



forum

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Estimate Number of Grafts and Donor Area

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To estimate the number of grafts is not an easy job. I would like to present the approach that we have been using for three years in our facility.

We first calculate the total area of coverage. Based on the total area of coverage, we then can decide the size of donor area that should be harvested. From the size of donor area, we then can determine the number of grafts, which depends on the size of graft. The sequence is very important.

Measure the Area of Coverage

Please keep in mind that the scalp is in three dimensions so it is very difficult to calculate 100% accuracy, but we only need an approximation.



Figure 1. Material needed to measure the coverage area.

- 1) Discuss with the patient to find out his desired coverage area; and draw the area directly on his scalp with a "China Marker" (or a black eyebrow pencil).
- 2) Apply the transparent sheet (plastic food wrap) over the scalp.



Figure 2. Draw the area directly on the scalp with a marker.

- 3) Trace the coverage area on the transparent sheet.
- 4) Place the transparent sheet over the *specially designed graphic paper** to count the number of small squares. (Each small square = 1cm², big square = 4cm²). In this way, you can estimate the approximate coverage area in square centimeters easily.
- 5) Take a digital photo of the scalp with the mark; keep it on file for future reference.
- 6) Photocopy the transparent sheet and keep it in patient's chart. (When the patient comes back for surgery, compare the coverage area to make sure it is exactly the same as measured during consultation.)

*You can download a copy of the graphic paper from the Website: <http://www.hairtransplant.com/Spencer.pdf>

Decide the Size of Donor Area

From my experience, 90% of our patients are satisfied with a 50% donor site density. Of course, this depends on the patient's hair color/texture, skin

color, contrast between skin and hair color and patient's age, we have to do some adjustment.

For an average person, we assume 50% donor site density gives adequate coverage.

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