



Prevalence and Awareness of Alopecia amongst Females in Ferozepur City

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ABSTRACT

Alopecia is a chronic disease and a serious issue among men as well as women nowadays. The patient may lose some hair or may have total scalp hair loss and sometimes, complete body hair loss. It is neither painful nor life frightening disease, but it may lead to stress, nervousness and public phobia in most of the victims. This paper aims to find out the prevalence and reasons behind alopecia among the females of age group 20-25 years in Ferozepur city. The reason behind occurrence of alopecia may be heredity, serious illness, infection, lack of proper hair care, chemical hair services etc.

Keywords: Alopecia, Female, Hair loss.

I INTRODUCTION

Hair, a thread like structure, nurtures from the follicles located in dermis layer of skin. As skin and nails, hair are also composed of protein, called Keratin (Reese et al., 1950). Each healthy hair passes through a particular span of life cycle, which consists of three phases: Anagen/growing phase, Catagen/transitional phase and Telogen/resting phase. During the resting phase, hair sheds off and a new hair starts growing from the same follicle i.e. growing phase (anagen phase) starts again. The life cycle of hairs does not occur simultaneously. Normally a healthy head loses 50-100 hair in a day, which is not considered as a problem (Lavker et al., 2003; Brannon, 2007). In some cases, the follicles do not remain healthy and they start shedding off the hair at premature stage and thus, hair falling rate increases, such a condition is termed as Alopecia (Mounsey et al., 2009). Alopecia, the medical term for hair loss, coined from a Greek word, means "fox disease", as fox sheds it fur twice a year. Research shows that approximately 90% of people (men as well as women) suffer from alopecia during their lifetime. It can occur at any stage of life among men, women and even children (Barahmani et al., 2009). This disease occurs due to gradual shrinking of follicles, as the follicles go on shrinking, they start producing vellus hair and with the passage of time, they become unable to produce hair (Headington, 1984).

Signs of alopecia may vary from a tiny bald patch to complete scalp hair loss and sometimes, to full body hair loss. It can be identified with the help of physical analysis as well as laboratory examinations (Headington, 1984). Alopecia is of two types: Scarring and Non-Scarring. Scarring alopecia is non-reversible in nature and



occurs due to disorder of immune system or severe burns etc. Non-scarring alopecia is usually reversible in nature, but treatment must be taken carefully otherwise it may lead to permanent loss of hair (Stefanato, 2010). The reason behind hair loss may be heredity, ageing, hormonal changes, stress, serious illness, sudden shock, drugs, unhealthy diet, scalp infection or chemical services (Charles Salinger, 2005). It is not a life alarming problem, but may lead to mental and emotional stress in most of the sufferers (Hunt et al., 2005; Aghaei et al., 2014). Balding people start considering themselves as unsuccessful, less physically attractive, older and helpless (Gupta et al., 1998). Therefore, some people opt for non-medical cosmetology options to hide hair loss such as toupees, wigs and hair extensions/ hair weaving, while others go for medication or surgery.

A complete review of literature regarding structure, chemical composition and life cycle of hair has been done for the following study. The main objective of this study is to find average number of females suffering from alopecia in a particular age group with possible reasons of its occurrence.

II METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted in order to find out average number of females suffering from alopecia. The data was collected with the help of detailed questionnaire which involved the parameters shown in table 1:

Parameter	Description
Age group:	20-25 years
Gender:	Female
Sample size:	100
Sampling method:	Random sampling
Survey method:	Questionnaire

Table 1: Survey Parameters

Information collected through survey includes the family history, hair loss pattern and the expected reasons behind alopecia, has been formulated and represented with the help of pie charts. Results have been inferred on the basis of collected data.

III RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In order to represent the results of survey regarding alopecia various pie charts have been produced as follows:

Number of Alopecia Patients

Figure 1 demonstrates the number of females having alopecia among 100 samples. The result shows that 80% of the total samples have been suffering from alopecia and 20% does not have the problem of alopecia.

