

Hair Transplant Timeline: What Can You Expect

The first few months after a hair transplant can be the most frustrating. After all, new growth doesn't happen overnight. In this post, I'll discuss the typical hair transplant timeline of hair growth following the procedure. You'll learn who best qualifies as a candidate for a transplant, and why you may want to consider the choice. In addition, I'll tell you what to expect immediately following the procedure, as well as in the months

What is a Hair Transplant?

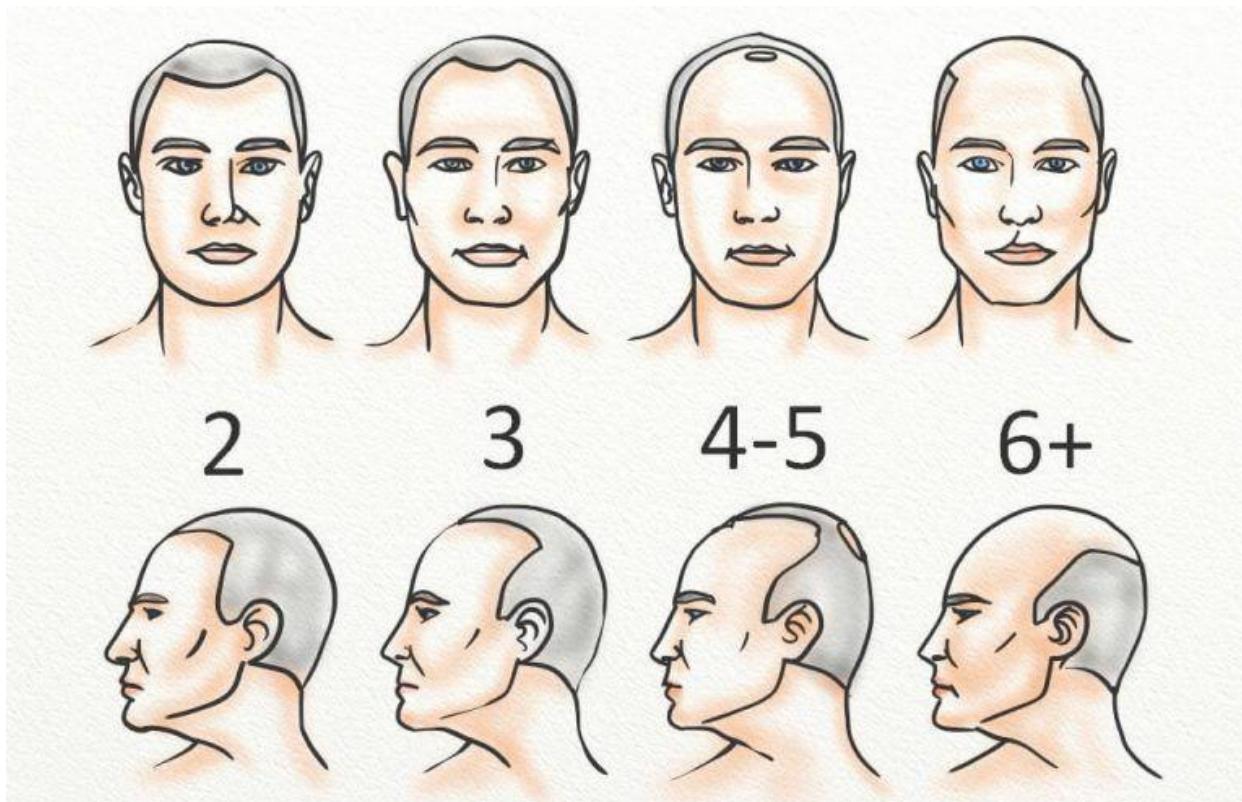
A hair transplant is a popular surgical replacement procedure where hair units are removed from a donor site (back of scalp or elsewhere from the same person) and transplanted into the recipient site.

