Why Do People Suffer Hair Loss?

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Many people associate alopecia primarily with hair loss or baldness on the head. But the condition can occur in any region of the body, not only the scalp. And while hair loss is a normal process of aging, balding can result from drug treatments for cancer and skin disease as well as indicate hormonal changes, according to a story reported by Medical News Today.

There several types of alopecia:.

Alopecia areata (called spot baldness) causes patchy hair loss anywhere on the body; alopecia totalis is complete hair loss from the scalp, usually caused by an autoimmune disorder or mental stress.

Alopecia universalis is total hair loss throughout the body.

Alopecia barbae is facial hair loss.

Alopecia mucinosa is scarring and non-scarring hair loss (reversible if treated early) caused by inflammation in the hair follicle and sebaceous or oil-producing glands. It usually affects the face, neck and scalp, but can show up anywhere on the body.

Androgenetic alopecia, or male pattern baldness, is thinning and receding of the hair line or hair loss on top of the head. The condition is hereditary.

Adrogenetic alopecia, or female pattern baldness, is thinned-out hair all over the head, sometimes accompanied by coarse facial hair. Women's risk of the condition increases during the hormonal changes of menopause. But the good news is that the condition does not usually progress to total baldness.

Traction alopecia is hair loss most often caused by aggressive hair styling that pulls or creates tension on the hair.

Other reasons for hair loss include cancer treatments that cause anagen effluvium, patchy hair loss that may result in total baldness. Telogen effluvium is another kind of hair loss caused by the hair prematurely entering its resting (or non-growth phase). Doctors believe the condition is caused by emotional or physiological stresses—such as childbirth, chronic illness, major surgery and crash diets—that interrupt the normal hair cycle.

But for hair loss sufferers, treatment is available. Often, depending on whether hair loss is a result of an infection or condition, treatments can result in hair re-growth.

In addition, male and female pattern baldness are treatable with over-the-counter medication such as minoxidil, which comes in a lotion form.

And for those experiencing alopecia areata, 80 percent see their condition resolve after a year on its own but treatment options include steroid injections into the scalp, topical steroid creams and tablets, immunotherapy, Dithranol cream and ultraviolet light therapy.

Click here to learn more about the causes of unwanted hair loss.

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