

Hello, folks!

Once you're here browsing thru this blog, you're amongst those 40%- basically, every third guy!!!- affected by the hair loss already by the age 35.

Well, it's getting worse the further we look: at the age of 60 approximately 65% of male population (majority!) are suffering from this problem, according to the *International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery*.

By starting a blog with these saddening data my point is: losing hair is not an end-of-the-world situation at after all! Indeed, as we read it all over the web, hair loss is a natural process of aging, partly due to the hereditary genetics and marginally also due to illnesses, bad habits or malnutrition.

Whether we want it or not, our appearance matters to us insomuch as we want to be liked by the opposite gender. So, in principle, it is women's opinion that counts most. Given that there are numerous guys with thinning hair, women are used to seeing us this way and do not pay so much attention to this *particular* characteristic- at least quite many of them so say. In some cases they even claim to like it because *clean head* makes guys look more mature, masculine and even sexy. So, if girls are indifferent to count hair on our heads and don't particularly point with fingers at us, why should we be so obsessed with this problem?

Hey, think of self-confident and successful fellas like Bruce Willis, Jason Statham, Vin Diesel, etc. they are just few but the list is VERY long! And I suppose females find them attractive.

OK, this *prologue* was meant to be a small spark for optimism to calm a bit down and gain some confidence over your appearance whenever you walk into the bathroom and look into the mirror at your self because these are some of the most unpleasant moments to start a day with. Give yourself a wink of an eye and smile confidently, even if what you see doesn't please you.

But this is not a story of building motivation or raising your self-esteem for living with what you've got by basically succumbing to the bad genetics inherited from your ancestors. - Of course, you can do that too and there are many guys exactly following this path. But most of the times we want to be men of action, so let's look at this constructively, pragmatically, if something- anything can be done! Believe me: A LOT CAN BE DONE, you just need to overcome some stereotypes and, yes- have some courage, too!

To leap ahead, I am now a year after my FUE hair transplantation and I feel so much better, relaxed and happier in life than before. It's worth it, indeed, I'm telling you! I am not advertising one particular clinic but purely describe my own experience at one of the hair restoration clinics, which I partly chose because of its high profile in the industry and, secondly, because of ATTITUDE of the Doctor, I guess.

So, spare some moments out of your busy day and read this blog, where I have tried to make as detailed description as possible from planning to after-operation period. I hope this will provide you with better insight into the whole process and maybe also serve as additional motivation.

I will be just happy for having helped at least a few guys, if my story and tips for planning for the operation can become useful. So, be patient and read ahead as here it goes....

MY PROFILE

I am a 36-year old male from the Northern Europe. My hair is greyish-blond and has curly-wavy structure. I recall initially seeing minor hair loss already at the age of 25-27 and initially my hairline was receding from the temples and I did not care for a while because my father has the same hairline- it's in my genes.

But then I noticed my head skin visible thru the scalp in the mirror and styling my hair with gel in the mornings became a nuisance, just because it (the hair) did not hold "up" the way it used to! – Suddenly, I realized I am among those fellas facing the *hair loss*!

I spent some time desperately looking for a *miracle treatment* to regrow back at least some hair. I was so worried about what people would say and whenever some comments came that I was losing my rich *crown*, it was a nightmare of emotional stress! But I realized I could not do anything about my bad genetics! But it seemed an absolutely useless struggle and waste of energy!

– Well, to leap ahead, turns out it's not so bad after all and like in all situations in life there is a solutions also to this PROBLEM! Trust me, because I know you CAN get back confidence in life and enjoy one of the most delightful transformations of your appearance! ☺

EARLY TREATMENT

As previously mentioned, I was freaking out at the start and my girlfriend was not happy either because she had to listen to all those complaining about my looks and thinning hair all the time. My hair loss was more than a problem on the *façade*. Now I realize it was more of a psychological disorder resulting in frequent mood swings and reasons for becoming a nuisance to people around.