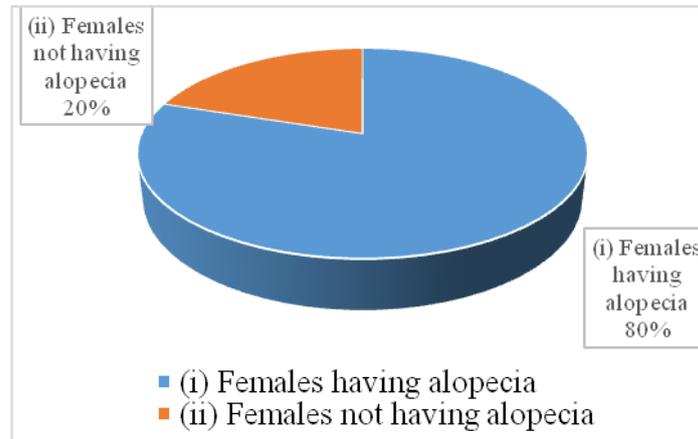


Figure 1 Females suffering from Alopecia

Family History

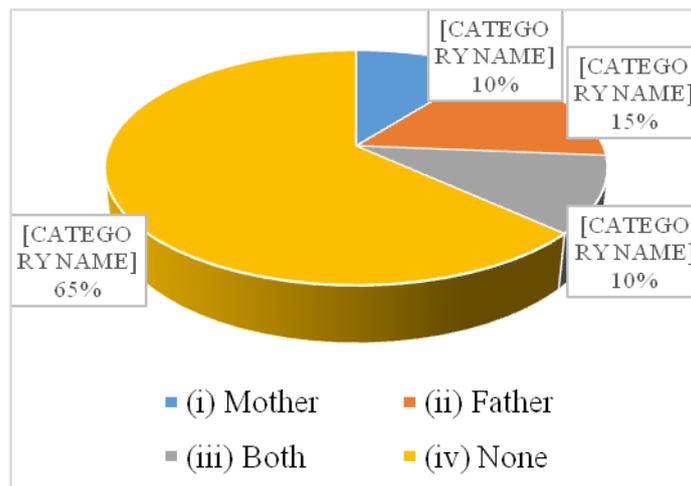


Figure 2 Family history

Figure 2 shows the family history of patients. Among the females having alopecia, 10% patients are expected to receive this problem from their mothers, 15% patients are expected to receive this problem from their fathers, 10% patients are expected to get this problem from both parents and parents of 65% have no link with this problem.

Type of hair loss pattern

The below figure shows the hair loss pattern of individuals. It can be depicted from the figure that 83% have even number of hair loss throughout the scalp, 17% have patchy hair loss, none of the patients have total scalp hair loss or complete body hair loss.

