New links for the week of July 16th:

14 NEWS – WFIE TV (Evansville, IN)
New Surgery Brings Back a Smile

By Amanda Gardner, HealthDay Reporter

MONDAY, July 16 (HealthDay News) -- By detaching, rerouting and reattaching a muscle used for chewing, surgeons were able to restore the ability to smile to seven patients with facial paralysis.

The procedure, called temporalis tendon transfer, is combined with intense physical therapy before and after surgery and could help similarly stricken patients right away.

"It's really a very doable procedure, and we're realizing how it can be done more simply," said study lead author Dr. Patrick Byrne, director of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery in the department of otolaryngology and head and neck surgery at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore. "It's very applicable on a wide scale," he added.

According to the study, which appears in the July/August issue of Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery, correcting facial paralysis is one of the biggest challenges facing reconstructive surgeons.

"Facial paralysis in general is really a complicated condition depending on the degree of facial paralysis, the areas involved and especially also on how long they've been paralyzed," Byrne said. "There are a lot of options, but, for patients with longstanding paralysis where we can't get the nerves to reawaken, then the options prior to this have been other forms of muscle transfers."

But those procedures were often problematic.

Temporals tendon transfer addresses one aspect of facial paralysis -- the inability to smile, as well as an asymmetry in the lower half of the face.

Previously, surgeons used a different portion of the same muscle to try to restore function, a procedure that left the patient with some function but also facial deformity.

"The way it was done produced a depression or cavity in the temple region and a large protrusion around the upper cheek," Byrne said. Furthermore, "The [transplanted] muscle itself has trouble moving well because of its unnatural position," he added.

For the new procedure, surgeons took the temporalis muscle, normally used for chewing, detached it, rerouted it and reattached it to the muscles around the mouth. With physical therapy, patients learned to smile again by contracting the muscle.
"It would be called a 'dynamic' procedure, because it does provide function," Byrne explained.

The current study involved seven patients who, at four months after surgery, reported "very high" satisfaction. Out of a possible 10 points, participants gave appearance an average score of 8.4, feeding 8.1, speech 8.7 and smile function 7.1.

Physicians not involved with the study saw photographs of the patients and rated four of them "excellent to superb." The other three got "good" post-operative results.

One expert said any advance is important for these types of patients.

"It is a slightly easier alternative to the more traditional transfer of muscle that we use," said Dr. Yael Halaas, a board-certified facial plastic surgeon and spokeswoman for the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. "This is a tragic problem. People can have one side of their face essentially a deformed mask, so anything that might be possibly successful really gives an interest and this does look like a nice, possible procedure," she said.

Some of benefits are tough to quantify, Byrne added.

"Facial paralysis is absolutely devastating. When you talk to patients, what bothers them the most of all the myriad problems, the inability to smile is the number one thing mentioned by these patients," he stated.

And recent research lends credence to what your mother always told you: Smile and you'll feel better. The emotions shown on the face affect a person's internal state.

"People who smile are happier, and people who can't smile are depressed. It really affects the brain," Byrne said. "There's no question we've seen this in these patients. They are happier and more upbeat after having this procedure."

More information

There's more on this topic at The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

SOURCES: Patrick J. Byrne, M.D., director, facial plastic and reconstructive surgery, department of otolaryngology and head and neck surgery, The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore; Yael Halaas, M.D., board-certified facial plastic surgeon, New York City, and spokeswoman, the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery; July/August 2007, Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery
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EXCLUSIVE!

TYLER PERRY
On His Billion Dollar Empire, New Talk Show and Rumors
Fact: Overprocessing and excessive styling contribute to pervasive hair loss among African-American women.

TYPES OF HAIR LOSS
Recognizing damaging conditions in their early stages can be crucial to halting their progression and, in some cases, completely reversing them. "Women are consistently losing more than the acceptable 50 to 100 hairs a day, they should seek further medical attention," says Monte O. Harris, M.D., of Cultura Cosmetic Medical Spa in Washington, D.C. These are five common causes of hair loss:

1. TRACTION ALOPECIA is characterized by loss of hair primarily along the hairline, especially around the temples and above the ears. It is a result of tension caused by certain hair styles—namely, weaves, braids, and ponytails. It is reversible when it first appears; however, if left untreated, over time it becomes permanent.

