

# Heads Up: Baldness Is a Thing of the Past

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN ON JULY 6, 2018

BOARDROOM WATCH



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He sits confidently in the hotel lobby, in his sharp looking suit and a clean buzz cut that Jonathan of the Queer Eye crew would swoon over. What people who meet him for the first time would not know that is Andreas “Andy” Kraemer of Hair For Life actually started fretting over his thinning hair at an early age. Male pattern baldness runs in his family, he shares, and he did not want to end up with his father’s hair loss problem. “My father was completely bald, and all my life I wondered if I would also be a bald man at his age. This is why at 23, I went to a doctor to have my first hair transplant,” he confides. He adds that the first one did not go so well (he called it a series of small disasters) and he had to have it redone several times, the last one being in 2005. “I am lucky that my hair problem did not progress, and I am happy for the moment that I do not need a hair transplant anymore.”



His small encounters with botched hair operations led him to write about his experiences in a blog and this drew readers, mostly men, who asked him for referrals. This was when he realized that he could make a business out of being a consultant. “My primary aim is to help more people to avoid what I had gone through. It is not really about making money,” he explains. With this in mind, he started doing more research in the field, seeking out doctors who give good results.

It grew when a former client who was satisfied with his service, gave Andy airtime at a TV station he worked for. Where he was formerly able to do personal consultations, he decided to turn to the internet to reach more people, faster. “Instead of them having to go to my office in Switzerland we are mailing and sending pictures. This allows me the freedom to work from anywhere in the world.”

This “anywhere” currently turns out to be the Philippines, where he is enjoying not only the warmth of the weather, but the hospitality of the people.

He has been in other places in Asia, such as Ankara, Malaysia, and Thailand where he meets up with hair transplant doctors for another side of his business, which is conducting seminars regarding the latest hair transplant tools and after care, without delving into the medical training for the procedure itself.

### **How transplants are done**

He explains how hair transplants are conducted. The process that is commonly used now is the Follicular Unit Extraction (FUE) where hair from the donor area (located at the back of the head) is harvested and transplanted to the front. “You can extract about 30 to 40 percent of the hair from the donor area because you don’t really need a high density as compared to the crown area. Sometimes, you can extract up to 50 percent if density is high,” he says.

His clients are mostly in their 30s to 40s, he shares, because the younger guys cannot afford the services of the more expensive, experienced doctors that he works with. “That becomes a problem when they seek out cheaper services from doctors who have not specialized in transplants. Sometimes, the procedure is botched and they really come crying because they find it difficult to go out in public.”



Because of the advancements in science, the procedure is relatively safe, if done by the right hands. It is also mostly unnoticeable with the needles used having only a measurement of 0.7 to 1 millimeter, and it leaves practically no scarring.

The older procedure was to get a whole strip from the scalp, and this leaves behind a wound, and in some cases, a noticeable scar. “There are women who still choose this procedure because they can wear their hair longer to cover up. Men usually want shorter hair so they go with the FUE. The most risk that they can have with that is that the hair follicles may not be treated properly, resulting in low growth rate.”

Ladies take up 20 percent of his clientele, he adds. “What they really want most of the time is to add more hair to the forehead area, to hide a receding hairline. Some are even born with high foreheads and they want to cover that up.”

Chemo patients come to him too, but he advises waiting for up to three years to see hair regrowth before planning a procedure. “There are also certain conditions where a dermatologist should be consulted first, such as alopecia areata,” he explains.

## **Crowning glory**

The aim of a hair transplant is that you cannot see it, you cannot detect that it has been done. For this, you need good experienced doctor, Andy advises. He also cautions about managing expectations. “Some clients who are completely bald come to me with photos of Brad Pitt. I tell them that they should not expect their procedure to turn out the same way.”

Studies have shown that people who have a full head of hair are perceived to be more attractive to other people. Andy says: “This is the reason why many men come in for a hair transplant. They want to look better, healthier, and younger.” They have to be careful, though, as if they believe that only having a full crown will be the key to finding a mate, because if they do not attract more women just because of their hair, they believe that the procedure was a failure, he smiles. “Then, it becomes my job to have to convince them that their hair already looks good and maybe they need to fix other something else.”

*To know more about Hair for Life, visit [www.hairforlife.info/en/](http://www.hairforlife.info/en/)*