Causes of hair loss and the developments in hair rejuvenation.

Rushton DH, Norris MJ, Dover R, Busuttil N.

Abstract

Hair is considered to be a major component of an individual's general appearance. The psychological impact of hair loss results in a measurably detrimental change in self-esteem and is associated with images of reduced worth. It is not surprising that both men and women find hair loss a stressful experience. Genetic hair loss is the major problem affecting men and by the age of 50, up to 50% will be affected. Initial attempts to regenerate the lost hair have centred on applying a topical solution of between 2% to 5% minoxidil; however, the results proved disappointing. Recently, finasteride, a type II 5alpha reductase inhibitor has been found to regrow a noticeable amount of hair in about 40% of balding men. Further developments in treatments have lead to the use of a dual type I and type II inhibitor where 90% of those treated regrow a noticeable amount of hair. In women the major cause of hair loss before the age of 50 is nutritional, with 30% affected. Increased and persistent hair shedding (chronic telogen effluvium) and reduced hair volume are the principle changes occurring. The main cause appears to be depleted iron stores, compromised by a suboptimal intake of the essential amino acid l-lysine. Correction of these imbalances stops the excessive hair loss and returns the hair back to its former glory. However, it can take many months to redress the situation.

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