

**SPECIAL FEATURE**

HAIR-RAISING STORY

SO why do you lose hair? Experts refuse to find a scapegoat.

It's a combination of factors. Maintaining proper hygiene rates very highly, as far as proper hair care is concerned. Hair must be cleaned on a regular basis with the right products as the dust and the grime we accumulate from our day to day activities, along with seasonal factors, can contribute to temporary and even permanent hair loss.

Another factor, which specialists rate highly, is the nutritional aspect. Your body must have the right levels of anti-oxidants, adequate supply of Vitamin E and C, and minerals like zinc and iron. An imbalance of these essential nutrients may cause temporary or long term hair loss.

There can be medical reasons contributing to hair loss too. People suffering from diabetes or acute diseases like typhoid can also experience temporary or permanent hair-loss, leading to balding.

MALE/FEMALE BALDING PATTERNS

Contrary to popular belief, women can go bald but only on rare occasions. It is more of a 'male' problem. Androgenic alopecia, or male pattern baldness, affects up to 70 percent of men and 40 percent of women at some point in their lifetimes. Men typically demonstrate hairline recession at the temples and vertex balding, while women

normally diffusely thin over the crown of their scalps.

Female androgenic alopecia is known colloquially as "female pattern baldness", although its characteristics can also occur in males. It more often causes diffuse thinning



without hairline recession; and, like its male counterpart, rarely leads to total hair loss.

Thinning of hair may start as early as the onset of puberty. The body, experiencing the surge of hormones for the first time reacts strongly. Hair follicles have receptors

for attachment of hormones, and with higher levels of testosterone, they bind with the chemicals resulting in hair fall.

The next phase of hair loss is seen after 40. This period is marked by excessive hair fall in men. Women are also affected, as

their bodies struggle to keep up with a second surge of hormones since puberty.

In women the levels of testosterone, the bad boy for balding, is lower than in men and thus their balding pattern differs considerably from their male counterparts.

SEEKING CONSULTATION

If you are losing more than 100 hair strands a day, it is a good idea to seek medical help. You might notice lumps of hair on your pillow or on the shower tray while taking a bath. Your doctor will be in the best position to assess the situation, based on your family history, your lifestyle and other essentials before giving their expert advice.

Hairs have their roots, of hair follicles, embedded in the scalp – the skin on our heads. If your hair follicles are healthy, it is possible for doctors to recommend diets or medication that will cause the hair to grow. However, once the follicles die out, no amount of medication, laser treatment or health regimen will make your hair grow back.

NO WORRIES

So what happens if you have completely lost your hair follicles? Does that mean you need to shave your head? Well you can, but modern medical care can also provide a viable option through hair transplant. Hair loss is a persistent problem we face, but it does not mean that we have to embrace baldness with a grim face. Through changes in your lifestyle, maintaining a healthy diet and medication, if needed, hair loss is no longer something you need to worry about.

– LS Desk