

The Correlation Between Stress & Hair Health

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Pull your hair out!
Unknown

We're all too familiar with the consequences of stress on skin. Did you know - stress and anxiety also impact the condition of hair? Just as stress often causes an upset stomach or an acne breakout, it can be rough on the scalp.

“Good or bad stress can be a major trigger of hair loss; stressful events such as divorce, job loss, moving, wedding or final exams can spark an increase in shedding,” says Rebecca Kazin, MD, FAAD, dermatologist and founder of H+ Scalp & Hair Therapeutics. “In some cases, hair may fall out in clumps or patches after prolonged periods of stress. Pregnancy and crash diets can also 'stress' the body and cause shedding.”

Curious? Dr. Kazin details the different types of hair loss:

- **Alopecia Areata** – A very stressful type of hair loss, this occurs when one or more large clumps of hair fall out for no apparent reason, generally very suddenly. These large clumps of hair almost always come back, but hair loss may recur in other areas in susceptible individuals. This condition should be evaluated and managed by a Dermatologist.

- **Telogen Effluvium** – This is the second most common hair loss condition. An acutely stressful event 'shocks' the hair into the resting phase of the growth cycle and those affected can lose up to 20% of their hair. The shedding can occur up to 2-3 months after the stressful event. It typically grows back within 6-9 months.

- **Trichotillomania**– Rarely, severe stress can lead to formation of nervous habits such as hair twirling or twisting, which can be done almost subconsciously – like nail biting. This chronic trauma to the hair in focal areas can sometimes lead to patches of broken hair and thinning.

“The good news is that once the source of stress is removed, hair usually grows back on its own, says Dr. Kazin. “Getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly can all support the regrowth process. The growth cycle of hair takes time, and it can be a number of months before you see a significant improvement.”

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