Extreme Stress Can Thin Women's Hair

June 29, 2010

Women can lose half of their hair due to seriously stressful events such as childbirth, surgery and the death of a loved one, according to dermatologists in a Physorg.com article.

When people experience physical or mental trauma, their hair follicles may respond by prematurely going into a resting phase. Three months later comes the shocker: Their hair begins shedding.

But stress-induced hair loss is usually temporary. Most often, the hair grows back on its own.

Some women 30 and older experience the female equivalent of male pattern baldness in which they lose hair only on the top of the head.

If these women also undergo stress, however, they may notice hair loss on the sides and backs of the scalp.

A number of women also experience both stress-induced and age-related hair thinning at the same time.

For this problem, doctors might prescribe an over-the-counter hair regrowth treatment such as Rogaine.

But don't confuse stress-related fallout with normal hair loss, cautioned Rebecca Euwer, MD, a Dallas-based dermatologist. "About 1 percent of your hair is falling out [at any given time], so it's normal to lose about 100 hairs a day."

If you start to lose more hair than that, Euwer said, then you should be concerned. Her advice? Get to the doctor.

Finally, it's important to know that hair loss may also result from excessive or harsh styling treatments and that it can signal more serious illnesses such as diabetes or lupus.

Learn how genetics is responsible for hair loss here.

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