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MICROPIGMENTATION OF HEAD SKIN. MEDICAL AND AESTHETIC ASPECTS.

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We can look at the micropigmentation of scalp from two directions. One is aesthetic surgery performed mainly on persons who don't want or cannot accept the processes of hair thinning and baldness. The procedure is used more and more frequently also by men for whom balding is not an emotional issue but who simply want to look attractive - in this case have a new hairstyle. On the other hand, it is a procedure in the field of medical micro pigmentation, solving the problem of alopecia areata, scarring, and the effect of ectodermal hair loss after a disease or masking accident scars, scars formed by cutting out strips for hair transplant, or finally irregularities on the skin after a failed transplant.

This article will present the issue of micropigmentation of scalp from the perspective of a person, who deals with this procedure every day, facing the experiences of the persons subject to the hair loss problem.

Micropigmentation can be divided into aesthetic and medical.

- **Aesthetic micropigmentation** focuses mainly on improving the natural look. It is the classical micropigmentation of eyebrows, eyelids, mouth.

- **Medical micropigmentation** aims mainly at restoration of natural appearance which was disturbed, usually by mechanical injury or a disease. This includes such procedures as:

- reconstruction of the eyebrow arch or eye lash line after



- oncological disease;
- reconstruction of the nipple after mastectomy, reconstruction of the vermillion border after lip transplant surgery;
- pigmentation masking vitiligo, scars;
- micropigmentation of scalp in case of alopecia areata, and especially masking scars, including those resulting from transplants.

One of the new procedures is aesthetic surgery performed mainly on persons who don't want or cannot accept the process of hair thinning and baldness. The procedure is used more and more frequently also by men for whom balding is not an emotional issue but who simply want to look attractive - in this case have a new hairstyle. On the other hand, it is a procedure in the field of medical micro pigmentation, solving the problem of alopecia areata, scarring, and the effect of ectodermal hair loss after a disease or masking accident scars, scars formed by cutting out strips for hair transplants, or finally irregularities on the skin after a failed transplant.

THE PROBLEM OF BALDING

The problem of balding concerns a substantial part of the population of men and women, while the scale of occurrence of the problem is growing with age. In spite of progress in medicine, the majority of solutions are ineffective (various kinds of preparations, shampoos, etc.) and very risky.(unsuccessful transplants, artificial looking hair systems).

ANDROGENIC ALOPECIA

The colloquial meaning of balding means excessive hair loss. The main reason for balding is atrophy of hair formation in the hair follicle, which is caused by excessive sensitivity of the hair follicle to testosterone derivative DHT (dihydrotestosterone). The hair follicle forms thinner and weaker hair under the influence of DHT, until the hair looks like a very fine down, devoid of dye.

This type of balding occurs most frequently and is called androgenic balding. The androgenic balding accounts for more than 90%

cases of balding. As it concerns mainly men, it is called masculine type balding. The first signs of androgenic balding can appear in teenagers. A characteristic symptom of the disease is the beginning of the process of hairline receding at the temples and forehead; the process may progress until there is a total loss of hair.

The main balding causes, apart from the organism hypersensitivity to DHT, include:

- possession of a gene (genes) of balding,
- medical history,
- poor diet,
- poisoning of the body.

Recently stress is being more emphasized - a factor which begins to be predominant. The stress of everyday life, and especially that related to strong emotional experiences results in excessive proneness to progressive balding. A relationship of stress with hair loss can be observed in an increased percentage of women afflicted with a hair loss problem. Excessive or prolonged stress combined with lack of proper rest and diet has a destructive impact on human organisms and significantly influences deregulation of the hormonal system which results in atrophy of proper hair formation. Sometimes we can observe people who suddenly lose hair in a very short time as a result of strong and sudden stress.

BALDING AND THE COMFORT OF LIFE

Scientific research as well as careful observation of persons affected with the problem of balding proves that hair loss significantly influences the comfort of life, reducing it significantly and in some cases resulting in such a strong discomfort that it leads directly to depression.

The proper hairline and hair density is an element building our image and appears to be something normal. The moment we begin to lose hair excessively the hairline recedes or gaps





appear. When we look in the mirror we can see that our facial features change and when this is accompanied by an excess of light reflecting on the head it becomes clear that what we used to perceive as normal and did not notice, suddenly begins to play a new role - we begin to get older pretty fast.

Becoming aware of yourself, of the fact that the years are passing and we start becoming less attractive, is only a matter of time. Some cope with it better, some unfortunately much worse, and even give in completely, falling into depression. Children experience balding especially dramatically since they are absolutely not ready for that process. For women the process of losing hair is also very difficult because hair is usually their natural attribute of beauty and femininity. The process of balding is also painful for men and older persons. Everyone who is subject to this process must face it. The younger the person, the harder it is usually to handle hair loss properly.

