



Structural Fat Grafting for Craniofacial Trauma

Facial Injuries in Soldiers

Combat related injuries involving facial trauma are common and can have a major impact on a person's quality of life. Visible facial injuries can impact a soldier's ability to integrate back into society, and can affect both personal relationships and employment opportunities. While current medical procedures can do a lot to reconstruct these injuries, physicians consistently strive to find better ways to accurately restore facial features.

What is a Fat Grafting?

Fat grafting is a minimally invasive surgical procedure in which a person's own fat may be used to improve the appearance of the body by moving it from an area where it is less needed. The fat is usually taken from the thighs or abdomen with a small liposuction tube and then moved to an area that has lost shape or fullness due to injury. This procedure is performed through very small incisions that allow a hollow tube to pass through.

Fat grafting is a common cosmetic and reconstructive procedure. It was performed approximately 65,000 times by plastic surgeons in the United States last year. Typically, the transferred fat results in an increase in volume and shape of the body site being treated. We believe this clinical technique of fat grafting could be of significant benefit to patients with facial injuries. The fat grafting procedure being performed in this trial is considered to be research, but not an experimental procedure.

Procedure Provided as Part of a Research Study

In this clinical trial funded by the Department of Defense, we are evaluating how effectively fat grafting can restore facial features, and how the filling effect of the fat graft lasts over time in participants with visible facial injuries. All procedures for this research study will be performed at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Research Study Eligibility

Men and women who are active duty or former members of the United States Military may be eligible. Research candidates, who have suffered facial trauma, and are at least 3 months since the initial facial injury will be evaluated. Prior surgery of the face or skull does not prevent participation in this study, as fat grafting is often used as a procedure to further improve the results after other surgical procedures.



Dr. J. Peter Rubin

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Dr. Rubin is the Co-Director of the UPMC Aesthetic Plastic Surgery Center. He is an expert in body plastic surgical procedures. Dr. Rubin directs a basic science research program in the biology of adipose-derived stem cells and is co-director of the Adipose Stem Cell Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

Contact Information

For more information about this study, please call Carlynn Jackson Graves, BS at 412-641-3728 or e-mail at crj9@pitt.edu

Financial Coverage

Neither you nor your insurance provider will be charged for the cost of any of the research procedures performed for the purpose of this study. All research participants will receive remuneration for their participation and travel expenses upon completion of each study visit.

Research Issues You Should Discuss with Us

- How fat grafting procedures may affect your appearance
- Description of research study procedures
- Risks and benefits
- All research procedures to take place in Pittsburgh

The Clinical and Research Team

Dr. J. Peter Rubin, a board certified plastic surgeon and researcher at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, is the Principal Investigator for this project. Our team includes physicians and scientific researchers with the expertise to provide the fat grafting procedure and evaluate the results over time.