

Beat:

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According to Dr. Lynn A. Drake, M.D. Harvard Medical School, in a review article published in the Annals of medicine, 2016, seven major systemic causes of hair loss, ranging from infectious agents to contaminated supplements was identified. There is, however, an over attribution of the causes to androgenic imbalance or stress. An early diagnosis of the real cause such as nutritional deficiency, endocrine imbalance, collagen or vascular disease and in more rare cases, malignancy, can lead to a rapid reversal and improve quality of life, as hair loss causes a major psychosocial impact. There seem to also be a low-yield lab order, which contributes to missing out on the real cause of many cases of hair loss.

There were seven major identified factors described: Telogen effluvium, Nutritional, Endocrine, Drugs, chemicals, Infection and Malignancy could be a few of the underlying etiology.

In the cases of Telogen effluvium, amongst the causes, some hair loss causes are: crash dieting and oral-contraceptives, while in nutrition, we have a common factor in protein deficiency, vitamin excess or deficiency, such as selenium, zinc, and iron, and with the increased consumption of vitamin supplements, mostly not approved by the FDA, we have seen an increasing hair loss due to arsenic, lead or mercury toxicity found in many supplements.

Many drugs have been described to cause hair loss too, commonly used by the population, who ignore the information, such as some families of antihypertensives, antidepressants, antibiotics, psychotropic agents, anticonvulsants, laxatives, statins, amphetamines, to name a few.

Some of the most common infections and special disease causes include fungal infection; hepatitis C; HIV; anemia, endocrine imbalances such as hyper or hypothyroidism, hypercortisolism, and hyperandrogenemia; systemic lupus erythematosus; amyloidosis; some malignancy conditions, among others, have also been linked in the literature with hair loss.

The beneficial effects of reversing hair loss are immediate, with dramatic improvement in the overall quality of life.

Some precautions could be taken by the patients to prevent hair loss include a healthy natural diet, free of pesticides, avoid consuming supplements and medications not prescribed by a physician, avoid fad crash diets, have a regular check-up to reveal any endocrine imbalance or systemic conditions that could lead to hair loss.

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