

## Injectible ACell notes

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Again, all the normal components of follicular architecture are present. If this isn't evidence, what is it? Yes, of course, large blinded studies would be nice. But these are very difficult for the unfunded solo doctors to carry out in their private practices, and they are especially difficult in the field of surgical hair restoration. In fact, I'm not aware of any "evidence based medicine" study that has had any significant effect on the day-to-day practice of the hair surgeon. We change and evolve through hearing case presentations and technique descriptions from our colleagues, and then trying these out in our own practices. This is the milieu in which the autocloning technique will live or die and this, of course, takes time.

Regarding the name—autocloning—there is no double entendre here, only one entendre. Webster's Dictionary defines a "clone" as one that appears to be a copy of an original form; *duplicate* is a synonym of *clone*. It is derived from the Greek word *klōn*, meaning twig. The word arose in the horticulture world, where the creation of a new plant from a twig of the original was called cloning. This is very similar to the hair autocloning technique, where auto (self) cloning (copying) occurs by plucking a "twig" of hair from the mother follicle to create daughter

follicles. Cloning in scientific usage may also be applied to disparate laboratory techniques involving DNA, cells, or whole organisms. In scientific circles, it is not generally used to refer to somatic cell therapy. Implanting cultured dermal papilla to regenerate follicles is not "cloning," as has been explained many times in the past.

The actual clinical significance of the autocloning technique remains to be determined. How successful, how durable, etc., are important questions that must be answered before a consensus is reached. But as far as I am concerned, these preliminary clinical and histologic observations have weathered their first round of criticism quite nicely.

*Editor's note: Despite the fear of being redundant, I would like to point out again that discussions such as this are how progress is made in our field. I can speak from experience that not only progress but respect and friendships result from such enthusiastic exchanges. I look forward to seeing what role ACell will assume in our field. We, the editors, hope to make the *Forum* useful for having and recording these discussions. We also hope that soon the ISHRS website will be a venue for ongoing discussions of topics such as this and that all members will participate. The *Forum* will report on the new developments from these blogs periodically. —WR♦*

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## Author's reply: Dr. Gary Hitzig

Although it would be difficult to scientifically show the true duplication of a "plucked" hair, there are certain simple methods one can (and did) apply to empirically show duplication. What we did was to pluck clean a circular area of hair from either the scalp or beard. Of course, this was not performed without trepidation at the time. This was performed in several cases and no hairs were left in the plucked areas. The plucked hairs were evaluated for intactness (no bulb fracture) and some surrounding attached tissue (dermal papillae more than likely). The plucked hairs were transplanted and the patients were followed. In ALL cases, the circular plucked areas whether treated with ACell or not filled back in. The plucked hairs were treated with ACell (and later ACell/PRP) and grew in the recipient areas. This is autocloning simply meaning we grew new hairs where the plucked hairs were inserted (and sometimes these further duplicated) and grew back the hair in the denuded plucked donor areas. Please explain how this could happen otherwise—it is powerful proof of duplication of hairs albeit maybe they are not perfectly identical.

*Editor's note: It would seem that exogen follicles in the plucked area and careful hair mass assessment of the parent and progeny follicles would need to be considered before becoming too confident of understanding the phenomenon you are observing. An exciting pursuit nonetheless! —WR♦*



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