

MALE PATTERN HAIR LOSS

YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH MALE PATTERN HAIR LOSS (ANDROGENETIC ALOPECIA)



WHAT IS IT?

The term alopecia refers to hair loss. There are several different types of alopecia. When the cause of hair loss is related to hormones (androgens) and genetics, it is called androgenic alopecia. In men, hair loss usually begins above the temples, and the receding hairline eventually forms a characteristic "M" shape; hair at the top of the head also thins, often progressing to baldness.

HOW DID I GET IT?

There are many potential causes of hair loss, including medical conditions, medications, and physical or emotional stress. However, male pattern hair loss is an inherited condition, caused by a genetically determined sensitivity to the effects of dihydrotestosterone, or DHT in some areas of the scalp. DHT is believed to shorten the growth, or anagen, phase of the hair cycle, from a usual duration of 3–6 years to just weeks or months (see life cycle of hair). This occurs together with miniaturization of the follicles and progressively produces fewer and finer hairs. The production of DHT is regulated by an enzyme called 5-alpha reductase.

Several genes are involved, accounting for the differing age of onset, progression, pattern and severity of hair loss in family members.

Hair miniaturization: Unlike other areas of the body, hairs on the scalp grow in tufts of 3–4. In androgenic alopecia, the tufts progressively lose hairs. Eventually, when all the hairs in the tuft are gone, bald scalp appears between the hairs.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

Typical male pattern baldness is usually diagnosed based on the appearance and pattern of the hair loss, along with a detailed medical history, including questions about the prevalence of hair loss in your family.

TREATMENT

Supplements

Many supplements, including biotin and folic acid, specific omega-3 fatty acids, omega-6 fatty acids, and antioxidants are said to help grow and thicken hair.

Hair Loss Shampoos

While hair loss shampoos cannot regrow hair, or prevent hair loss from worsening they can

- Help your hair hold moisture, which makes hair look fuller and thicker
- Lessen breakage, which can reduce thinning

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Medicated Shampoos

Minoxidil 5% (Rogaine, generic versions). Minoxidil can produce some new growth of fine hair in some, but not all, people. However, it can't restore the full density of the lost hair. It can take two months before you see any results and the effect often peaks at around four months. If minoxidil works for you, you'll need to keep using it to maintain those results. If you stop, you'll start to lose hair again.

Directions for Minoxidil

Be sure that your hair and scalp are dry. Using the dropper or spray pump that's provided with the over-the-counter solution, apply it twice daily to every area where your hair is thinning. Gently massage it into the scalp with your fingers so it can reach the hair follicles. Then air-dry your hair, wash your hands thoroughly, and wash off any solution that has dripped onto your forehead or face. Don't shampoo for at least four hours afterwards.

Possible side effects:

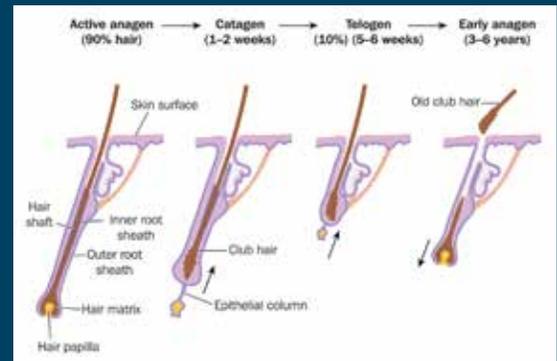
- Scalp Irritation: Some women have scalp irritation probably caused by the alcohol in the solution. Using the foam version seems to cause less irritation than the liquid.
- Sometimes the new hair differs in color and texture from surrounding hair.
- Hypertrichosis — excessive hair growth in the wrong places, such as the cheeks or forehead.

Other available treatment options

There are several other treatment options available to treat male pattern hair loss including:

- Anti-androgens
- Lasers for at-home use
- Platelet-rich plasma therapy
- Stem cells
- Hair transplant
- Follicular unit transplant

LIFE CYCLE OF A HAIR



All hair follicles are replaced at different rates by the normal process of hair cycling. Hair growth alternates between phases of activity and rest.

Anagen phase - the growth period of hair that lasts for two to six years. During this time, the follicle is long and deep and produces thick, well-pigmented hair. About 90% of all scalp hairs are in the anagen phase at a given time.

Catagen phase (which lasts 1-2 weeks) is a brief transition phase. During this time, the base of the follicle shrivels.

Telogen phase is the resting period lasts for three months. In this phase, the shrunken follicle retains the hair fiber.

When the anagen phase begins again, the old hair is dislodged and falls out to make room for a new hair to begin growing in its place.