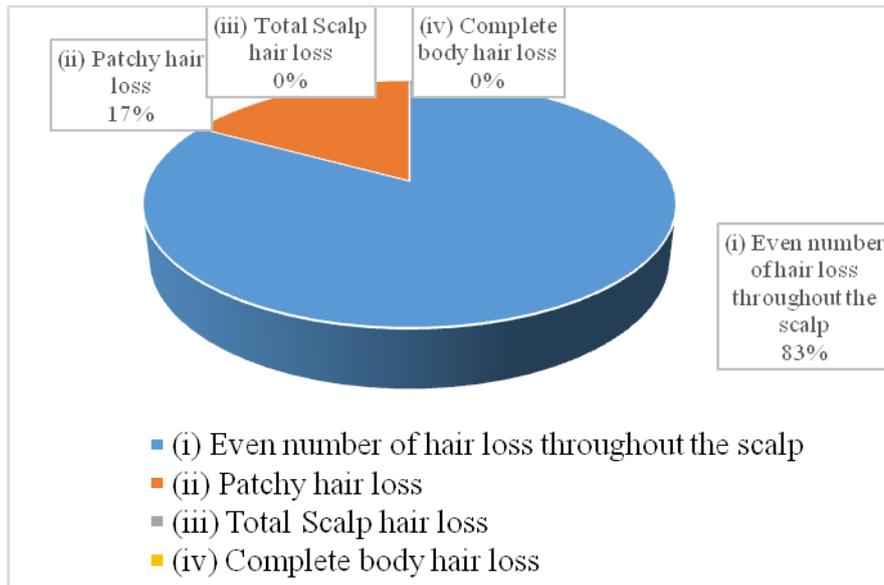


Figure 3 Hair Loss Pattern

Reason behind Alopecia

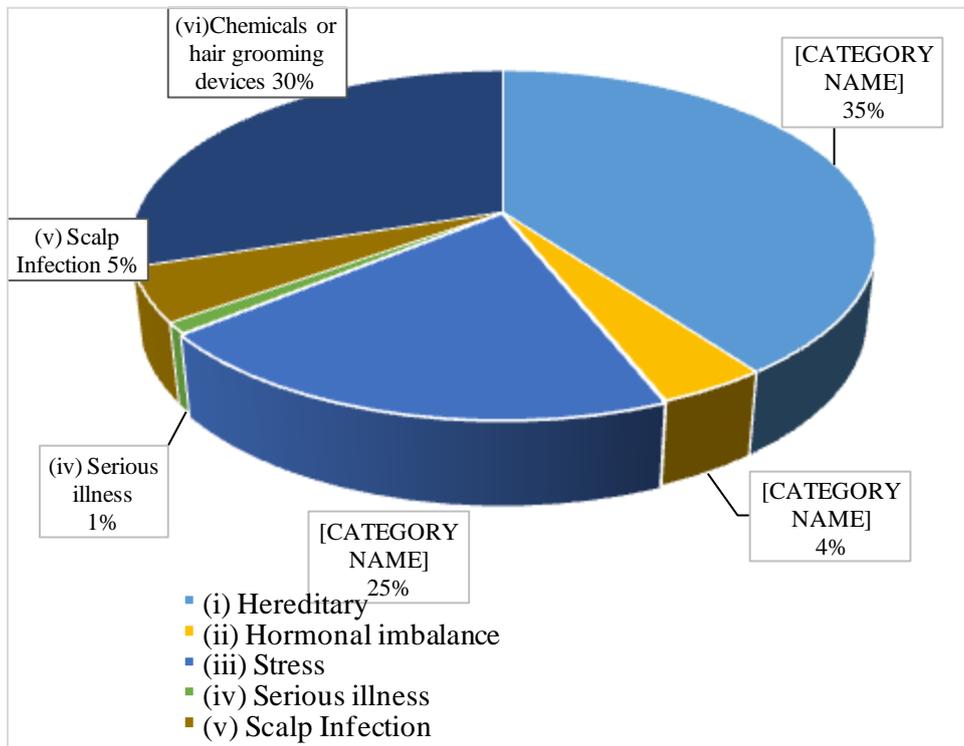


Figure 4 Reason behind Alopecia



Figure 4, demonstrates various reasons behind alopecia. Information inferred from the chart shows that 35% have hereditary factor, 4% has hormonal imbalance, 25% are suffering from stress, 1% suffers from serious illness, 5% may have this problem due to scalp infection, 30% use strong chemicals or hair grooming devices.

IV CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that heredity (35%), stress (25%) and chemical or hair grooming devices (30%) are major factors behind alopecia among females of age group (20-25) years. Generally, alopecia is reversible in nature i.e. hair grow back when the condition causing it disappears. Thus, diminishing the causes along with proper hair care practices and healthy life style may prevent occurrence of hair loss. It can be treated with the help of medication (topical treatment such as Minoxidil, oral treatment such as Dutasteride) or surgery.

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