



Words Dr Nestor

**DR NESTOR'S**  
 MEDICAL COSMETIC CENTRE

# RECEDING HAIR LINE? YOU'LL WANT TO READ THIS.

Gentlemen, although this article isn't exclusively for you, it largely is. Let's face it, a receding hairline, a visible crown, or thinning hair all shake our confidence and alters how we see ourselves, and how we think others see us.

One are the days of the 1980s 'comb over' (I think we can all agree that was a terrible idea). Some men wear the bald proudly. For many of us, not so proudly. Up to 50% of men will experience some degree of hair loss by the time they reach 50. And for many, hair loss will occur far earlier whilst they are in their 20s, 30s or even late teens.

#### What causes hair loss?

The main cause for 95% of men experiencing a thinning scalp is androgenetic alopecia – commonly referred to as male pattern baldness. Testosterone is converted into a more potent hormone called dihydrotestosterone (DHT). It causes follicles almost exclusively on the top of the head to shrink and produce abnormal hair with a shorter life. More testosterone, more DHT. That's right, balding men have higher levels of potent testosterone. It's not a myth.

Other causes of hair loss in men include stress, disease, and reactions to medication. Hair loss is always about much more than a receding hair line. It can deeply affect our confidence and self-esteem.

#### Is male pattern hair loss hereditary?

A family history of hair loss is common. A number of genetic locations linked to male pattern hair loss have been identified and linked to maternal inheritance.

#### What does male pattern hair loss look like?

The first area we typically see hair loss in is the crown, followed by thinning around the hairline and temples, before the mid scalp is affected. However, we all have different experiences of the condition and some may see varying patterns depending on their case.

#### How can male pattern hair loss be treated?

Male pattern hair loss can be treated with solutions applied to the scalp and tablet treatments aimed at decreasing male hormones, or camouflage treatments aimed at disguising the thinned areas (micro-pigmentation).

Non-surgical modalities and treatments can be used on their own or in conjunction with hair restoration procedures. Fortunately there are safe and effective medications available to treat male and female pattern hair loss.

#### Topical Treatments:

- **5% Concentration Minoxidil**  
Minoxidil started out as an oral anti-hypertensive. A reversal of androgenetic alopecia was noted in patients using oral minoxidil which led to the development of topical formulations for hair loss. Topical minoxidil is very safe and any potential side effects associated with its daily use such as allergic or irritant dermatitis are less frequent with the foam version.

#### Oral Treatments:

- **Finasteride**  
Finasteride stops the action of an enzyme called 5-alpha reductase. This enzyme is responsible for making testosterone into the DHT (which, as we've discussed shrinks and kills our hair follicles). If we can stop this conversion, we can hold on to our hair for longer leading to an increase in hair growth.

The recommended daily dose is 1mg of Finasteride for prevention and treatment of hair loss. As with any drug, there are risks of side effects. These include decreased libido or erectile dysfunction. Sounds scary, but it is less than 3%.

*"There are two successful techniques for hair transplant surgery. Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE) and Follicular Unit Transplantation (FUT or Strip Technique) surgery. Both are carried out under local anaesthetic. Both are effective, delivering natural results".*



#### Hair Restoration Surgery:

Hair transplantation can improve hair density at the front of the head and crown by moving follicles from unaffected areas at the back of the head. Today's procedures carry a success rate of 90-100%. On average, our head has between 100,000 to 150,000 hairs and we lose up to 100 of them every day. I know, it sounds pretty depressing.

There are two successful techniques for hair transplant surgery. Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE) and Follicular Unit Transplantation (FUT or Strip Technique) surgery. Both are carried out under local anaesthetic. Both are effective, delivering natural results. One is not necessarily better than the other. The procedure type really depends on how much density and coverage you are looking to achieve.

Follicles are only inserted one by one, but depending on someone's suitability, we can utilise two different methods to extract them – either individually or as a strip of follicles. Regardless of the extraction method used, the final result of the hair transplant procedure will be the same – a natural-looking hairline. Both have pros and cons. The best treatment is the one that suits your needs and scalp appropriately. Sometimes, both procedures are needed.

#### Follicular Unit Extraction:

FUE involves removing healthy hair follicles directly from a donor area on the scalp one at a time (usually at the back of the head where the hair is plentiful) and grafting them onto the bald or thinning areas. There is no detectable scarring and, in most cases, patients are able to return to work the next day with permanent results.

#### Advantages of having the FUE:

FUE is a minimally invasive treatment and unlike the Strip (FUT) procedure, stitches aren't needed after treatment. Recovery time is therefore reduced.

#### Disadvantages:

Based on the pattern of hair loss, it may not be possible to harvest enough hair follicles with this technique alone. This is where the strip method has its advantage.

#### Follicular Unit Transplantation (Strip Method):

In cases where there are not enough follicles to extract individually then a strip of follicles can be extracted. The strip of follicles is taken from the middle-portion of the back of the head, as this area is largely immune to DHT.

This strip method leaves a fine pale scar at the back of your head, which is easily covered by your own hair. Dissolvable sutures are used which are usually absorbed by 2-3 weeks, although I'd recommend removing them between 8 and 12 days after the procedure.

#### Is it painful?

Both procedures are carried out under local anaesthetic and once this takes effect, there is no pain whatsoever.

#### How long does it take?

Depending on the extent of the procedure, the transplant will take approximately four to eight hours.

#### What are the risks?

As with any surgical procedure, hair transplantation carries risks, including bleeding and infection (extremely rare). Other risks that can occur with hair transplants include scarring and unnatural-looking new hair growth (if not implanted correctly).

Around the time new hair growth starts, some people experience inflammation or infection of the hair follicles (folliculitis). This can be treated with antibiotics. Another potential risk is the sudden loss of transplanted hair, called shock loss. This is rarely permanent.

#### What is the 'down time'?

After hair transplant surgery, your scalp may be tender. Pain medication may be needed for a few days. Most people are able to return to work after two to five days.



To learn more about hair restoration surgery, visit [www.drnestor.co.uk](http://www.drnestor.co.uk) or e-mail [man@drnestor.co.uk](mailto:man@drnestor.co.uk)



#### When will you see the results?

Within two to three weeks after surgery, the transplanted hair will fall out (but the new implanted follicles remain).

You will start to notice new growth within a few months. Most people will have attained 60% of new hair growth after six to nine months with almost full restoration at 1 year.

#### Is Hair Transplant Surgery for me?

If you are bothered by thinning hair or balding, hair transplantation can significantly improve your appearance and self-confidence.

As with everything, do your homework, speak to a doctor/surgeon trained in the procedures who will give you honest advice about the best treatment for you as well as realistic expectations.