

## Surgeon of the Month: Bessam Farjo, MD

*Jerry E. Cooley, MD Charlotte, North Carolina USA*

Bessam Farjo was born in 1963 in Amara, a town in the southern region of Iraq. At two years of age his family moved to England for four years while his father completed his specialty training in orthopedics. Bessam attended three years of school in England during which time he became fluent in English. Little did he know that years later he would return to permanently settle in this country.

Bessam's father established a reputable surgical practice in Baghdad. He was also an accomplished artist and musician, traits he passed on to his son who now applies them to hair restoration surgery. It is ironic that Bessam has now trained his father in hair surgery as his own practice has expanded.

After one year of medical school at Baghdad University, Bessam secured a place at the prestigious Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland where he received his medical degree. It was in Dublin that he met the most influential person in his life: his future wife, Nilofer, who was also in medical school. Two years after graduating, they married and settled in England, where Bessam trained in general surgery and Nilofer in internal medicine. After a chance visit with Dr. Larry Fremont near Toronto, they decided to enter the field of hair restoration surgery together. Needless to say neither has regretted the decision and eight years later they now have thriving practices in Manchester and London.

One key area that Bessam has been particularly keen on developing in England is the education and promotion of hair transplantation not only to the general public but amongst doctors, trichologists, hairdressers, and any other groups allied in any way to hair. Bessam, Nilofer, and their staff regularly donate their time to give talks and seminars to these groups. In 1996, Bessam was instrumental in forming the British Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons and has been the secretary since its inception. Although there are only 14 members at present, it is hoped that the group can not only share ideas, but also set standards of care for their patients.

Bessam is a regular attendee and presenter at international hair conferences. His most recent trip was to Cairo, where he was an invited speaker at the 30th annual Egyptian Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. One of his presentations, describing the grafting of an entire beard and moustache on a scarred face, has generated significant media interest in the U.K.

Bessam and Nilofer live in Cheshire, south of Manchester, with their daughter Aliya Rhea (8) and son Janan Ryan (7). Soccer, computers, gadgetry, music, and the odd game of Blackjack are Bessam's passions. He religiously attends every home game of his soccer team and this topic makes an ideal talking point with patients during operations. His wife and nurses are amazed at the number of hours that can be spent discussing one sport.



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