So, if you think about gaining back your nice hairline, look at this issue and benefits much deeper. It will not only make you look younger, it will make you feel more confident on the inside and I am not exaggerating.

I found a doctor called *trichologist* -didn't know before that such a profession existed- and became a frequent patient there for some oil treatments on my scalp. I was prescribed the traditional *Rogaine* lotion and *Finasteride*. It lasted for a couple of years but without any visible effect. I also tried some oil treatment that stimulates hair growth but without any effect again. Finally, I underwent a needle therapy of some hair root revitalizing and stimulating serum that was injected in my head. It was painful- up to 100 punctures a single therapy without any anesthetic of small needles into your head? Was it worth it?- I'm not sure.

I was so motivated to preserve at least my remaining hair from further receding, if no improvement was possible. But again- without obvious results! So, it was all waste of energy and resources!

HAIR TRANSPLANTATION

At the time I had practically given up all my hope, suddenly some promising news came. Quite by chance, slightly more than a year before the actual operation I bumped into an article analyzing the existing and innovative hair restoration methods.

Hair transplantation surgery..... - it sounded scaring at first but fundamental and encouraging at the same time. I had nothing to lose, so bit-by-bit I did my research on what exactly this whole thing was.

It seemed I would never consider hair transplantation for myself- the HIGH COST of an operation was a major *back-setting* issue. But, I can assure you- it just takes time to get psychologically used to such numbers. On the other hand, think about the cost of time visiting a trichologist regularly and also money spent on treatment aids, which in principle are quite useless, or rather- will not provide fundamental results.

Try to think of hair transplantation operation as a long-term investment into your life: not just appearance but also personality! I can assure you it will reward you several-fold! If you have full determination and want to achieve something, nothing should be an obstacle, even the relatively high cost. –Yes, the operation cost equals to the price of an average second-hand car... but is it really too much for a better looks, regained confidence and better mood. I don't think so! For me this was a decisive factor and I pulled together all of my strength and told myself "I NEED to do this!"

CHOOSING A DOCTOR..... THE DOCTOR

One doesn't need to read all that is posted on the web to quickly come across a few powerful reputable names in the industry. I could spot just some 3-5 doctors in the European market and I am telling honestly- there can be no better marketing than *word-of-mouth* advertising.

Long story short- I decided in favor of Dr. Bijan Feriduni for two reasons. First, his *artwork* (judging from pictures)-seemed very convincing! And secondly, I did not/could not find ANY bad comment about him from his patients!

However, I still wanted to check out for myself and before actually scheduling an operation I decided to visit Dr. Feriduni at his Hair Clinic. I thought it would be a good idea to meet and get to know my Doc before actually making my final decision.

By the way, Dr.Feriduni's promotional video on his Clinic's webpage is very insightful! After having watched it for a couple I was quite surprised- in the best senses, of course,- how accurate and close to the real life situation the whole atmosphere was. On my first arrival I had a feeling I had been there before.

FIRST VISIT

When I came at the Dr. Feriduni's I was received in a very professional and warm manner. Not just as a potential patient but somehow friendly, I would say.

Special thanks also to Christin (the assistant of Dr.Feriduni) who took great care in helping me with all the formalities and also offering some excellent coffee and nice Belgian chocolate. Apparently, seeing my nervousness, he was trying to be very helpful by encouraging me with his own story. Definitely, this counts as one of the selling points- at least for me who till then had not seen any real life examples, just pictures.

DR. FERIDUNI- WHAT IS HE LIKE?

I was thrilled and anxious to meet Dr.Feriduni and the very moment he came to greet me I felt he was a very nice and forthcoming personality. "Hello!" he greeted me by my name and invited to his office.- I felt intrigued to learn more about the whole thing.

