

# THE NEW AGE OF HAIR RESTORATION

The SMARTGRAFT® System from Vision Medical, Inc. offers a novel approach with multiple benefits for hair restoration surgeons and patients



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**H**AIR RESTORATION IS ONE OF THE fastest-growing segments of the aesthetic market. In fact, according to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS), hair is of great concern to men, with 60 percent of men surveyed in 2016 saying that their hair (or lack thereof) bothers them most.

Currently, in the US, over 50 million men and 30 million women experience hair loss, and it affects many aspects of their lives, especially how they see themselves and their self-esteem. It can have an impact on their social relationships, as well as their professional lives. Competition in the workplace, social media, the aging population and consumer awareness are among the key factors contributing to the significant growth of this segment. Celebrities and athletes having hair restoration procedures have also created greater acceptance in the public eye.

Minimally invasive hair restoration is in demand around the world. Vision Medical, Inc. located outside of Philadelphia, PA, is at the forefront in this important segment of the aesthetics market. Their proprietary SmartGraft® method offers an advancement in the treatment of permanent hair restoration with natural looking results. Developed by experienced hair restoration physicians, clinical researchers, and engineers, the SmartGraft device uses state-of-the-art technology without the need for a scalpel. Hair grafts are precisely and gently extracted, counted, and placed into an environmentally controlled bio-sphere canister until

implantation with a single motion. The bio-sphere canister protects the grafts from drying out by not exposing them to constant air flow. It automatically hydrates the grafts and keeps them chilled. By eliminating many of the standard manual processes and additional steps, SmartGraft helps the surgeon to reduce trauma to the grafts and treatment times. These factors work to increase the success rate for graft regrowth, according to SmartGraft physicians.

According to Barry DiBernardo, MD, FACS, Director, New Jersey Plastic Surgery and President Aesthetic Surgery Education & Research Foundation, 'I use the SmartGraft system due to its closed loop harvest system, and optimal graft holding chamber with saline and temperature control. Patients are very pleased with the outcomes and graft quality after a SmartGraft procedure. The system seems to both offer exceptional graft harvesting, as well as high-cost efficiency for my practice.'

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## Technological evolution

Clearly, technological advancements have been driving growth in hair restoration over the past decade. SmartGraft uses the industry's first

closed harvesting system to harvest grafts more efficiently, safely and quickly with virtually no discomfort.

Cynthia Rager, President of Vision Medical, Inc., explains the philosophy behind the brand's strategy. 'We are committed towards advancing the category and offering physicians and their patients optimized solutions for minimally invasive hair restoration procedures. By automatically counting, storing, and moistening the hair grafts, the SmartGraft automated follicular unit extraction device reduces the treatment time by approximately one-third. The procedure typically takes just a few hours, which is a fraction of the time for other methods. SmartGraft procedures are performed in a single session,' she says.

**SmartGraft®**  
THE SMART CHOICE FOR HAIR RESTORATION

The SmartGraft proprietary 'closed harvesting system' provides a more efficient way to harvest the donor grafts and preserves them in a climate controlled environment while awaiting implantation preparation. 'By automating the harvesting process and eliminating many unnecessary manual steps, we have significantly reduced treatment times and the risk of damaging the follicles giving them the best chance of optimum regrowth,' says Ms. Rager.

Implanting hair grafts more quickly also increases their success rate for better results. According to New York City facial plastic surgeon Yael Halaas, MD, 'In my experience, the SmartGraft system is excellent and the best on the market. Ergonomic, easy to use, allows for harvesting of excellent grafts with cooling and storage in a time efficient manner superior to other harvesting systems that are currently available. I have transitioned to using it for all my FUE cases now.'

'SmartGraft is superior in all design aspects. To be specific, the suction is better designed to be stronger but still gentle so as not to damage the graft. The cooling is more consistent and the moisture is superior. I particularly love the intermittent shower feature, the computer interface and the multiple options the system offers. Lastly, I really love not being beholden to a company per use,' she says.

## High patient satisfaction

What are patients looking for in hair restoration today? Like all other aesthetic patients, they want to invest in a procedure that is faster, with less downtime, and offers reproducible results that are permanent.

Recovery time takes one to two days rather than several weeks, and the results look and feel completely natural. SmartGraft offers an in-office procedure, quick recovery, virtually no discomfort, and it allows you to permanently regrow your natural hair. The new minimally invasive techniques and SmartGraft technology are better options for people wanting to get back to work and resume normal activities quickly. And today, hair restoration procedures are more affordable than they have ever been.

'In my practice, the ideal candidates for SmartGraft are healthy with donor areas that have many follicles per square centimeter. This is typically in the occipital area of the scalp where hair growth is more dense,' says Dr. Halaas. 'Patients increasingly want to avoid the linear scar from traditional hair transplants and therefore chose follicular



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**Yael Halaas, MD, facial plastic  
surgeon, New York City, NY**

unit extraction. The SmartGraft system allows the surgeon to harvest more quality grafts in a faster, more reliable method easily. It's a win-win,' she says.

Austin plastic surgeon Jennifer Walden, MD explains how the SmartGraft system has added significant value to her practice. 'We purchased the SmartGraft system in the spring of 2016. I have found it to be superior to other systems in the way that it protects the extracted follicles by cooling and moistening while waiting to implant the grafts. The surgeon is involved in the consultation, patient evaluation and planning process. The surgeon is in more of a supervisory role during the actual procedure, but can be as technically involved as he or she wants to be if so desired,' she says.

