

TELOGEN EFFLUVIUM

Telogen Effluvium is a common problem which produces a temporary hair loss. It is important to realize that this is only a temporary problem. No patient with this problem ever goes bald. For every hair that falls out of the scalp, there is a new hair to replace it. The hair that replaces it, however, is very short and takes many months to fill in the scalp the way it was before the problem started.

In the normal scalp there are two types of hairs. The hairs that are in the growing stage are known as anagen. The hairs that are in the resting stage are called telogen. At any point 90% of the hairs are in the growing or anagen stage and 10% of the hairs are in the telogen or resting stage. In the normal growth cycle an individual hair is in the growing stage for many years. It then changes to the resting stage hair and falls out. When the hair falls out, there is a new hair to replace it.

In the problem that you have, there is a growth cycle shift. More of the hairs have switched from the growing stage to the resting stage. Instead of there being a 90:10 ratio there may be a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. Because more hairs are in the resting stage, more hairs fall out at once.

It is not possible to be 100% sure of the cause of the growth cycle shift. Some of the common causes are having a baby, a physical illness, or a severe emotional or psychological stress such as the death of a loved one. Normally the hair loss begins two to four months after the problem which caused it.

Telogen Effluvium is a temporary problem. Eventually the hair goes back to the normal growth cycle and all the hairs that have fallen out are replaced with normal hairs. Since there is no scarring of the roots, the scalp will return to normal. Unfortunately there is no medical treatment to speed this process. It is important, however, to realize that this is a temporary problem and that you will not go bald. There are times when blood tests are done to make sure there is no internal abnormalities such as a thyroid condition which may be contributing to your hair loss.

Although telogen effluvium can be a disturbing problem your scalp hair will return to normal. If you have any other questions regarding this condition after reading this information sheet, please ask me.