

Co-editors' Messages

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I recently came across a paper proposing an alternative model for the mechanism of androgenetic alopecia. It is a kind of wild, radical hypothesis, with the following reasoning: "Skull expansion of the frontal and parietal bones will progressively stretch and pull tight the scalp tissue that overlies it. As a consequence, a constriction of blood vessels within the capillary network that serves the Male Pattern Baldness region will develop. The resultant decrease in blood flow that follows will then reduce the supply of nutrients required by follicles to grow hair." Doesn't this hypothesis sound rather like one of those advocated by scientists of the XIX century, when all they had as scientific tools were their imagination, curiosity, and persistent observation? In fact, what you have just read is a fragment of a paper that is going to be published in the peer-review scientific journal *Medical Hypotheses* (Big head? Bald head! Skull expansion: alternative model for the primary mechanism of AGA. Taylor, P.J. Available online as of September 2008). This hypothesis, probably wrong given the overwhelming amount of data relating male pattern baldness with androgen stimulation, reminds me how necessary it is in science to challenge established "dogmas" with new, thought-provoking ideas.

I have very much enjoyed the articles/interviews submitted by some of the scientists that collaborate with the *Forum* (Paus, Randall, Philpott). One thing they all emphasize is the difficulty in obtaining tissue for their investigations. For us, to save 10 or 20 follicular units in a typical 1,500-2,000 case does not seem excessive, and we could easily start a productive collaboration by sending them that most precious cargo: human hair follicles. Moreover, we have the opportunity not only to serve as "tissue providers," but also to take a further step and become active participants in their research projects. As a matter of fact, there are not many people who know more about macroscopic anatomy and microscopic dissection of hair follicles than we do as hair surgeons. I am convinced that collaboration with research teams can only have positive consequences. From personal experience, I can tell you that my long-time collaboration with my pathologist colleague and friend Dr. Poblet provides me with continuous intellectual stimulus, which is also highly productive, because we have both benefited from a number of publications that would not have been possible working on our own.

In short, let us try to do what our scientist colleague Dr. Philpott proposes in this issue of the *Forum*: contact a research team interested in hair biology and offer the possibility of mutual collaboration, starting by providing them with tissue (hair follicles). Simply by making the effort of initiating something like this you will be miles ahead of almost everyone else.

Paco Jimenez, MD

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The central theme of this issue is the Montréal Annual Meeting and, as always, you will find a detailed report of the lectures, panel discussions, and poster presentations. The meeting was full of new ideas for presenting the most controversial topics in our field, and I would like to extend congratulations to Arthur Tykocinski, Victoria Ceh, and the entire Annual Meeting Committee. They created an extraordinary educational experience, and, as is the case every year, the bar is raised for future meeting organizers. I know that everyone is excited and looking forward to what Ken Washenik will have in store for us next year in Amsterdam.

It is fitting that this issue should also commemorate the life of one of the giants and foremost educators in the history of hair restoration, D. Bluford (Blu) Stough, III. Dr. Stough was one of the founders of the American Society of Dermatologic Surgery and organized the first-ever hair restoration symposium in the 1970s, which took place in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The "Hot Springs Symposium" was an event that has now attained great historic significance and that sparked the careers of many renowned hair surgeons. I was fortunate to have known Blu Stough and to have benefited from his teaching as well as his friendship. I recall when I was starting out in hair restoration, he was a person who made you feel that you were an important part of this medical field and that you had something to offer. It is no coincidence that these qualities are embodied by the camaraderie of the ISHRS, which Blu's son, Dow, co-founded and served as its first President. We are all fortunate to have Dow in our midst as he continues to provide friendship, guidance, and education to the Society

In this issue, we focus on graft preservation. Jerry Cooley begins with a clinical viewpoint on holding solutions. Nilofer Farjo, in her interview of one of the foremost hair researchers, Mike Philpott, probes into the basic science principles underlying this key component of graft survival. Interestingly, Dr. Philpott's research involves the susceptibility of balding follicles to oxidative stress, a novel concept that is studied epidemiologically by Fabio Rinaldi in his excellent article and addressed from a therapeutic standpoint by Rajesh Rajput in his study using vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants to treat hair loss patients.

We are honored to have Dr. Zoe Diana Draelos, who was one of our Featured Speakers in Montréal, contribute a guide for advising our patients regarding general hair health and grooming practices. We also continue to present novel devices to facilitate our procedures as Tamara Tamzashvili, et al. present a Container Protective Graft Preservation device while Carlos Puig and Dae-young Kim present their instruments to facilitate the trichophytic closure.

All this, along with Cyberspace Chat, the Surgical Assistants Corner, and our other regular features, hopefully make up a *Forum* issue that you will find informative and enjoyable.

Bernard Nusbaum, MD