

# FORUM

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Complications & Difficult Cases: Transient Alopecia After Vascular Occlusion Ischemia from Calcium Hydroxylapatite

## A Ten-Year Retrospective Analysis on the Long-Term Survival of Hair Transplants

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### ABSTRACT

Over time, and as our knowledge and experience has grown, researchers have studied various treatments for androgenetic alopecia (AGA). Among them, hair transplantation is considered to be the only potentially permanent solution for hair loss. However, there are concerns about the long-term sustainability of its outcomes. Hence, the authors evaluated hair transplantation results in patients who had undergone a linear strip excision hair transplant a decade or more prior. Overall patient satisfaction rate, influence of medications on patient satisfaction, recipient and donor hair characteristics, and patient demographics were evaluated. Medical records of patients who met the criteria for the study were retrieved, and the necessary data was collected.

The study included a total of 70 patients with AGA. Overall, the results demonstrated a high level of patient satisfaction, with a statistically significant correlation found between the intake of hair loss medications and patient satisfaction, particularly in the case of oral finasteride. Donor hair and recipient hair characteristics were also compared, but they did not show significant differences in measured outcomes.

Interestingly, for the few participants who were female, we found that hair loss was relatively stable and did not show significant progression during the 10-year or greater interval. The success of hair transplantation when it comes to permanence and in correlation with patient satisfaction rate is dependent on different factors, including the quality of donor hair and, importantly, patient compliance with hair loss medications. Even 10 years after the procedure, a majority of patients noted high satisfaction, but this was seen mainly in patients who had been compliant with medications; however, evaluation of hair density showed a statistically significant decrease of 4-6% over five years, suggesting that not all hair from the safe donor area is permanent. No statistically significant difference was seen in donor compared to recipient hair caliber after 10 years.

**Keywords:** donor hair, graft survival, long-term results, permanence

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### INTRODUCTION

Androgenetic alopecia (AGA) is a distressing concern highly prevalent in today's population.<sup>1</sup> Over the years, increasing efforts have been made to understand and develop effective treatments for this condition. Many non-surgical treatments to help halt the progression of AGA, such as oral finasteride, topical and oral minoxidil, and platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy among others, have been studied and used.<sup>2</sup> However, it is hair transplantation that offers the potential for long-lasting results. Due to modern advances in technology, hair transplantation has seen striking improvements—from its implementation to its results.<sup>3,4</sup> Even so, the longevity of its results remains in doubt.

The outcome of hair transplantation is highly dependent on several factors: the technique of hair transplantation used, including whether it is follicular unit transplantation/linear strip excision (FUT/LSE) or follicular unit excision (FUE); the technology and tools used for the procedure; the age and general health of the patient, including the patient's family history; and the skill of the surgeon and their team. In addition, the patient's understanding of and ability to follow the post-transplant guidelines also play a role. Therefore, it is important to note that graft survival and consequently the long-term results of hair transplantation are influenced by many factors.<sup>5,6</sup>

Knudsen found that experienced transplant surgeons have observed that, over time, transplanted grafts can suffer thinning. He attributed this to three possibilities: 1) the graft was harvested from an inappropriate site; 2) there was a general decline in the hair health, otherwise known as senescence; or 3) there was recipient site influence.<sup>7</sup> Norwood also shared a similar view wherein he suspected that senile alopecia might account for the acceleration of male pattern baldness and that transplanted hairs might not be all permanent and that they will thin over the years.<sup>8</sup>

## PLAN TO ATTEND!



31<sup>ST</sup> WORLD CONGRESS  
NOVEMBER 1-4, 2023



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