The next hour and a half went by quite fast and in a very relaxed conversation. I was asked several questions and the Doctor meticulously took down notes in my newly created file. He asked about my expectations from the operation and suggested that FUE (*follicular unit extraction*) would yield the best results. I was shown several (actually many!) sample pictures from the patient database and we discussed the kind of hairline that would fit me best, given my age and facial traits. We also experimented with several shapes of hairline on me until both agreed on the optimal solution. Finally, Dr. Feriduni made several pictures of me and I was informed that an operation price quotation would be sent to me during the next few days!

All in all, Dr. Feriduni on the first encounter and throughout the whole appointment leaves an impression of a true PROFESSIONAL you can trust. I noticed he pays great attention to details and evaluates a patient's face with a computer-like precision. At the same time, he likes to make jokes during the conversation and this helps to ease up the atmosphere. You don't feel any tension at all as would normally be visiting a plastic surgeon.

Upon leaving the clinic, I had already decided in favor of Dr. Feriduni and I decided to schedule my operation right on the spot, so I had no room for changing my mind. Of course, you can do that too, but why should one give up some good resolutions? I left Dr. Feriduni's Hair Clinic satisfied and looking forward to my newly-scheduled operation that had to take place half a year ahead.

My advice: don't hesitate to make an appointment with your doctor (or, even several- if you can afford travelling) before you actually decide on the operation. Your inner voice/intuition will tell you what to do next.

For the very impatient and those having no time to read the whole story, the interesting part starts from here, I guess.... ☺ Before describing, what and how exactly was happening during the operation, here are some aspects to consider, at least from my personal experience.

TIPS FOR PLANNING AND TRAVELLING TO/FROM THE OPERATION

Try to plan your operation during the Summer time and take a holiday leave as long as you can! -You will need time to recover from the operation and minimize the visible effects on your head.

The problem is the long lasting redness of the head skin in the treatment area, where hairs have been transplanted. I have no clue, what other guys write, that they are OK already within 3-4 weeks but my head was still visibly red for more than 3 months after the operation. I took 4 weeks of holiday but even this was not enough. So, take my advice- don't be too much upbeat about returning to your normal condition just in 2-3 weeks! And even if you do recover faster, another week or two will do you no harm! I had to return to work not only completely bald but with a visible redness on my treated area. -Try then to think of an excuse why you look so strange! In my particular case nobody really ever asked what? and why? but somehow I still felt suspicious looks from my colleagues and these were not very agreeable situations. So, rather have a long leave!

As you return to your office, you will need to have a plausible story, why you had shaved your head and had really happened and your head has the redness, unless you really don't care and are ready to tell the truth.

Secondly, maybe, someone will start smiling here but: try to plan your operation during the new Moon. Yes! Think about this: all living beings- and we are no exception- are subject to the lunar cycles. Ask your grannies and they will tell that plants in the garden grow better when they have been planted during the new Moon. And we are just a part of living nature. By the way, if you haven't noticed, your hair grows faster when you have been to the hairdresser in the new Moon. All processed progress faster (and wounds heal better) during the new Moon cycle.

Scheduling FLIGHTS and booking a HOTEL

Since my operation was scheduled half a year ahead from my first visit to Dr.Feriduni's I had enough time to plan my journey, book flights and a hotel.

A thing to consider, scheduling your flight, is that most probably you will encounter some acquaintances or familiar people at the airport, so be prepared for small talk whereto and for what reason you're travelling. ☺

Even more so, this applies to planning your returning home! Because you don't want to meet any familiar faces having such a strange appearance (swollen face like a pumpkin and a strange black bandana on your head. You will be told this by your Doc, but you **ABSOLUTELY MUST NOT** touch/wear anything on your head during the next 10 days of post operation period.

No, -I'm not being a paranoid, I just think that operation like this everybody would like to carry out discretely and without additional attention. By the way, I exactly had the worst-case scenario in this respect: I met some people travelling to Brussels and had to quickly think of a story I will be doing there and also returning back home with a strange black garment (a bandana) on my head and quite a swollen face. How on earth can one explain such a masquerade without raising suspicion? Have some sunglasses, or a magazine to read/hide your face, if necessary.

