

WHAT'S NEW | WHAT'S NEXT

popular science

NOVEMBER 2001

TRANSPLANTS

RAISIN' HAIR

Foiling genetics with new surgical technology.

WHEN I WAS A BOY, MY DAD TOLD ME that three things are inevitable in our family: death, taxes, and male pattern baldness. Like most sons, I'm forever trying to prove him wrong. That's why, 30 years later, I decided to get a hair transplant.

But not any old hair transplant. Certainly not one like my buddy Brad's—he wound up with unsightly clumps sprouting from his scalp. Nor one like friend John's, which led to days of suffering: "The anesthesia made my face swell up like Quasimodo," he says.

I ended up in the Miami offices of Dr. Jeffrey Epstein, who uses a technique so new, he says, that fewer than 100 doctors offer it nationwide. Even better, Epstein uses a tool that greatly reduces pain and swelling.

After I settle into a comfy chair (and the Valium kicks in), Epstein carves a thin, hairy chunk of scalp from the back of my head. Technicians then dissect out hundreds of hair follicles—which look like tiny lumps of skin surrounded by rings of fat—each capable of growing up to four hairs.

Next, Epstein pricks my noggin with a high-tech wand that delivers a precise amount of anesthesia. I barely feel a thing when he takes jeweler's forceps and begins implanting the follicles one by one like daisies. Over 5 hours, Epstein implants some 1,923 follicles that should generate 4,483 new hairs.

Only question left: Will it work? I'll know in five months, as the new follicles settle in. **FIRST-HAND** will monitor my beeper for a few issues to see what happens. So will my dad.—CHARLES HIRSHBERG



PLANTED
Will new-sown dome (bottom) bear fruit?

popular science

JULY 2002

Rejoice, Gentlemen of Middle Age!
For science took a half-bald guy and restored some of his shagginess.



• hair transplantation BALD & BLUE [1 2 3 4 5] HAPPILY HIRSUTE

Six months ago, Dr. Jeffrey Epstein performed upon me a "follicular unit transplant" —that is, he extracted a clump of 1,923 hair follicles from the back of my head and grafted them, one by one, to the front (we left a bald spot on top). He also used a high-tech anesthetic wand to forestall pain and swelling [Firsthand, Nov. '01]. The successful result you can see for yourself. For details, see www.foundhair.com. —CHARLES HIRSHBERG