Preventing the Problems of Postoperative Pressure Alopecia

Monique L. Abner, MD, CWSP

Regarding the article “Can an ’Aesthetic’ Intervention (Braided Hair Coil) Cause Hair Loss After an Aesthetic Operation?” by Dionyssopoulos and colleagues, the subject of postoperative pressure alopecia (PPA) is not a new problem nor necessarily an uncommon occurrence. I disagree that PPA is usually associated with lengthy surgical procedures greater than six hours’ duration. As you know, for example, in the understanding of the development of decubitus pressure ulcers, pathological skin changes may occur within two hours. I, personally, have had one case of PPA, and that was one too many! Now, I avoid this problem by telling my patients preoperatively: “No hair clips, scrunchies, elastics, barrettes, twists, braids, or weaves. Come in FREE and WILD.” They giggle in response to my word choices, however, as I explain the potential consequences of not doing so, they quickly become compliant. I have not had another problem of PPA in my 17 years in solo practice.

We as surgeons discuss safety measures such as the prevention of perioperative hypothermia and the prevention of deep venous thrombosis; however, we should also review our preoperative “safety checklists” to avoid the potential iatrogenic occurrence of PPA. While the effects of hair loss are not life-threatening, we as aesthetic surgeons should not have any unpleasant outcomes.

Disclosures

The author declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

REFERENCE


Dr Abner is a plastic surgeon in private practice in Charlotte, NC.

Corresponding Author:
Monique L. Abner, MD, CWSP, 10030 Park Cedar Drive, Suite 101, Charlotte, NC 28210, USA.
E-mail: abne7048@yahoo.com