Choosing and booking a hotel was easy. Actually, Dr.Feriduni's Clinic has a very advantageous arrangement with a nearby Hassotel. At the time I was there, the first night was at the cost of the clinic, so you save eur 70, the second is at your own expense. Another positive factor in favor of Hassotel is that their staff are used to seeing guys with shaved heads and bloody bandages. -No bewildered and inquiring faces! Everybody treats you understandingly and discretely.

The hotel itself was very much OK, too.- Actually, what do you need at all going for such an operation? The room was tidy and breakfast had good variety of food. Maybe someone thinks differently but personally I am very modest on these issues: clean bed, running hot and cold water in shower and a decent breakfast in the morning.

Make sure to arrive at the hotel a day before, so you can get a good rest and sleep during the night. I don't think it makes much sense to squeeze the schedule in just one day to save some extra cash. In fact, prior to the operation you will get a detailed manual from the clinic how to prepare for the operation and I think I have more or less also covered this aspect.

DAY OF THE OPERATION

Most likely, at night you will have "empty" sleep and you will feel nervous. I think this does not require clarification, why?- Everybody would feel/behave the same way, given that there is a hard operation ahead in a few hours.

Wake up earlier and take your time to calm down. A refreshing shower, comfortable clothes and good breakfast will make you feel a bit more relaxed. At least, try to tell yourself you are relaxed! ☺

As soon as you enter the clinic you see everybody literally is there prepared for you and great attention is being paid to detail. For the start, there are some formalities- a standard operation agreement you have to read thru and sign.

You are then taken to a separate room for changing into operation robe and have some moments of privacy to get yourself together. I WAS NERVOUS and after signing all the papers I even got amused with my attention distracted from stress by the assistant Cristian coming in and with all the seriousness on his face asking: "Sir, what would you like to eat for lunch- a tuna sandwich or ...?", don't remember the other option! ☺ In all my stress it made me smile and get carried away for a moment. But as I said- seriously, the Clinic takes great care in all the details.... as you see, even the menu!

After changing into the operation robe, I was accompanied to Dr.Feriduni's office and once again (remember, I came to see the Doctor for the first time half a year earlier) we went thru pictures and the proposed hairline. Dr.Feriduni explained briefly the course of the operation and then drew my new hairline. I had the opportunity to look at it in the mirror and was encouraged to suggest improvements. But I did not have any because I think the Doctor does his work best, so I relied on his proposal.

When all the *artwork* was finalized, I was escorted to the *barber's* where a nice and humorous lady (sorry, I don't remember her name) asked me for the last time if I was sure about what I was about to do. I nodded bravely and before I could change my mind, she shaved the first strip of my hair and then, indeed, there was no going back. ☺ When all my hair was gone I was accompanied to the operation room with the whole team already waiting for me. I sat on the operation bed and had to lean back.

Dr. Feriduni came in and instructed he would inject some anesthetic in my forehead, temples and back- some anesthetic. This was not pleasant but quite tolerable and then some time was given for the medicine to work on me.

Another amusing thing is that during the operation you are offered to watch TV and you can even choose between movies! I was quite embarrassed by this and could not quickly make up my mind. I finally chose some James Bond.

About the operation itself I cannot tell much because I did not see what exactly was going on. I felt no pain but there was a thick helmet on my head and they were doing something on its surface. This surface was my head.

All I know is that the first part of the operation was extraction of hair follicular units from the donor area. When all the necessary follicular units had been extracted (after a couple of hours, I guess), there was a break and I was offered a lunch break during which I had some 45 minutes to have my tuna sandwich and rest a bit. While I was on the operation desk I did not feel any dizziness but as soon as I stood up and had to walk a few steps it was not that pleasant at all. Also, during my lunch I felt kind of squeamish.