Who Is the Best Candidate for a Transplant?

If undergoing a transplant is something you'd like to consider, you should first understand that not everyone qualifies. A reputable surgeon will have their own candidacy requirements, however here are some general ones to give you a better idea of the ideal candidate.

Men With Male-Pattern Baldness (Classified as Norwood 3 and Above)

MPB is the most common cause of balding in men, and it's one that takes place in stages. The most advanced thinning and hairline recession begins to take place at Stage 3, and this is also when a more predictable pattern of loss emerges.



While stages prior to Norwood 3 are bothersome, most surgeons will not treat so early. This is because there are many non-invasive treatments that can be more effective for earlier hair loss, including Rogaine and Propecia.

Men With a Stable Loss Pattern

Even if you're a male with NW3 hair loss, a reputable surgeon may be wary of performing the procedure if your hairline is continuing to recede. The recession of your hairline happens as a result of sensitivity to DHT. This occurs in men with Androgenetic Alopecia (AGA) and can lead to full baldness if not treated. If you haven't begun to treat the DHT sensitivity, whether through natural or medicated means, the recession will continue. It will continue even after a hair transplant takes place.

Men and Women With Trauma-Related Hair Loss

If you've experienced hair loss as a result of injury, surgery, or burns, a hair restoration surgeon may be able to work with you to restore your hair. In such cases, hair loss like this is stable enough to see good results with a transplant. In addition to the above, your surgeon may also prefer that you've tried other treatment methods before moving forward with the procedure.

Post-Healing Hair Transplant Timeline: An Overview

Once your incisions have healed, you'll have a better idea of how hair growth will occur. Let's take a look at the three primary periods of hair growth following a transplant.

NOTE: Healing and hair growth will vary by individual. The below timeline is just an estimation and may not be experienced by every hair transplant patient.

Months 0 – 4: The Dormant Period

The months that immediately follow your transplant can be some of the most discouraging. You just got a costly and painful procedure done, only for that hair to then fall out!



Fortunately, this is a temporary phase and one that's necessary for healthy hair growth.

With the newly-transplanted bulbs in place, your scalp will temporarily experience shock. In most cases, this results in swelling, redness, and tenderness at the site of implant. At this stage, though, the transplanted hairs will remain in place.

As the shock wears off, however, you'll experience shedding throughout the recipient area. When this happens will depend on the healing process. Though, it's generally around weeks 2 and 3 that this begins.

Once the hair has been shed, the follicles enter a complete stage of rest. This is known as telogen in the regular hair growth cycle, and it's an entirely normal part of the process.

This stage lasts anywhere from a few weeks to a few months, at which point new hairs will emerge and the cycle can begin again.

Months 4 – 8: The Emergent Period

The moment you've been waiting for has finally arrived – hair is growing in the recipient area!

At this point in the process, your transplanted follicles have moved from telogen phase into anagen. This the phase of the hair growth cycle when active growth takes place.

In the beginning, these hairs will be especially thin. If you've received a transplant to the crown of your head, expect growth to take longer (as the skin is thicker).

You'll also likely return to your surgeon somewhere within this time frame for a follow-up appointment.

In regards to the donor site, it should be fully healed by now. This means the hair growth cycle has returned to normal and no evidence of the transplant (unless you have scarring) is visible.

Months 8 – 12: The Maturation Period

The final stage in the first year process following a transplant is known as the maturation period. This is the time when the thin hairs become thicker, and the majority of hair growth (about 75% to 80%) should be seen.

