





# ALOPECIA AREATA

## THE FACTS




-  Alopecia Areata is an auto-immune disease which causes partial or complete hair loss on the scalp and body.
-  It can affect people of any age, gender or race.
-  Alopecia Areata most commonly presents in childhood.
-  It is believed to affect 2% of the population at some point in their lifetime.

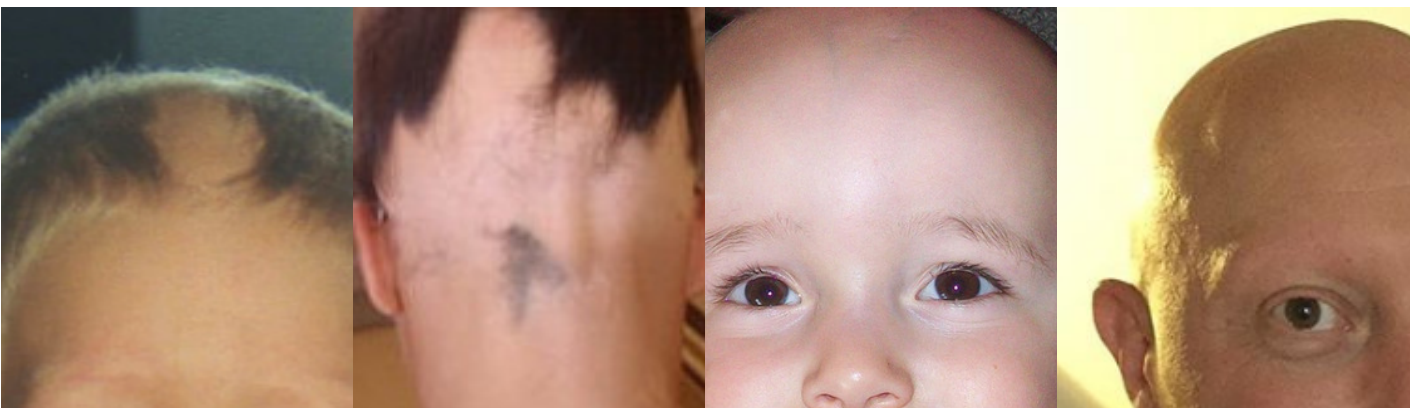
**Currently there is no cure.**

### Types

There are many types of Alopecia Areata. They are generally grouped by what area of the body they affect, or the pattern of the hair loss.

The three most common forms are:

-  Alopecia Areata - patchy loss of hair on the scalp
-  Alopecia Totalis - complete or mostly complete loss of hair on the scalp
-  Alopecia Universalis - complete loss of all hair including brows, lashes and body hair



### Cause

Alopecia Areata occurs when the body's immune system mistakes hair follicles as a foreign body, like an infection, and attacks them. This causes the hairs to fall out. It is not currently known exactly what causes this immune reaction. It is believed to be a complex combination of genetic and environmental factors. Many people say the condition is stress induced, but there is little research evidence to support this.

## Symptoms

Alopecia Areata produces circular patches of hair loss that appear rapidly. More patches appear over time, and a small percentage of people develop Alopecia Universalis and lose all body hair. In rare cases, the nails may also be affected with pitting. In all forms of Alopecia Areata, the hair follicles remain alive and hair regrowth may occur even without treatment and even after many years. Alopecia Areata does not impact the overall health of an individual, though mental health impact can be severe.

## Alopecia Areata... It's life changing.



### Managing Alopecia

Although there is no cure for Alopecia Areata, there are medications available that can help hair grow back in some cases, at least temporarily. A dermatologist is most often consulted for information about treatment options, though alternative therapies are becoming increasingly popular.

Some individuals find wearing a wig, hat or other head covering helps them feel more comfortable.

### Mental Health

How an individual's alopecia will develop is very difficult to predict. Often the bald patch or patches will regrow within a few months, but in other cases the hair loss can last a lifetime. The condition can deeply affect self-image, self-esteem and mental health. Managing the emotional impact of alopecia is vital, and can be done through accessing online resources, support groups, or the aid of a mental health professional.

For more information about Alopecia Areata, or support services available for individuals and families affected by the condition, visit [www.aaaf.org.au](http://www.aaaf.org.au)

or

contact the Australia Alopecia Areata Foundation at [info@aaaf.org.au](mailto:info@aaaf.org.au)