

The Hair Truth and nothing but the Truth

We are asked every week whether people on the diet will lose their hair. It is not a given but a few people will lose some hair as it is a naturally occurring process whether you are on a diet and losing weight or are not on a diet and gaining weight. As a matter of fact, 34% of women in USA, England, and Japan report hair loss each year. Hair goes through cycles of growth and rest. The length of these cycles vary with each person and often are genetically programmed. The growth phase, also called anagen, is 2-3 years long and depends on many factors. Each hair (called a follicle) grows approximately 1 cm per month. Thus, in a year, it grows about 6 inches. After growing for between 2-3 years, the hair enters the resting phase, also known as telogen. This lasts for 3-4 months. Once this cycle is completed, the hair falls out and a new one grows in its place. Many of you are saying, well how to people get hair that is 5+ feet long?. The rate of each cycle and time of growth is often

determined by genetics—some have good hair genetics and others do not.

There are 2 types of hair loss and these are related to the above growth phase and the resting phase.

Anagen effluvium is hair loss in the growth phase.

This is usually due to medications such as chemotherapy that poisons the growing follicle and prevents further growth. Thus, resting phase occurs immediately and then eventually the hair falls out.

Telogen effluvium is an increase in the number of hair follicles entering the rest stage and has many causative and contributing factors. The most common cause of increased telogen hair loss are as follows:

Physical stress: surgery, illness, anemia, rapid weight loss or rapid weight gain

Emotional stress: mental illness, family members illness or death, job loss or change in jobs

Medical problems: anemia, thyroid problems, Diabetes, Lupus

Medications: high vitamin A content, some Blood pressure meds, gout therapy, some arthritis medications, and some depression medications

Hormones: pregnancy, birth control/period control medications, menopause therapies

Illicit drugs: cocaine use

Age: often due to changes in medications, hormones, and medical problems

Hair loss in anagen is longer lasting but typically not permanent. Hair loss in telogen is TEMPORARY but stressful as well.

Hair loss can occur in dieting. During dieting, your body is going through many changes—typically many at the same time. It is adjusting to different foods and different means of providing energy to your brain, muscles, and a different way of supplying energy to the organs that need them to process food. It is also busy repairing and detoxifying many tissues after the stress that was placed on it during the time of being overweight. This stress, along with the added physical

stress of decreased food and hormone changes that often occur, causes your body to make a decision to stop hair production and focus on creating a healthier body for you to have for a longer life. This causes hair to enter the telogen phase earlier as described above. Generally, there is a 3 months delay between the events causing hair loss and the actual loss of hair. And, there is generally a 3 month delay prior to the return of the hair growth as well. We have not seen anyone in our program whose hair has not grown back yet. Again, this is temporary yet stressful and we understand that. Similar cycles exist for nails as well.

Hair growth and slowed loss can be helped in several ways. First, follow our program and eat all your protein as decreased levels of protein can cause hair loss. Second, continue to take your vitamins. Occasionally stopping Vitamin A will help but only if you have a high level of Vitamin A. Taking Biotin may help as well. Third, handle your hair gently and do not use tight hairstyles. Fourth, avoid compulsive twisting, rubbing or pulling your hair. Fifth, adjust some other medications if you are able. Talk to us and

we can help. Sixth, check for thyroid problems, low protein and anemia with simple blood tests. Seventh, have patience-- your hair will grow back.