2. CENTRAL CEPHALICAL ALOPECIA (CCCA) was known as traction alopecia back in the day. While an exact cause has not been determined, some doctors ascribe this condition to excess heat styling and chemical processes. Women with this condition generally experience loss at the crown of the head. CCCA is a progressive and scarring scalp condition that commonly goes unnoticed. Some of the first warning signs are inflammation and tenderness. Later signs include a shiny scalp with sparse hair growth.

3. ANDROGENETIC HAIR LOSS (aka female-pattern baldness) is a hormonal and/or hereditary condition. "Women may see "Hair breakage and loss are seen more commonly in African-American women than in women of other ethnicities."

4. THE STATE OF OUR STRANDS
Experts are getting to the bottom of the issue. "AFRICAN-AMERICAN HAIR is significantly more fragile than Caucasian hair," says Victoria Anthony-Harbour, M.D., dermatologist and director of the Scalp Institute for Ethnic Hair and Skin Research. She notes that hair breakage and loss are seen more commonly in African-American women than in women of other ethnicities. "The O'Neal Institute has found that an estimated 60 percent of African-American women report hair loss problems with hair breakage and 27 percent experience hair thinning or loss," hair loss is primarily because of how each woman styles her hair. dermatologist Monte O. Harris, M.D., of Cultura Cosmetic Medical Spa. "The main complaint is, we see at Cultura are traction alopecia, which usually results from wearing wigs and hair extensions, and CCCA (central cephalic alopecia), which is related to excessive heat styling and over-processed hair."

5. MEDICATIONS
Many medications for hair loss or thinning as a possible side effect. "Drugs, for instance, can cause certain blood pressure medications, androgens, anticoagulants, and contraceptive agents, or chemotherapeutic agents may cause some women to experience hair loss."

Visit Essence.com for more information.
Fact: An estimated 60% of African-American women report having problems with hair breakage, and 27% experience hair thinning or loss.

GET HELP AT HOME
A new crop of shampoo, conditioners and serums formulated to revitalize hair and give your new growth a fighting chance have hit the market.

Osmotics Follics Nutrient System ($16–$60), osmotics.com. This three-step program is designed to deliver a mixture of vitamins, minerals and amino acids directly to follicles.

Alterna Life Restore program ($295–$333), alterna.com. This system contains the patent-pending NutriEnzyme Complex to neutralize enzymes that cause follicles to stop growing hair.

Revitalize hair-care system ($14–$24), pronature.com. After a ten-year study, this line was created on the principle that essential oils such as peppermint, spearmint and coconut help increase blood flow to the scalp, thereby benefiting hair follicles. Call 888-904-0330 for more information on product use.

Jan Marini Age Intervention Hair Revitalizing Conditioner ($170), janmarini.com. This leave-in treatment may help rejuvenate mature hair. The company claims it takes just two weeks of daily use to notice increased thickness.

NIOXIN Thinning Hair Systems ($40), nioxin.com. The company's popular three-step system (available in eight formulas for every type of hair, from coarse and chemically enhanced to fine and natural) cleanses, restores and activates the scalp.

A few hard workers in the new wave of hair-recovery products.

GIVE THESE GOODS A TRY

HAIR TRANSPLANT 101
Best for: Those who have localized hair loss, where there are distinct, local areas that have thinning from traction alopecia and scarring. "In these patients, single-surgical session sessions have the potential of providing a great aesthetic outcome," explains Harris. In cases where the loss is more diffuse, such as in androgenetic hair loss, it is more of a challenge to achieve adequate density without damaging surrounding follicles, Harris adds.

Process: With the patient under local anesthesia, a donor strip of hair and scalp containing follicular unit grafts is taken from the back of the head and transplanted into sparse areas. There is a three-to-six-month period before new growth occurs. "Surgical hair restoration has really evolved over the past five to ten years," says Harris, who plans to open a facility in the fall of 2007 that will specialize in hair transplantation for women of color.

Pros: The results are permanent. And the early hair loss in common among African-Americans makes for a fuller look than straighter hair. "You don't need as many grafts to get a good amount of density," Harris says.

Cons: If the primary cause of hair loss is an autoimmune disorder such as lupus, or if there is a history of keloid scarring, then transplants are not a viable option. And postprocedure hair growth can be unreliable. "Blacks are more susceptible to scarring types of hair loss, which lowers the success rate of this procedure," explains Jeffrey Epstein, M.D., a facial plastic surgeon with offices in Miami and New York City.