As much as I can understand- the shorter the break between extraction and transplanted, the better it is for the follicular units and the higher their survival rate. So, right after my lunch without hesitation we quickly resumed with the second part -the transplanted of the follicular units. This lasted another couple of hours and by the end I was really tired. My neck was numb from my operation position and a bit of spine was aching from lying in the same position for hours.

When all was over, I was brought to my changing room and shortly after took my leave to the hotel. The clinic had organized a taxi, which was very good given my condition at the moment.

From there I proceeded straight to my room, where I lay down to have rest. The head felt very strange and since it was already rather late afternoon, I decided to not go out and stay without a meal.

The first evening and the night after the operation is difficult because anesthetics are leaving your body and you start feeling what has actually been done. I can tell honestly- this is very unpleasant sensations and quite a bit of headaches. The doctor will instruct you and it is important to sleep in a proper position so you do not touch the recipient area. This can damage the follicles that are holding into the transplanted area quite loosely and can be accidentally extracted by touching, smearing, etc. To do everything properly and minimize the risk of harming the follicles, you have to sleep in almost an upright position with the head high. For that a special pillow will be provided. After the operation you will be given all the instructions so you make no mistakes. It's very important to observe all of them! No kidding! And, better don't try using alcohol as a painkiller or a relaxing aid after the operation. It can affect your senses and you can eventually damage the transplants while in the sleep.

THE DAY AFTER THE OPERATION

On the next day after the operation I woke up feeling quite unpleasant! Constant headache was haunting me and there was a feeling of absolute senselessness of the head upon a touch. For a while I feared this would last for a lifetime. I had had a bad sleep during the night with a constant fear subconsciously to bump/touch my head and it took guts to look into the mirror. For a while I was cursing myself for having desired and agreed to this whole venture.

I took shower, avoiding moisture on my head and then dressed. It was difficult psychologically to go down for breakfast because I instinctively felt that not all hotel guests are from the clinic and people would curiously look at me. Luckily there were few guests in the restaurant and the hotel staff was very supportive. It seemed as if they were quite used to such sceneries like me.

After the breakfast I had a taxi ordered and went to the clinic at the set time. Dr.Feriduni met me cheerful as usual, which, quite frankly, encouraged me to feel better and made me look at all that had happened as not so tragic at all.

The bandage on the donor area was removed and my head was inspected carefully. After that I was taken to another room where one of the nurses gently washed my head. I did not feel my head, which was quite unpleasant again.

When all the post-op maintenance was done, I was taken to the Doctor's office where, among other instructions and matters, he instructed me how to put the black bandana on, which is very important not to accidentally remove hairs from the recipient area. He gave me additional instructions (a folder with post-operation manual), along with some after-op treatment aids (aloe vera gel, vitamin spray, post-FUE treatment serum). By the way, make sure you travel to the operation with at least a bag you can later on check-in as a regular and not a hand luggage. The liquids you will be given exceed 100ml and there is a risk that airport security can confiscate them. But you definitely need them for post-op treatment. As a matter of fact, I made this mistake and came just with my hand luggage but

was quite lucky to get them thru because of a very responsive security guy. I tried to explain what these were for and he understood me well.

I was quite lucky, apparently because of my appearance and explanations, but it's definitely better not to test their responsiveness because some officials are really strict. So, remember about the bag for a non-hand luggage!

TRAVELLING HOME

Right after visiting the clinic I took a taxi to the train station to get to Brussels for my flight home as it was exactly on the day after the operation. And, judging from what happened on Day 2-4, my advice is TRAVEL HOME AS SOON AS YOU CAN! The explanation for that is simple: in my particular case, serious swelling on the face started on the Day 2 to the limit that I could barely see. Presumably, you don't want to scare people in public with a pumpkin-like appearance. ☺ So, make sure to get back home quickly, where you will be spending indoors the next week.