Persons subject to the balding process often start losing self-confidence, feel less attractive, and sometimes even avoid contact with others. The process of balding is accompanied by unpleasant feelings: grief for something lost, frantic desire to stop the process, or even better, reverse it, and sorrow that this has happened to them. The vast majority of individuals afflicted by the process start searching for countermeasures. They begin to work on remodeling the hairstyle, which is easier in women and somewhat harder in men. Almost everyone remembers an uncle with a "scrapeover" which is impossible to forget and which always raises a question: why is he wearing it if it makes him look comical? Unfortunately, the person subject to such a difficult problem does not always act rationally.

Manufacturers looking for a market, tempt a potential client with a broad range of solutions, not always informing them

about efficiency and negative consequences. And so, they offer various ointments, fluids, conditioners, vitamins, and modern "scareovers" in the form of hair systems, preparations for injections into scalp and transplants. People experiencing the problem of balding are frequently clutching at straws and spend considerable funds in order to look better and stop hiding. Hiding may assume various forms, beginning with reluctance to go out down to always wearing a cap. As part of my practice in micro-pigmentation I very rarely meet men not wearing headwear. Men wear caps even in summer. Sitting in the waiting room they are reluctant to take off a cap even during consultation, and when they do, they often explain that they don't look good and apologize for their appearance. This shame, sadness, lack of self-confidence and embarrassment are often predominant in a person afflicted by hair loss. No explanations that it's not so bad, and the hair loss is not so much, that someone looks even more handsome, can help... The person afflicted by the problem perceives it differently, sees it more acutely and deeply, and sometimes even sees situations that do not occur in reality. From this perspective "an uncle with a scrapeover" begins to be perceived in a different way. He is a person trying to deal with his problem in a way that is available to him. The "uncle" usually also rubbed in and took something to divert balding.

While we are accustomed to the image of an "uncle", the image of a twenty-year-old who treats the hair on the back of his head as bangs is much more moving. People of 20-30 afflicted by balding sometimes practically do not think about anything else, except what to do to look better; they use various countermeasures, following and taking part in social forums dedicated for the balding.

Another numerous group consists of men coming with a double problem - they decided to have a transplant and, apart from the fact



that they have no hair, they also have scars and the hair which has taken root, looks unnatural. The problem with these men is that these scars are very visible and people begin to ask questions about their origin. The problem concealed for months or years becomes greater and necessitates explanations or making up of stories.

INDICATIONS

Micro pigmentation of the scalp is a procedure which makes real help possible to people battling against the problem of balding. It can make the hair loss or even post operative scars invisible.

The individuals coming for the procedure are divided into several groups:

- people wanting to camouflage the effects of failed transplant (thickening of the transplanted hair or covering scars);
- persons suffering from alopecia areata, including children;
- persons suffering from androgenic alopecia unable to accept the problem of balding and hiding that problem by wearing wigs, hair systems, "scrapeovers", hairstyles or powders - special preparations masking bald places;
- persons suffering from androgenic alopecia, who can't imagine the above or a hair transplant which might have



various effects and bears long-term consequences and for whom micro-pigmentation seems to be the only solution.

Each of them chooses the procedure because they do not accept their appearance and the fact of hair loss. The procedure has a huge impact on their appearance but also on the everyday functioning and this increases their self-esteem. I frequently met with the gratitude of my clients which makes me feel somewhat awkward and although I already became accustomed to their hugs, there are still some reactions that surprise me... This gratitude makes me forget the

difficulties of the procedure and gives me happiness that I was able to help somebody. The procedure becomes more popular in men who do not have problems with self-acceptance but regard the method as a great way of improving their appearance, and just as women use anti-wrinkle treatments, men improve their looks by choosing micro-pigmentation.

EFFECTS

Micro-pigmentation of the scalp is a method that allows for camouflaging of the problems related to balding in a safe, predictable and relatively cheap

way. This innovative method consists of hiding the problem of balding through the creation of the ideal imitation of a shaved head almost to zero or a shadow optically darkening the skin of the scalp and hiding bald spots in case of longer hair.

During the procedure a suitable pigment is selected, making the difference between the natural hair and the created micro-hair invisible. The pigment is introduced into the surface layer of the skin - just above the epidermal basilemma, where it remains for 2 to 5 years on the average.

The final effect, in cases of short as well as long hair, is very realistic and resembles natural hair. The method also allows coverage for various kinds of scars or tissue loss, e.g. after a failed transplant or head injury. It can be applied to every form of balding in men and women as well.

In order to obtain the ideal effect it is necessary to use a special needle - thinner than in cases of classical pigmentation. The procedure consists of making single, precise micro-punctures.

The sum of several thousand points gives the final result in the form of a hairstyle. Working with a single needle allows you to obtain the best visual effect and is completely safe. Only such precise pigmentation guarantees full control over the quality of the procedure and control over the pigment until its 100% faded. After a properly executed procedure the pigment does not change color and eventually disappears, which at first glance seems to be a defect, while actually being the advantage-remember that a balding scalp tends to bald progressively and necessitates pigment supplementation in other balding spots. Bearing in mind that every pigment fades with time, it would be difficult to obtain identical pigmentation effects at each subsequent procedure. Besides, the scalp changes its structure with age, the hairline drops down and corrections of

hairstyle "shape" are indicated. That is why placing the pigment in the epidermis, and not the skin proper as in classical tattoo, is a more careful and rational choice. Refreshing treatments should be performed every two or three years. It's the ideal solution for all those who do not want to risk the loss of it looking good in the future. In addition, for persons with a tendency to gray hair (white hair) or further balding or even thinning of hair such a temporary solution is the most appropriate.

