

HIRSUTE HIPSTERS DRIVE 72% GROWTH IN BEARD TRANSPLANTS

- **More than a quarter (27%) of those having beard implants are doing so to keep up with trends**
- **Eyebrow transplant requests up 89%, pubic hair transplant requests increase by a fifth (21%)**
- **Male hair transplant tourism up 169% in one year, as men look to go abroad for cheaper procedures**

Monday 14 April 2014 – Nearly three quarters (72%) of surgeons have reported an increase in enquiries for beard transplants in the past year, as facial hair has become all the rage amongst young men, according to new research by private healthcare search engine WhatClinic.com. Surgeons revealed that more than a quarter (27%) of their beard transplant patients are following the latest trend for thicker, bushier beards.

WhatClinic.com polled hair transplant surgeons across 40 countries and found that although traditional hair transplants remain the most popular request by men, 95% of clinics confirmed that they had seen an increase in the number of requests for transplants on other areas of the body ^[1]. Some of the most popular requests outside of traditional hair transplants were for beards, eyebrows, pubic region, eyelashes and chest.

According to those polled, patchy or uneven beard growth is a common problem amongst men, and almost a third (31%) of patients requesting a beard transplant are looking for fuller coverage. More than a quarter of requests (26%) for beard transplants are to cover scaring.

Beards have become a prominent feature on the fashion catwalks and celebrity red carpet in recent years, and that trend has fed through to the high street. From old-fashioned barbers to beard maintenance kits, gents of all ages are investing serious time and money into this bushy trend.

But some men are taking it one step further in their search for that designer stubble and opting for beard transplants – a procedure that removes hair follicles from the back of the scalp, and transplants them onto the face and chin.

Follicular unit extraction (FUE), sometimes called FUE Harvesting, takes individual hair clusters (of between one and four hairs) and replants them one by one, which although time-consuming, gives great results and little chance of scarring.

Although the popularity of beard transplants is growing, the procedure is not cheap. A typical transplant can cost several thousand pounds and sometimes more for the most complex procedures.

Not surprisingly given the hefty price tags here, many UK men looking to have beard transplants are opting to have the procedure carried out overseas. Cheaper air fares and highly competitive prices by foreign clinics have seen overseas enquiries for male hair transplants alone up 169% in the past 12 months.

Of all the patients searching for hair transplants through WhatClinic.com, more than three quarters (77%) contacted overseas clinics about the procedure, with some of the most popular medical tourism hotspots for this treatment being India, Turkey Jordan and the Netherlands.

The following table shows the top ten most popular celebrity beards for transplants, according to the hair transplant surgeons surveyed:

| Rank | Bearded celeb |
|------|-------------------|
| 1 | Brad Pitt |
| 2 | George Clooney |
| 3 | Ben Affleck |
| 4 | Colin Farrell |
| 5 | Zac Efron |
| 6 | Tom Hardy |
| 7 | Gary Barlow |
| 8 | Leonardo Dicaprio |
| 9 | Johnny Depp |
| 10 | Wayne Rooney |

Caelen King, CEO of WhatClinic.com, comments: “Hair transplant surgery has come a long way since the days of tell-tale hair plugs. In the past few years, there have been huge advancements in hair transplant technology and techniques, which could account for the significant growth in this area.

“Beard transplants require skill, experience and advanced technique so make sure you do your research and find a surgeon you can be confident of. Ask about their qualifications and how many surgeries they have carried out. Talk with your surgeon about expectations and likely results, as there are a variety of factors that can affect the success of the procedure.

“It’s also worth comparing surgeries in the UK and overseas on price. Hair transplant procedures are not cheap, so spending a couple of hours researching online could save you a considerable amount of money in the long run.”

– ENDS –

Notes to Editors

- 1) WhatClinic.com polled over 450 clinics that specialise in hair transplants about the patient enquiries they are seeing along with their opinions on market trends, patient concerns and attitudes
- 2) WhatClinic.com conducted an opinion poll of aesthetic practitioners on the views surrounding the growth of the cosmetic surgery amongst men.

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About WhatClinic.com

WhatClinic.com is a clinic comparison site that lists over 100,000 clinics globally. In 2013 15.7 million people visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective, self-pay medical treatments. WhatClinic.com's mission is to give the patient, as an empowered consumer, access to all the information they need to make an informed choice, including price, availability and reviews. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King, and is in operation in over 127 countries.