

MARTINE LANGSAM, IAT, WTS - Trichology Clinic
880 Las Gallinas Ave., Suite 4, San Rafael, CA 94903
www.martinelangsam.com (415) 453-9792

GENETIC THINNING IN WOMEN

Characterized by thinning of hair in front/top area of scalp. Thought to be inherited from both parents. This means both parents can have thick hair even though the daughter has thinning of hair. Sometimes associated with increased oiliness of the skin, excessive facial hair and sensitive "burning" scalp.

Estrogens (female hormones) are "good" for the hair. Androgens (male hormones) are "bad" for the hair. Women and men produce both types of hormones. In women with genetic thinning, their levels of androgens are usually quite normal.

In younger women, genetic thinning can be triggered by particular oral contraceptives. Progestogens that are not considered to have an adverse effect on the hair include desorgestrol, gestodene and cyproterone acetate (androcure). Androcure is contained in the oral contraceptive Diane 35 ED (see below).

If a sex hormonal imbalance is suspected, blood tests can be run that establish whether the ovaries or adrenal glands are at fault. Once the problem can be pinpointed, corrective action can be taken. Relevant blood tests include SHBG, total testosterone, free testosterone, DHEAS, FSH, LH, and Prolactin.

Inflammation/swelling around the hair follicles is indicative of the stem cells of the hair follicles being attacked by a group of white blood cells. The oral intake of tyrosine usually reduced this inflammation quite quickly. Tyrosine reduces the production of noradrenaline from the sympathetic nerves in the skin. In turn, this reduces the white blood cells.

TREATMENTS FOR GENETIC THINNING IN WOMEN

Such oral contraceptives as Diane 35 ED (Brenda, Estelle, Juliet) or Yasmin or Yaz. The possible side-effects of this therapy include weight gain, nausea, headaches and decreased libido.

The diuretic Aldactone, also called spironolactone. Possible side effects include Hyperkalemia, mood swings, disturbed cycles, and tenderness of the breasts. Because of the hyperkalemia, patients on spironolactone should not take potassium supplements.

The topical application of Minoxidil 5% (Rogaine etc.)

The herb Saw Palmetto (Serenoa) reduces DHT in the skin and, therefore, can benefit the hair.