

DISORDERS OF HAIR GROWTH: DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Second edition. Edited by Elise A. Olsen. 544 pp., illustrated.
New York, McGraw-Hill, 2003. \$195. ISBN 0-07-136494-3.

HAIR CAN BE USED TO EXPRESS CULTURAL, sexual, and religious individuality. Disorders of hair growth that compromise individual expression may affect self-esteem, social functioning, and quality of life. Deviations of hair growth may also be a manifestation of internal disease and thereby a vital diagnostic clue for all clinicians. This textbook of hair disorders, now in its second edition, affirms that diagnosis and treatment are possible in most cases.

The editor, Elise Olsen, is a dermatologist from Duke University Medical Center, in North Carolina, and past president of the North American Hair Research Society. She is responsible for numerous publications on the subject of hair disease and, in particular, androgenetic alopecia (common baldness). The contributors to this book are leading dermatologists and dermatopathologists, primarily from North America, with one Australian and one British dermatologist adding international flavor. The three chapters on basic science cover embryology, anatomy, and the genetic and molecular control of hair growth and differentiation and are an important prelude to the remainder of the book, which is problem oriented. Chapters covering surgical approaches to alopecia (hair transplantation, scalp reduction, and flap surgery) blend nicely with chapters on hair-care products to provide a well-balanced and comprehensive therapeutic guide. A separate chapter is dedicated to hair disorders peculiar to blacks, such as traction alopecia and folliculitis (caused by braided hairstyles), ingrown beard hair (pseudofolliculitis barbae) and acne keloid (folliculitis keloidalis).

Since the last edition of this textbook, eight years ago, there has been substantial progress in the understanding of hair biology, genetics, diagnosis, and therapeutics, and this is comprehensively detailed in the new edition. Some of the more exciting advances have occurred within the domain of molecular biology, including the unraveling of a number of mechanisms that control hair growth and differentiation, the identification of stem cells within the bulge of the follicle at the level of insertion of the arrector pili muscle, and even the genetic determinants of red hair. On the therapeutic front, two new treatments have been approved by the Food

and Drug Administration for men with androgenetic alopecia, namely finasteride and 5 percent minoxidil lotion. Systemic antifungal agents (for treating tinea capitis) have improved in efficacy and safety; new drugs are available to treat insulin resistance, which often underlies hirsutism; and lasers for hair removal are now widely available. A revised classification system for cicatricial alopecias (those involving scarring), based on the predominant inflammatory cell type, is clearly outlined, although effective therapy for this group of disfiguring diseases is still sadly lacking.

This is a well-illustrated textbook (if you excuse the rare grainy photograph), considering the difficulties in capturing good-quality images of hair disorders. The chapters on hair-shaft defects, hair loss in childhood, and cicatricial alopecia are particularly outstanding in this regard. Tables are used liberally to help confine large bodies of information, and Web sites are listed when they would be useful to the clinician. Each chapter is extensively referenced right up until 2003. Personally, I would like to have seen more of the book devoted to the methods used to assess drugs that promote hair growth and to the relatively new clinicopathologic entity of chronic telogen effluvium, given its prevalence.

This book is competitively priced and represents good value for the money. It will be of interest to a variety of clinicians and trainees, including dermatologists, endocrinologists, obstetricians, gynecologists, pediatricians, trichologists, and general and family physicians. Realistically, any department involved in the care of patients with hair disorders will be ill equipped without this excellent book. The second edition of *Disorders of Hair Growth* is set to become the preeminent reference source in the field.

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CORRECTION

Combination Antiretroviral Therapy and the Risk of Myocardial Infarction (November 20, 2003;349:1993-2003). On page 1998, the reference cited in line 8 of the legend to Figure 1 should have been 27 (Law et al.), rather than 26, as printed. On page 2001, in the third paragraph of the right-hand column, the reference cited in line 5 should have been 26 (Mocroft et al.), rather than 27, as printed, and the reference cited in line 16 should have been 27, rather than 26, as printed.