

Alopecia

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Abstracts: To understand the causes of hair loss and to treat it by preventing the causative factors and with the help of homoeopathic remedies. [Muni P NJIRM 2016; 7(2):128-130]

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Introduction: Alopecia also known as baldness is loss of hair from the scalp or body. It may be partial or complete lack of hair growth. Thinning of hair may also lead to decrease in density of the hair. Normally there are 100,000 to 150,000 hair on the head. It is normal to lose 50-100 hair per day. But when the patient complains of decrease in density of hair in general or hair loss from a particular area or total hair loss it has to be treated.

Hair enhances the beauty of a person male or female. When there is hair thinning or baldness it gives a psychological stress to a person.

There are various causes of alopecia

- Androgenic alopecia - It is also known as common baldness or male pattern baldness. Androgenic alopecia is excited by endrogenic hormone in association with the genetic factor and ageing. Thus we see that male pattern baldness runs in generations. In male there is a hair loss from the frontal and temporal region, while in female there is progressive decrease in hair density from vertex to the front of the scalp. In females there may be diffuse hair loss throughout the apical scalp.
- Genetic - Genetic factor may lead to diffuse alopecia or circumscribed alopecia. In diffuse alopecia there may be total alopecia or hypotrichosis (hair sparse). Total alopecia is seen in hereditary syndromes like Progeria, Hidrotic ectodermal dysplasia, Moynahan's syndrome, Baraitser's syndrome or Atrichia with keratin cyst. Hypotrichosis is common Pili torti, Anhidrotic ectodermal dysplasia, Rothmund – Thomson syndrome, Netherton's syndrome, Cartilage – hair hypoplasia etc. The circumscribed alopecia is common in Naevoid, Aplasia etc
- Telogen effluvium - In normal young adult scalp 80 -90% of follicle are in anagen phase of hair cycle. The term telogen effluvium means shedding of the normal club hairs which follows the premature precipitation of anagen follicle into telogen phase. The process may be a response of stress like fever, prolonged and difficult birth, surgical shocks, haemorrhage, crash dieting, emotional stress, postpartum period or withdrawal of contraceptive pills after been taken continuously for a long time.
- Endocrine factor – Endocrine disorders like Hypopituitary state, Hypothyroidism, Hyperthyroidism, Hypoparathyroidism, Diabetis melitis etc lead to alopecia.
- Chemical agents - Medicines like thirouracil, carbimazole used for thyrotoxicosis; anticoagulants like heparin, heparinoids, coumarins; hypervitaminosis A; boric acid; antipsychotic drugs like trimethadione; drugs like propranolol, metaprolol, levadopa used for hypertension causes diffuse alopecia.
- Nutritional factor – Protein, Iron, zinc and essential fatty acids deficiencies lead to alopecia. A balanced diet is very much essential for normal hair growth.
- Severe chronic illness - Conditions like Neoplastic disease, impaired liver functions, Lichen planus, Lupus erythematosus, Scleroderma, Sarcoidosis, Autoimmune conditions, Scalp eczema, Seborrhea (Dandruff) etc may lead to alopecia.
- Infections Certain fungal, bacterial, viral or protozoal infections may lead to circumscribed or diffuse hair loss.

- Traumatic alopecia – Repeated vigorous massage, hair dressing style causing continuous traction, use of tight curlers or rollers, Hair ironing, continuous pressure on a circumscribed area, mechanical trauma, burns or radiations lead to alopecia.

Types of alopecia

Alopecia is broadly divided into three types

Alopecia areata – Baldness in circumscribed area.

Alopecia totalis – Complete loss of hair from the scalp.

Alopecia universalis – Complete loss of hair from all over the body

Homoeopathic remedies useful in the treatment of Hair loss

1. *Natrum Muriaticum*:

Hair loss due to skin eruptions like psoriasis, eczema, herpes etc.

Vesicular eruptions at the edge of the hair.

Hair loss in anaemic female.

Hair fall out when touched in nursing women.

Affects the hair follicle causing alopecia.

Eczema appears in thick scabs, oozing pus and matting the hair together, crusta lactea.

2. *Phosphorus*:

Indicated in itching of scalp due to dandruff.

Hair loss in patches due to dandruff.

Falling of hair in large bunches.

Bald spots, Alopecia areata

Scaly eruptions in bald patches.

Fluoric acid:

Hair becomes dry, losses its luster and falls out.

Ends of the hair are dry, the hair mats and splits and breaks.

Formation of crust over the scalp

Dry scales, itches very much, bald patches, alopecis areata.

3. *Nitricum acidum*:

Loss of hair due to chronic complaints

Eruptions on the scalp with sharp splinter like pain.

Moist, itching, offensive eruptions on the scalp.

Discharges are acrid which destroy the hair.

Loss of hair from the vertex.

Sensitiveness of the scalp to combing of the hair.

Hair falls out in profusion, as in syphilis.

4. *Sepia*:

Eruptions over the scalp, hair falls out.

Roots of hair sensitive.

Great falling of hair after chronic headache at the climacteric period.

Hair falls due to eruptions like herpes, ringworms or in case of ichthyosis.

Yellow crust over the scalp, oozing of pus and other fluids, vesicles and eczema of infants.

5. *Phosphoric acid*:

Falling out of hair.

Hair falls out from scalp, eyebrow, genitals etc.

Hair fall after typhoid fever.

6. *Selenium*:

Hair falls out from scalp, eyebrows, eyelashes, beard and genitals.

Hair falls from all over the body, Alopecia universalis.

7. *Graphites*:

Hair are matted, brittle and falls out.

Hair loss due to eruptions like eczema on the scalp.

Scalp is red and itches violently.

Scaly eruptions on scalp, hair falls out leaving a bald shiny patch on the scalp.

8. *Silicea*:

Dryness of the hair.

Hair falls due to moist, scaly eruptions on the scalp, eczema capitis.

Helps to strengthen the hair and promotes the growth of the hair.

9. *Lycopodium*:

Premature baldness and greying of hair.

Great falling of hair due to eruptions like eczema.

On scalp eruptions in patches, smooth patch with hair off.

10. *Calcarea crab*:

Hair falls with itching of the scalp.

Hair falls in patches. Alopecia areata

Hair loss due to nutritional deficiency; pituitary and thyroid dysfunctions.

Eczema of head in infant and children.

Thick scab on the head with yellow pus.

11. *Baryta carb*:

Hair falls out, baldness in young people.

Scalp is very sensitive to touch.
Eczema of the scalp.
Moist crust on scalp or dry eruptions on the scalp.

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12. *Vinca Minor*:

Indicated for bald spots, alopecia areata.
Eruptions on scalp with offensive discharge, which breeds vermin.
Corrosive itching of scalp.
Hair fall out and is replaced by grey hair.
Useful in plica polonica where hair is matted together.

13. *Kali Carb*:

Indicated for Hair thinning and brittle hair.
Dry skin and hair. Great dryness of hair causing hair loss.
Helps to promote the hair growth.

14. *Kali sulph*:

Loss of hair due to dandruff, psoriasis or ringworm
Helps in hair growth

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