

# Introduction

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*Journal of Investigative Dermatology Symposium Proceedings* (2007) **12**, 1. doi:10.1038/sj.jidsymp.5650045

Human hair is a unique attribute. In a species whose genotype is so convergent, it is a miracle of phenotypic expression, varying from straight black to curly ash blond and a plethora of hues, textures and forms, between.

Hair, despite being highly durable, is malleable and in all cultures is unconsciously or deliberately employed to express age, health, status, politico-economic association, and adherence (or otherwise) to fashion.

The scalp bears on average some 100,000 follicles and hair is remorselessly produced from each with only occasional pauses, unless disease or senescence intervenes. Conditions of pathological hair loss may be associated with intense psychological distress and even dysmorphia. Management of such medical conditions is rightly the province of the physician and demands not only clinical skills but also compassion and communication.

Self-inflicted damage to the hair shaft by environmental, physical, and chemical methods yearly results in a quiet

but world-wide epidemic, wherein loss of structural integrity and homeostasis results in poor quality hair and resultant loss of aesthetic appeal. Specific problems may be associated with cultural practices and fragility of certain hair types.

The treatment of many hair loss conditions is often limited by the sparse therapeutic armamentarium and medico-economic restrictions. Nevertheless, as part of the holistic management of hair disorders, attention to the preservation and enhancement of the cosmetic and aesthetic attributes may sustain patient well-being and be achieved by cost-effective cosmetic products.

In this symposium, P&G Beauty offers a faculty of world-class speakers who will present different aspects of hair and scalp disorders with the object of enhancing the lives of all our patients.

The physician may better understand the importance of good hair-care practices as well as a diagnostic algorithm in the management of their patients.

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