'Our patient satisfaction with SmartGraft has been amazing. We are getting great results and they have a great team. This is really a life-changing procedure in a relatively short number of hours, given the years of embarrassment and angst many men and women go through after losing their hair, so the rewards are high,' she says.

## The business of hair restoration

The physicians of EliteMD Advanced Dermatology, Laser and Plastic Surgery Institute, operate three busy practices in Northern California, and SmartGraft now takes center stage in two of their locations. Plastic surgeon Vivek Bansal and his dermatologist wife Dr. Sonia Badreshia-Bansal, have assembled an impressive group of surgical colleagues treating a growing base of patients. 'We have patients coming from six continents, 23 countries, and 46 states in eight years to our three offices. SmartGraft has not only helped as an educational tool for patients, but it has also allowed us to recruit top physicians to work with us due to the cutting-edge technology we offer,' says Dr. Bansal. Plastic surgeon Malcolm Lesavoy flies in from Beverly Hills every other week and Robert Koch, who was formerly the Director of Facial Plastic Surgery at Stanford University, is on their team.

According to Dr. Sonia Badreshia-Bansal, 'We used to use an older technology for hair restoration until we heard about SmartGraft and how it is the most innovative technology in Automated Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE). We knew immediately that we had to incorporate it into our practice. The SmartGraft's efficiency, increased harvesting and less trauma to the hair follicles with ▷



SmartGraft hair restoration treatment before (left) and after (right). Courtesy of Barry DiBernardo, MD



SmartGraft hair restoration treatment before (left) and after (right). Courtesy of Barry DiBernardo, MD



“Another area that is picking up steam among women is using SmartGraft for brow transplants. This treatment involves strategically placing follicular units in sparse areas of the brows, or to create the desired eyebrow shape.”



SmartGraft eyebrow restoration before (left) and after (right). Courtesy of Dr Gary Motytkie



SmartGraft eyebrow restoration before (left) and after (right). Courtesy of Vivek Bansal

▷ more precision and increased success rate, which delivered better results is the choice for our practice for hair restoration.'

'We charge a premium price for SmartGraft due to the high level of education we give our patients. It has been a valuable tool that separates us from the competition,' says Dr. Bansal. 'We also like working with ethical vendors and we have found that with the SmartGraft team.'

They also credit some of the success of their thriving hair restoration practice to their comprehensive marketing expertise. As Dr. Badreshia-Banal explains, 'Our marketing efforts have certainly helped the success of our hair restoration practice. This includes our investment in practice branding and in TV and direct to consumer marketing.'

corrected. Unlike traditional hair replacement methods, there was very little downtime so she was able to fly and be back on the set in only a few days after we treated her. Her case is not at all uncommon.'

Another area that is picking up steam among women is using SmartGraft for brow transplants. This treatment involves strategically placing follicular units in sparse areas of the brows, or to create the desired eyebrow shape. Dr. DiBernardo explains, 'SmartGraft has completely changed the way we can do brow transplants since grafts can be extracted more precisely and placed into a holding canister that automatically counts and moistens the grafts. The brows may be slightly red and swollen for up to a week after the procedure and we tell patients that the transplanted follicles will need to be trimmed and groomed like hair on their scalp. SmartGraft offers a desired long-lasting solution for anyone who wants the look and feel of real eyebrows without resorting to tattoos or permanent make-up,' he adds.

Although her hair restoration clientele mainly consists of men presenting with male pattern baldness, Dr. Walden also sees women with thinning hair and even thinned brows with age. 'My practice is mainly men, so it's nice to see some men as well coming through the office seeking cosmetic procedures,' says Dr. Walden. However, she notes that brow transplants and restoration of the anterior hairline are issues that affect women and they are seeking SmartGraft in her practice as a solution.

'Thick, dark brows is certainly trending right now for women, so we have seen an uptick of not only older women in their 60s and 70s asking for brow hair transplants, but also women who are younger with blonder hair or thinning brows from overplucking when that was all the rage,' says Dr. Walden. 'We are now able to help women and men of all ages as the SmartGraft procedure is versatile and can address a variety of hairloss conditions.' ▷



Jennifer Walden, MD, plastic surgeon, Austin, TX



Vivek Bansal, plastic surgeon, EliteMD Advanced Dermatology, Laser and Plastic Surgery Institute, Danville, CA



Dr. Sonia Badreshia-Banal, dermatologist, EliteMD Advanced Dermatology, Laser and Plastic Surgery Institute, Danville, CA

### Female hair loss solution

In most cases, hair loss in women begins in the 40s and up, but it can also show up earlier, which can be even more devastating. Female hair loss is a progressive condition, but unlike in some men, women do not tend to lose all their hair. Rather, their part often widens and the hairline near the temples may recede. Without intervention, this can eventually worsen to diffuse thinning that results in loss of self-esteem and embarrassment. Yet many women are not even aware of the options available to them, which represents a huge opportunity for aesthetic practitioners.

According to Dr. DiBernardo, 'SmartGraft offers a tremendous opportunity to treat women, which represent a fast-growing segment of hair restoration patients. We have recently treated an African American celebrity make-up artist who suffered with traction alopecia from years of wearing heavy dreads, bleaching and braiding, and tight hair styles. She was extremely pleased to find out that this condition could be



Below: The SmartGraft system unit