



Partners Human Research Committee
APPROVAL Effective Date
February 08, 2011

Transplantation for Treatment of Major Facial Deformities

Face Transplantation

Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) has received research funding for a face transplantation study from the Department of Defense. This study will enroll up to 10 patients who are in need of major facial reconstruction. Facial transplantations will be performed to treat patients who suffered massive facial tissue loss caused by disease, trauma or burn and will measure the outcomes associated with the procedure.

What is a Face Transplant?

A transplant of facial tissue from another person is a new research approach for facial restoration rather than reconstruction. During the surgery, missing parts of the face are replaced using donor tissue. A few facts are known about this new procedure. They include:

- A new face/facial component does not reveal the donor.
- The donor/recipient match will not be perfect in color and form.

Eligibility

People who have lost a major part of their face such as the entire nose or lips, or more than 25 percent of their facial tissue may have the option to choose a surgical face transplant for their restoration. This option may be important for patients who would otherwise likely be facing many unsatisfactory reconstructive operations.

Lifelong Medications

The body's immune system (protective) treats any new tissue as an invader, like a germ, and tries to destroy it. Transplant drugs partially shut down the immune system, so the body can accept the new organ or tissue. Patients have to take strong drugs for the rest of their lives to prevent rejection of the transplant.

Financial Coverage

The military contract that BWH has received will cover the pre-transplant screening and tests, as well as the procedure itself and immediate post-operative care. Your own health insurance company will need to cover the cost of the lifelong medication and follow-up care. Dr. Pomahac's office will assist in answering your questions and in obtaining the insurance approval.



Bohdan Pomahac, MD
*Brigham and Women's Hospital,
Boston, MA*
Surgical Investigator

Dr. Pomahac is director of the Brigham and Women's Hospital Burn Center. He is a member of the Department of Surgery: Plastic Surgery, Trauma Burns and Surgical Care. Dr. Pomahac performed the first U.S. face transplant on a male patient in April 2009.

Contact Information:

Bohdan Pomahac, MD
Brigham and Women's Hospital, Department of Surgery
75 Francis Street, Boston, MA 02115
Phone: 617-732-7796
Assistant: Lisa Quinn
Fax: (617) 732-6387
Email: bpomahac@partners.org

Research Issues You Should Discuss with Us:

- Experimental procedure
- Lifelong medication
- Major risks associated
- Functional outcomes
- Aesthetic outcomes
- Psychological outcomes
- Graft failure
- Associated publicity
- Treatment in Boston
- Costs/coverage

Brigham and Women's Hospital

Recognized internationally for its excellence in patient care, its outstanding reputation in biomedical research, and its commitment to educating and training physicians, research scientists and other health care professionals, BWH is a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School located in the heart of Boston's renowned Longwood Medical area.

BWH is the place where the first human organ transplantation was performed by Dr. Joseph Murray, establishing this field. BWH has one of the nation's leading transplant centers, performing heart, lung, kidney and heart-lung transplant surgery as well as bone marrow transplantation.