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FUE Roundtable

Co-editors' Message

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This issue of the *Forum* is dedicated to the FUE Roundtable, a discussion of advanced topics in Follicular Unit Extraction surgery by 12 of our members from around the world who have extensive experience in performing FUE. Panel members utilize a variety of methods: manual, motorized, sharp punches, dull punches, and robotics. In developing this project, we first defined a list of important topics in FUE and then prioritized them as to importance. Due to space limitations in this issue, we were not able to cover all the topics. But, we are presenting discussion of certainly some of the most important, including causes of poor growth in FUE, *in vivo* and *ex vivo* splitting, minimizing trauma during extraction, ideal FUE grafts, long-term donor management, minimizing evidence of harvesting in the donor area, common mistakes beginners make, quality control in FUE, proper punch depth, and the role of assistants in FUE. We begin this issue with a featured paper by one of the panel members, Dr. Jean Devroye, on his new powered FU extraction with the Shaky Flat FUE System (SFFS). Then we will meet the panelists and learn about their practices and move into the Roundtable Questions. For some of the topics, I asked three of the panelists to prepare an answer independently so that we could compare views of the same subject. For other parts of the discussion, all panelists participated.

Powered FU Extraction with the Short-Arc-Oscillation Flat Punch FUE System (SFFS)

Jean Devroye, MD, FISHRS *Brussels, Belgium* officedevroye@aol.com

**The author has ownership interest in manufacturing and selling the SFFS, punches, and devices. Since no claims are made in this article, there is no real conflict of interest as it is instructional in nature.*

Key Points

- Tethering is probably the main factor explaining the difficulty in obtaining good quality grafts with different FUE techniques.
- Splay is also a major obstacle to creating good FUE grafts without transections.
- Sharp punches are associated with a high transection rate.
- A flat punch moving with low speed decreases dramatically the rate of transection and produces FUE grafts that look more like FUT grafts.
- For a link to videos relating to this article, please go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWldpuJQ05o&feature=youtu.be>

Introduction

We have been practising the FUE technique for 15 years now, and it's a major advancement in our HTS practice. The goal is to extract an individual follicular unit with a small circular trephine punch.

It is interesting to note that two distinct schools of thought quickly emerged in the development of FUE. The first one, led by Dr. Jim Harris, prefers the blunt punch. In the beginning, it was the 3-step system: very superficial scoring with a sharp punch followed by a dissection with a dull punch, then an extraction with fine forceps.¹ This then evolved into the blunt punch 2-step system where the same punch is used to cut and to dissect. The ARTAS® Robotic Hair Transplant System uses the 3-step approach with a blunt punch sliding along a sharp punch.

The second school of thought, led by Dr. John Cole, has opted for the sharp punch.² This system is by far the most widespread and adopted around the world. Only a few punch types dominate the market: Dr. Cole's thin and sharp punches, the titanium nitride coated punches (from Mediquip Surgical, among others), as well as cheaper

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For details, see page 173.

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