Allergic reactions to local anaesthetics or other medications used during the procedure may occur, ranging from mild to severe.

Cysts

Small, benign cysts may form in the recipient area if hair follicles become trapped under the skin.

Persistent Redness or Visible Extraction Sites

Some individuals, particularly those with fair skin, may experience prolonged redness or visible extraction marks beyond the usual healing period.

Prolonged Swelling

While swelling typically resolves within a week, in rare cases it may persist for longer.

Skin Necrosis (Very Rare)

Poor blood supply or excessive trauma may lead to localised skin death (necrosis). This risk is higher in smokers or individuals with vascular conditions.

Excessive Scarring (Very Rare)

While FUE is associated with minimal scarring, some individuals may develop more noticeable scarring due to individual differences in healing.

Need for Further Procedures

In some cases, corrective surgery or additional sessions may be required to refine the outcome or address areas of poor growth.

5. Recovery Information

Recovery from a hair transplant requires time and careful aftercare. The following is general guidance — your Gro doctor will provide specific post-operative instructions tailored to your procedure.

Immediate Post-Procedure (Days 1–7)

- Swelling, redness, and tenderness in both donor and recipient areas is expected
- Small scabs will form and should not be picked or scratched
- Strenuous physical activity should be avoided
- Direct sun exposure to the scalp should be avoided
- You may need time away from work depending on the nature of your role

Weeks 2–4

- Scabbing typically resolves by day 7–10
- Some transplanted hairs may shed — this is normal (telogen effluvium) and does not indicate failure
- Continued avoidance of strenuous activity is recommended

Months 3–12

- Initial hair regrowth typically begins around 3 to 4 months post-procedure
- Noticeable improvements in thickness and density are generally visible from around 6 months
- Full results are typically visible around 12 months post-procedure
- In some cases, results may continue to improve up to 18 months

Recovery timelines vary between individuals. Factors including age, general health, the size of the procedure, and adherence to aftercare instructions all affect how quickly you heal and how results develop. Your Gro doctor will discuss what to expect based on your individual situation.

6. Limitations and Important Considerations

There are important limitations to hair transplant procedures that every individual should understand before making a decision.

- **A hair transplant does not prevent future hair loss.** Hair loss may continue in untreated areas. Ongoing medical treatments such as finasteride or minoxidil may be recommended to help maintain results.
- **There is no guarantee of permanent, complete, or uniform hair restoration.** Outcomes depend on factors including genetics, age, health, hair characteristics, and adherence to aftercare.
- **Additional sessions may be required.** Depending on ongoing hair loss or desired density, further procedures may be needed in the future.
- **90% graft survival is a general expectation, not a guarantee.** Individual graft survival rates vary and cannot be predicted with certainty in advance.
- **Results take time.** Full results are typically not visible until 12 months post-procedure. Assessing outcomes before this point may not reflect the final result.

7. Who May Not Be Suitable for a Hair Transplant

A hair transplant is not appropriate for everyone. Your Gro doctor will assess your suitability during a clinical consultation. Factors that may affect suitability include:

- Insufficient donor hair density
- Certain medical conditions or medications
- Active scalp conditions
- Smoking (which increases complication risk)
- Unrealistic expectations of outcome
- Age — particularly younger individuals where the pattern of future hair loss cannot yet be predicted

If you are not suitable for a hair transplant, your Gro doctor will discuss alternative options with you.

8. Making an Informed Decision

A hair transplant is a significant medical procedure. The decision to proceed should be made carefully, with full understanding of the risks, recovery, limitations, and alternatives outlined in this document.

Before proceeding, you should have the opportunity to:

- Ask all questions and receive clear answers from your treating doctor
- Understand the realistic range of outcomes for your individual situation
- Consider alternatives
- Review and sign a detailed consent form
- Take adequate time to make your decision without pressure

If you have concerns about your suitability, the procedure, or any aspect of your care, speak directly with your Gro doctor. You are not obligated to proceed and may withdraw consent at any time prior to the procedure.

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