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Hair Loss Treatment Guide



Disclaimer: if you have any medical concerns or questions, please talk to your healthcare provider. The following Hair Loss Treatment Guide is underpinned by peer-reviewed research and information drawn from medical institutions and governmental agencies. This source; however, does not substitute the professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment that would be provided by a medical provider.

Balding - not the most fun of topics to cover. It's a deeply personal experience and one that comes with a lot of stigmas attached to it. This guide is your comprehensive stop to tell you all about the treatment options at your disposal that can help you take action in the most discreet way possible.

While there are numerous causes for hair loss, the most common is known as male pattern baldness (MPB), also known as androgenetic alopecia. More specifically, the conversion of testosterone to a more active form known as dihydrotestosterone (DHT) is linked to the shrinking of hair follicles, shortening the hair growth cycle. It's important to note that it isn't necessarily the DHT production that is the culprit for hair loss, but rather that some men genetically have high sensitivity to DHT, which results in them experiencing a weakening of their hair follicles (Urysiak-Czubatka, 2014).

While no cure exists for MPB, there are a number of preventative lifestyle solutions and medical treatment options that one could explore to reverse the effects of hair loss. Before going down the road of exploration of scalp micro pigmentation, platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections, or even surgical transplants, explore the following list of treatment options that you can start as early as today.

Medical Treatment Options



Finasteride (Generic Propecia®)

More widely branded as Propecia, Finasteride is the only FDA-approved oral hair loss treatment available and requires a prescription from a certified medical provider prior to purchase. It works by blocking an enzyme 5-alpha reductase, which is responsible for converting testosterone to DHT, resulting in a reduction in both scalp and blood levels of DHT. Finasteride is taken once a day orally and has been proven to decrease serum DHT levels by almost 70%.



Treatment Type
Oral Pills



How often do you need to take it
Once daily



Minoxidil (Generic Rogaine®)

Minoxidil, the generic version of Rogaine, stimulates hair follicles to increase blood flow and stimulates dormant hair follicles to activate hair growth. This topical treatment is applied by rubbing into one's scalp and is used primarily to combat the effects of male pattern baldness (MPB). Minoxidil is typically found in 2% or 5% lotions and foams.



Treatment Type
Topical spray or foam solution



How often do you need to take it
Twice daily

Alternative Preventative Treatment Options

For those more inclined to explore natural methods to stimulate hair growth, look no further. There are a host of natural treatments or preventative measures one can take that can help increase scalp circulation and prevent hair loss. Though these have not all been clinically proven, they are very popular solutions to explore.



A Healthy Diet = Healthy Hair

It goes without saying that we are what we eat, and your hair health relies heavily on a diet packed with adequate protein, vitamins, and minerals to keep its shine and strength. One of the best lifestyle choices one can make is in a healthy, balanced diet that prioritizes intake of the following:

- Iron
- Zinc
- Protein
- Vitamins C, D, E and A (caution on not taking too much Vitamin A; however, as it can contribute to further hair loss when taken in excess)
- Omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids
- B-complex vitamins

Aside from food intake, regular exercise, consistent sleep, solid hydration, and reduction of alcohol intake are solid lifestyle choices that will work in your favor to not only keep you performing and operating well, but strengthen your hair.



Scalp Massage

Though robust research is still lacking in this arena, some smaller studies have shown that scalp massages help increase hair thickness (English, 2019). The benefits are closely linked to the reduction of stress levels experienced by the massage itself - reason enough to try!



Supplements

- **Biotin (Vitamin B7)** – A commonly referenced ingredient in hair thickening shampoos and supplements. However, there are no clinical trials that have demonstrated that biotin supplements can help hair loss when there is not an existing deficiency.
- **Saw Palmetto** – Of all the natural treatment options available, saw palmetto has gained popularity as being the most promising, though limited in its effectiveness in comparison to medical treatments available. An extract of saw palmetto berries has been found to block the conversion of testosterone to DHT (Murugusundaram, 2009). Saw palmetto can be taken orally in the form of topical drops, or doses can be added to a shampoo of your choice (though this technique may be less effective).



Hair Loss Shampoos

While shampoos do offer some benefits in supporting your hair health, they are not an all-encompassing hair loss solution if you have MPB. In terms of ingredients to look out for in your hair loss shampoos, the two most common ones are caffeine and ketoconazole. Though there are not any clinically viable results that show that these are responsible for hair growth in MPB, when combined with medical treatments, they can show improved effectiveness (Perez, 2004).

Deciding On A Treatment That Works for You



Is it easy to use these hair loss treatments?

Ease of use really depends on the treatment. For daily application treatments, those are far easier than say a PRP or hair transplant. It's important to factor in consistency and what you are able to maintain as a part of your lifestyle as this is likely to affect results you see.



Are these safe treatments to use?

There's no fun in taking risks or trying treatment ideas without first knowing their efficacy and safety. Take the time to discuss all possible side effects of available treatments with your medical provider. It's important to note that your medical history and genetics do play a role in how you experience these medical treatments. The more thorough you are, the more likely you'll be able to find the personalized treatment plan to meet your needs.



How soon do these treatments start to show results?

Results will vary from person to person. Natural or alternative preventative treatment plans may show fewer side effects, but their efficacy (effectiveness of treatment) may not be as high as that of medical treatment options. The use of Finasteride and minoxidil begin to show visible results in as few as 3 months of daily use. It can take up to a year to see maximum results. Work with a provider to find the right plan for your lifestyle to produce results that make you confident.

References

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