The treatment does not result in adverse effects on the skin of the head (the scalp). A properly performed procedure does not harm the still growing hair - on the contrary, it often results in stimulation and growth of new hair because of simultaneous micro needle therapy. This is because micro-punctures cause better blood supply to the scalp.

A similar technique is used in the procedure of Skin Needling however, a vitamin preparation is injected in a puncture instead of pigment. The treatment does not preclude the hair transplant in the future in any way. The advantage is an immediate effect; basically no recovery time is necessary after the treatment. The skin is flushed only for a few hours after the procedure.

It is also an extremely attractive financial alternative in relation to other available forms of solving the balding problem available on the market.

EXAMPLES OF FAILED PROCEDURES. HAZARDS

When performing such advanced treatment it is necessary to put on naturalness and rendering services at the highest level, taking full responsibility for the effects of the performed procedures. I don't know what the previous sentence means.

The persons coming to us, line artists, bring with them a huge burden of experience related to hair transplant, scars, wigs, hair



systems or just great complexes. We can't afford a mistake because it might be much more "costly" than just spoiled eyebrows.

Unfortunately, a still growing group of persons coming for micro-pigmentation treatments are the ones asking for help. The severity and scale of the devastation caused by failed scalp micro-pigmentation is various:

- unnatural appearance, sometimes it looks as if a playing child made dots on the head with a marker;
- spilled pigment, as if the child's marker spilled;

- micro-scars from a roller, as if a child made holes in a sheet of paper;
- mismatched pigment, as if a child could not select the color;
- mismatched shape, as if a child was learning to draw.

Please forgive the emotional tone when I compare those "works" to the work of a child, but unfortunately it sometimes looks like it. When clients come to me after a failed micro-pigmentation, in answer to my question, why they remain silent and do not demand their money back, they begin to explain, are ashamed



again, uncertain, they do not want to go back to the issue, they don't want to write on the forums, they don't want to talk at all and only ask for help.

Very often people after a failed micro-pigmentation have already spent all the money on numerous adjustments, and yet do not want to "ask" at least for a refund of money.

Last month I had two special cases - two persons who were models during training. It seems that micro-pigmentation market in Poland is coming a full circle: after a period of unsuccessful micro-pigmentations of eyebrows, lips and eyelids the time for failed micro-pigmentation of the scalp is coming. The sad thing is that behind the unsuccessful micro-pigmentations there is someone's feelings, lost hopes and regret.

THE CONCEPT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARLOR

The interest in micro-pigmentation treatments among customers is increasing. The medical micro-pigmentation parlors in the world function at the aesthetic medical clinics. In Poland, the time of the development of the parlors dealing in classical permanent make-up and their evolution in the direction of medical-corrective pigmentation, including the scalp which is a separate sector of permanent make-up developing very dynamically in the world, is knocking at the door.

In recent years the interest in micro-pigmentation procedures of the scalp has been increasing. The United Kingdom and the United States is its cradle. The treatment in Poland is much cheaper than abroad and we also observe treatment tourism.

Subsequent years in Poland will be the time of the development of such parlors. So it is worth it to think seriously about expanding our offer with scalp micro-pigmentation in order to have a strong position before the sudden development of services. It would be possible to cash in profits from the procedures which are now

definitely more advantageous in terms of mark-up than classical micro-pigmentation.

However, I am convinced that the best time of permanent make-up is still ahead of us. Linergists are today much more mature, more reasonably choose their development directions and the level of their services is still increasing. Customers are much more aware and more carefully choose parlors in which they have treatments. Also new segments appear, such as medical micro-pigmentation of the scalp which is a chance for professional development but is also a certain kind of mission to help people with various aesthetic problems, often hindering their normal functioning.

Nowadays, thanks to new professional qualifications we may expand our offer but also become full linergists. Today we observe that persons after a one day course of micro-blading become "linergists". I think that in a few years such linergists who can work in many fields will count on the market, while the beginner linergists will be left with classical micro-pigmentation only (eyebrows, mouth, and lashes). I encourage the linergists who want to develop professionally to carefully observe the companies offering trainings in micro-pigmentation. Ideally, they will find the following in these companies:

- hundreds of photographs of actually performed make-ups of very good quality;
- micro-pigmentation on the head and not in the picture; a possibility of contact;
- training that does not last 1 or 2 days;
- a student who actually completed such training.

I advise that you use only safe ways of development. It happens that the teachers at such courses do not even have their own successful micro-pigmentations and use someone else's photos (but usually single ones)

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