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Coping With Alopecia Areata

By Richard Mitchell

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Alopecia areata is a condition that is typified by patchy hair loss over the scalp or body. It comes in several forms ranging from a single patch to total body hair loss (alopecia universalis). Its cause may be difficult to diagnose but many cases appear to link directly to imbalances in the immune system that can be treated effectively. In most cases hair will reappear on its own but some patients develop more extreme variations that are more difficult to treat.

It is important that sufferers diagnose their condition correctly by visiting their doctor and undergoing a series of blood tests to check factors such as hormone levels. This will allow your physician or dermatologist to accurately diagnose your condition and recommend an appropriate treatment regime.

The treatment chosen will depend on the causes identified by the blood tests as any underlying problems must be addressed first. In severe forms of alopecia areata successful treatment may prove problematic. In other cases the problem may rectify itself without external treatment. At present successful treatment regimes are somewhat limited but the following may prove useful in stimulating hair growth:

Daily application of minoxidil (Rogaine).

Injection of cortisone into patchy areas of the scalp (this must be administered by a physician). Creams and lotions containing cortisone can also be used but results are variable.

Dithranol can be applied to the scalp in mild or early cases.

Application of 100% aloe vera gel.

Massage the scalp with rosemary and lavender essential oils in a jojoba base.

Use of a hair loss product containing the Chinese herb He Shou Wu.

A product called Calosol has recently generated positive feedback.

Please note, however, that none of these is guaranteed to work due to the unpredictable nature of alopecia areata. It is this uncertainty that offers opportunities for scamsters to make outlandish claims. The fact remains, there are no miracle cures for advanced forms of alopecia areata so sufferers may wish to consider other options such as head coverings and wigs.

This does not mean that patients are without hope because, even in severe cases, hair can spontaneously start to grow again even after years of loss.

You can find out more about alopecia areata and other forms of hair loss at the site listed below.

Richard Mitchell is the creator of the

website that provides information

and guidance to those suffering from premature hair loss.

Common Treatments For Hair Loss In Women

By Richard Mitchell

Much has been said and written about modern day hair loss treatments but this tends to relate almost exclusively to men. Do these same treatments offer solutions to women suffering from hair loss or is there a completely different category of remedies available? It really depends on what is causing hair loss in the first place and as the most common causes of hair loss are the same as those that affect men, the treatments available are pretty similar.

In an earlier article we concluded that the three most common causes of hair loss in women are female pattern baldness, telogen effluvium and alopecia areata. We'll now look at each of these in turn and examine the best treatments available, bearing in mind the specific needs of women:

1. Treatments for female pattern baldness.

In most instances minoxidil (Rogaine) is the first treatment used. This is one of only two FDA approved hair loss treatments and it remains the only one approved for use by women. Minoxidil comes in the form of a topical solution that works by tackling the symptoms of hair loss and helping to generate new hair growth. It does not target the causes of hair loss and will not work for everyone. The women's version of minoxidil is a 2% solution but the 5% version marketed for men can be used if necessary.

The most popular drug for treating male pattern baldness is of course finasteride (Propecia). Women of child bearing age should not use this drug due to the severely damaging effects it can have on unborn

male fetuses. Any women considering using Propecia should discuss it first with their physician. In some cases your doctor may prescribe a different androgen blocker called spironolactone as a means of stopping the hormone activity that is causing hair loss. Spironolactone is normally used as a diuretic and results may be variable.

There is a bewildering range of commercial products available, most of which are aimed squarely at men but many are also suitable for women to use. Whether they work or not is another question but some products containing ingredients like saw palmetto, stinging nettle, pygeum and green tea have shown their value. You can find out more about these and other potential hair loss solutions by visiting the site listed at the end of this article.

2. Treatments for telogen effluvium

This is a hair loss condition that generally does not require any specific treatment. Once the effects of the trauma that caused hair loss in the first place have subsided, the hair will regrow of its own accord. Some patients like to encourage the regrowth process by using minoxidil but this isn't necessary. Implementing a good nutritional regime and supplementing with B–vitamins may help to create a hair friendly environment.

3. Treatments for alopecia areata.

This is another hair loss condition that may resolve itself spontaneously. In some cases one of the following treatments may prove useful:

Daily application of minoxidil (Rogaine).

Injection of cortisone into patchy areas of the scalp (this must be administered by a physician). Creams and lotions containing cortisone can also be used but results are variable.

Dithranol can be applied to the scalp in mild or early cases.

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