

Inside this issue

President's Message 242
 Co-editors' Messages 243
 Notes from the Editor Emeritus:
 Dr. Dow Stough 246
 ISHRS Legal Update: Delegation
 of Surgery in Hair
 Transplantation 253
 Another Way to Look at Donor
 Harvesting Effects with FUE 254
 A Side-by-Side Study of 20
 Consecutive FUE Patients
 Comparing the Use of a 0.99mm
 Sharp vs. 0.9mm Blunt Punch 256
 Letters to the Editor 259
 Update on European Standards
 or Hair Restoration Surgery 260
 Review of the Literature 261
 Hair's the Question:
 Mimics Part 2 262
 How I Do It: Poster Winners from
 the 2016 24th ISHRS World
 Congress 266
 Meetings & Studies:
 Review of the 24th ISHRS World
 Congress 268
 Workshops 273
 Extra Courses 278
 Leadership, Committees,
 Awards, & Recognition 282
 Message from the 2017...
 World Congress Program Chair 292
 World Live Surgery Program Chair 293
 Surgical Assistants Program Chair 293
 Classified Ads 294

Peri-operative Antithrombotic Therapy in Hair Transplantation

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Introduction

Patients under antithrombotic therapy sometimes visit our clinic for hair transplantation. Antithrombotic therapy is of critical importance to prevent serious cardiovascular events in patients with a mechanical heart valve, a coronary artery stent, or atrial fibrillation (Figure 1). Hair transplantation is considered safe surgery, therefore, peri-operative cardiovascular complications must be avoided.¹⁻⁶

Mechanical Heart Valve

Thrombus formation on the metal surface of the mechanical prosthetic heart valve results in malfunction and acute regurgitation of the valve with severe heart failure, which makes the patient critically ill. A thrombosed mechanical heart valve needs to be replaced with a new mechanical heart valve, and replacement surgery is a high-risk procedure.

Peri-operative control of antithrombotic therapy is of critical importance for prevention of thrombotic events and safe surgery in patients with a mechanical heart valve (Figure 2). According to the most recent guidelines, antithrombotic drugs should not be stopped and should be continued in a reduced dose before surgery.

Bridging Anticoagulation

The author doesn't stop warfarin before surgery in patients with a mechanical heart valve. Some cardiologists and other physicians may recommend stopping warfarin and antiplatelet drugs for one week before surgery. Because it is written in many books, sometimes cardiologists recommend bridging antithrombotic therapy using low molecular weight heparin.

This heparin-bridging regimen is one of incorrect information in modern medicine, and it should not be recommended. There is no evidence based on scientific data for heparin bridging. For more than 30 years, basic scientists

⇒ page 247

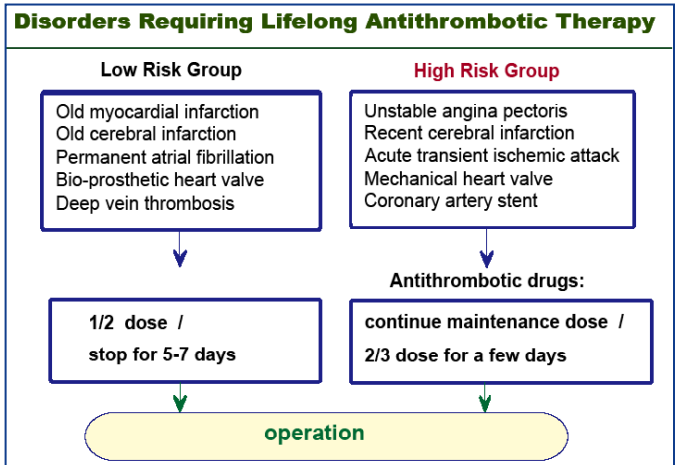


Figure 1. Disorders requiring lifelong antithrombotic therapy.

A note from Dr. True: One of the greatest strengths of our Society is the diversity of backgrounds of our membership. Because of our primary specialties, many of us bring unique expertise to our Society—neuro-surgery, urology, facial plastics, dermatology, cardiology, ENT, anesthesiology, etc. And when our members share insights from their background, it often enhances all of our practices. The lead article in this issue is a perfect example. Our immediate Past President, Dr. Kuniyoshi Yagyu, is a cardiologist by training. He has contributed many articles and presentations on the management of cardiology conditions during hair restoration surgery and in this issue he offers a very thorough and clearly written guide to help us provide correct peri-operative management of antithrombotics in hair transplantation.

I also would like to express Dr. Mario Marzola's and my gratitude on behalf of all the members to Dr. Yagyu for his outstanding leadership of our Society. We have been fortunate to have had the right leader at the right time to guide us through some difficult issues. We should hope that other societies and nations will be fortunate to have leaders of the same quality.

On page 252, we share an excerpt from Dr. Yagyu's opening remarks at the 24th ISHRS World Congress just concluded in Las Vegas.

**Las Vegas
World
Congress
Review
begins on
page 266!**