Therefore, when there is a suspicion of scarring alopecia, I recommend a smaller test procedure first to determine how successful the transplant growth will be," he adds.

Cost: $4,000–$10,000.

GETTING PROFESSIONAL HELP
Early detection and medical intervention can help revitalize hair loss cycles.

Many women delay seeking help because there are so few places to go. "Women usually wait until hair loss is in full swing before they see a dermatologist," says Dr. F. Bryant, Jr., M.D., of Culbreath Dermatology in Washington, D.C. When speaking to patients, Bryant emphasizes the importance of early help. "If you have a problem, it's best to catch it early," he says. "Don't wait until it becomes a big problem."

If in doubt, talk to a dermatologist. "Don't delay," he says. "This is a serious problem that affects so many people. Don't delay in seeking help."
WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Liz Weber isn't embarrassed to talk about the cosmetic work she's had done.

"I've had Botox done for, like, seven years," she said.

She was happy with those results but cringed every time she caught a glimpse of her hands.

"They begin to look like your mom's hands. That's what freaks you out, it's like, 'I've got my mom's hands!'" she said.

Turns out, she's not alone. Dermatologist Dr. Marilyn Berzin said she's seeing a dramatic increase in the number of patients looking to improve the appearance of their hands.

"The face is looking like 40, but the hands are looking like 60 years old," said Berzin.

The most popular treatment is Sculptra -- an injectable and long-lasting cosmetic filler that adds volume to the skin and keeps tendons and blood vessels from showing.

"We have new options that we didn't have several years ago," Berzin said.

Ones like Thermage -- that uses radio frequency to tighten skin and stimulate collagen. Age and dark spots can be zapped away with intense pulse light or the Fraxel laser treatment -- which restores skin using pixels of light.

"To me, if it's noninvasive, can go back to work and it doesn't hurt -- sign me up," said Weber.

There can be mild redness after a procedure, but recovery and results are generally rapid, and that's a welcome change for patients who want to turn back the hands of time.

Costs of the procedures vary. On average, Sculptra costs $1,000 to $1,200 for each treatment. Thermage is around $2,500 for one treatment and Fraxel is $2,200 for a package of four treatments.
Patients Turning To Liquid Treatment To Freshen Face

Kathy Lazzaro wants a fresh look to celebrate her recent retirement as a school teacher. "I would like to maintain myself as a classic car; I want to keep tuning myself up,” said Lazzaro.

Lazzaro said time is certainly taking a toll on her face.

"When you get older, your skin looks kind of thin, saggy and not so rounded,” said Lazzaro. Facial plastic surgeon Dr. Roy Amir said, "Healthy people, as we age, we tend to lose a little bit of the fat, a little bit of the collagen that's under the skin.”

Amir said a new liquid injectable called Sculptra could give Lazzro the look she’s been searching for.

“Sculptra is more geared toward bulk areas, larger areas of the face. For example, the hallow areas under the cheek or the actual cheek areas," said Amir.

Sculptra contains polylactic acid, a liquid that has been used for years in cosmetic corrections of scars and wrinkles.

“Its presence stimulates the body to produce collagen over time,” said Amir.

Amir said Sculptra could restore volume and improve facial contours in a matter of weeks.

"Over the next three or four weeks, the body will begin to fill in an area by laying down your own collagen, and that is where we get the long-lasting effect,” said Amir.

A needle containing tiny particles of polylactic acid that will stimulate the formation of new collagen is used in the Sculptra process.

“This is going to give her a little more of a youthful appearance a little bit more volume to certain areas,” Amir said of Lazzaro.

Lazzaro said she is seeing change after her first treatment.

"I look like I just got 10 years younger,” said Lazzaro.

According to medical experts, there is no downtime with Sculptura, but there is temporary bruising and swelling that goes away after a few days.

Sculptra costs between $3,000 and $4,000 for a series of treatments with results that last up to two years.
According to the AAFPRS (American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery) there has been a 91 percent increase in the number of men having Botox since 2000. During the same period there was a 69 percent increase in the number of women having the procedure. The increase in the number of men getting Botox was supported by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons who reported an increase as well. It was believed that Botox was an attractive option for men because it was less invasive and had minimal pain associated with it.

Frown lines are the normal target area for men primarily because this is where the more obvious wrinkles are located.