The challenging part in travelling home is to stay *incognito* at the airport when you are arriving at the gates for boarding. Please, remember you **MUST NOT WEAR ANY HOODED GARMENTS, CAPS, or HATS**. Your head can only be covered by the bandana, provided by the clinic, so there are few *camouflage* means, e.g., sunglasses to hide your identity. You don't look particularly attractive and don't want to meet any acquaintances at all, even relatives, unless you're a really cool guy and don't care about anyone's opinion. But, ironically, there will surely be somebody whom you know but don't want to speak to at this particular moment. So, my advice: try to arrive exactly for the boarding, when most of passengers are already on the plane. You should have checked-in earlier for a seat somewhere in the front rows (right after business class), so you can sneak in to your place unnoticed. Don't worry about the looks of strangers, look for familiar faces and avoid them. When the plane lands, you can also quickly leave the aircraft unnoticed.

Also, remember I earlier wrote to plan the operation during Summer (ok, at least warm season) because another practical aspect to this is that you cannot wear anything on the head. But, guess, what if you have an operation in the cold season and there is a freezing temperature outside, uh? -Not a very agreeable sensations with a bald head undergone a heavy operation in the cold weather.

BACK HOME IN THE POST-OPERATION PERIOD

When you leave Dr. Feriduni's Hair Clinic you are equipped with everything you need in the post-operation and healing period. It's all presented in a nice corporate style neat brown folder. It includes day-by-day schedule how you should apply the provided healing aids. Not much to comment further on this. Just travel home safely and observe all the instructions.

From my experience I can say that Days 3-5 are the most difficult because the face is round like an egg and you can barely see anything at all. The only thing you can be happy about is that wrinkles you ever used to have on the forehead, are gone but not for good, just a couple of days. Unfortunately. ☺

It's better to stay indoors and rest at this time. Direct exposure to the sunlight is forbidden at the start. However, if you desperately want to go outside, you **MUST** wear the bandana **NOT** a cap, or hood, or anything else during the first days! During the first week also make sure you are using the sleeping pillow provided because grafts are loosely holding in your scalp and they are safe only after 10 days. Be careful not to touch the recipient area at any

times, rub or bump your head. Another side effect I personally had was frequent headaches but as the Doctor explained this is a normal occurrence after such a heavy surgery on the head.

The scabs of punctures from the donor area start falling off after approximately a week and it is not a very attractive scenery on your linens and pillow in the mornings. The recipient area is going to look ugly for a relatively long period of time, so just don't look at it. For me it took 3-4 month before the redness started to fade away and it could be concealed under the growing hair. And even then, with the hair grown, upon a close-up look there was a difference in the scalp color. So, I am very skeptic about those stories that you cannot see anything already after 3-4 weeks.

After Day 10 I could start washing the head very gently and day-by-day the situation was SLOWLY improving. All this time I was wearing the bandana and had psychological problem to go out and meet my friends. My suggestion is that, planning your operation, please calculate some few months off – if you care- from big public events like wedding, big birthdays, public appearances linked with your profession, etc. You will feel much more comfortable.

According to the instructions after 2-3 weeks it was safe to wash the head but I still did it very carefully. I used the after-FUE treatment liquids provided by the Doctor at all times and lived peacefully, patiently waiting for my hair starting to grow. Believe me- it is a very sloooow process! All good things come slowly! 😊

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I am now a year after my FUE and according to Dr. Feriduni, whom I visited a few months earlier, I can still expect my best result to come. My hairline is much better than it used to be and hair look thicker.

The only imperfection I observe is that the front of the hairline, which was created by the hair from the donor area at the back of my head, has a bit different hair structure. As described before, my hair is curly-wavy in the front but rather straight at the back. So, on a close and careful look-up, there is some slight difference in the hair structure noticeable. I guess, it's only me and Dr. Feriduni, who would notice these minor differences.

Folks,

Honestly, I'm truly thankful to the Doctor Bijan Feriduni and his professional team for bringing back confidence in myself and happiness in life, for allowing me feel younger and stop worrying about hairloss that I was obsessed with for the past couple of years.

Enclosed are pre- and post-operation pictures taken of at several periods of time.