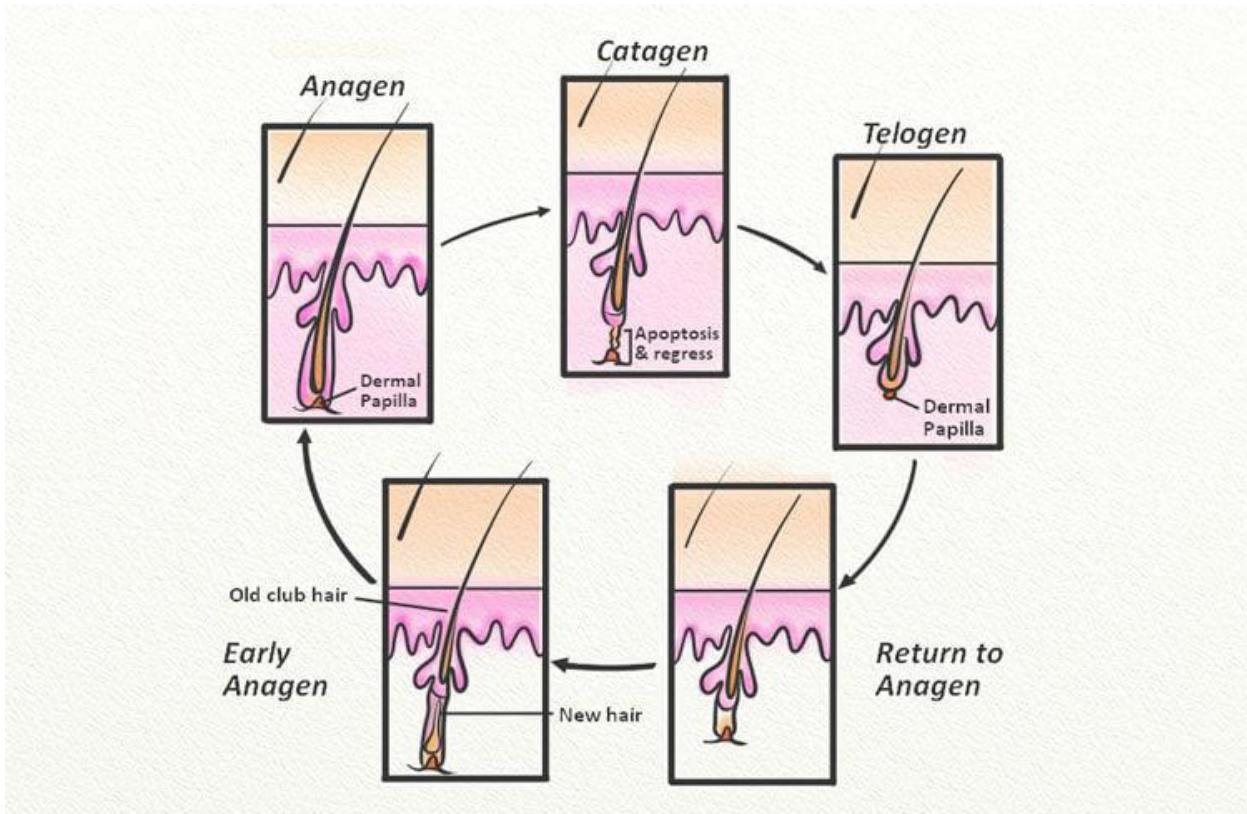
During this period, you may notice that newly-sprouted hairs are curved. This is due to the scarring, but it will disappear over time as your follicle heals more fully.

At this stage, your hair should be about 3 inches in length and able to be styled.

Months 12 & Beyond

Just as above, the results you see the second year following transplant will vary. By 24 months, the full results should be visible and this is the point when it's time to consider if another transplant session is necessary.

As your transplanted hair should now be fully into the natural hair growth cycle, you should expect a period of overall growth for up to 3 years. This is the typical length of the anagen phase, after which the hair will go through the other two stages (catagen and telogen).



Undergo Another Transplant Session

Depending on the severity of your loss, you may require more than one transplant session. Your surgeon will usually discuss this prior to the first procedure, but it also may not be known until the full results of the transplant are seen (typically 18 – 24 months post procedure). If you're generally happy with the results but wish you had more coverage, this is a common choice.