

# Hair Loss Information

## What causes hair loss?

There are many causes of hair loss. The most common cause is likely female pattern hair loss where the hair begins to thin at the top of the scalp while remaining thicker towards the base of the scalp. Other causes include medications, stress, illnesses, poor diet, and inflammation of the scalp.

## What can my doctor do?

Your doctor will examine your scalp and look for any signs of inflammation or infection as well as look at your medication and medical history. It may be necessary to perform blood tests to look for anemia, thyroid disease or iron deficiency, though this is not always needed. Your dermatologist can treat inflammation and infection and may need to refer you to an internist if any abnormalities occur in your blood tests. If your exam does not show any infection or inflammation, and your blood tests are normal, you most likely have female pattern hair loss for which no prescription therapy has been proven effective. There are reports of off label use of certain medications such as Spironolactone which have helped some women. Talk to your doctor if this medication would be an option for you.

## What can I do?

There are, however, over the counter products and supplements that many patients feel help the health and appearance of their hair and scalp. These products can be found in drug stores, health stores, and over the internet.

**Biotin** supplements: 2-3 mg daily

**Multivitamin** daily, in addition to following a healthy and well-balanced diet.

Thickening shampoos such as **Nioxin, Aveda Pure Abundance, and Pantene Pro-V Thick and Full**. (These specific product lines are designed to thicken individual strands of hair).

Anti-dandruff shampoos such as **Head & Shoulders** or **Selsun blue** to reduce inflammation.

**Rogaine** (Minoxidil) hair regrowth treatment: comes in solutions or foams, 2% for women and 5% for men. Either % is fine, although some studies have not shown any improvement for women using the 5% strength. It should be used for at least 6 months to see results. Results may come in the form of regrowth of hair or prevention of further hair loss.

Reduce stress and avoid going on and off medications, especially hormonal medications such as birth control pills and hormone replacement therapy as that can trigger and exacerbate hair loss.

## What can I expect?

Results from implementing the above measures will vary from patient to patient. All measures should be tried for at least 6 months. Female pattern hair loss rarely causes complete baldness and stabilizes over time. For severe hair loss that does not respond and continues to progress, some patients prefer wigs. Paula Young wig company provides a wide variety of and high-quality wigs and can be found over the internet.

