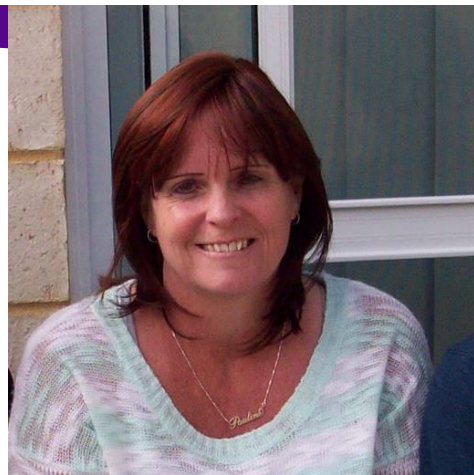


Pauline....I just hope one day there will be some magical cure for this disease.

My Story begins when I was 21 years of age with my 1 year old daughter. My sister in law first noticed a bald patch on the back of my head and was mucking around calling me Friar Tuck. I laughed along as I thought she was joking but that afternoon I grabbed a small hand mirror and checked out the back of my hair and to my surprise there was a round bald spot approximately the size of a 20 cent piece, I was shocked. I managed to cover it up as my hair was quite long. My hair was my favourite asset, everyone used to comment on my hair especially at school on saying how lovely it was.



I started to notice more and more hair in my hairbrush every day and the carpet was covered in it, even in the shower and on my pillow. It was coming out in clumps. I was devastated it was getting to a stage where I had to start covering my head with a hat. This is when I decided to visit my doctor, he told me he did not know what it was and sent me to a skin specialist. The skin specialist also had no explanation and gave me a topical steroid cream and asked me to come back in a month. I used the cream, it made my head a purple colour and by now all my hair had fallen out, including my eyebrows, eyelashes, leg hair and arm hair. I went back to the specialist and he told me I had Alopecia Areata.

I went home crying. I was really depressed. I did not go out of the house for months. Eventually I went shopping for a wig. I tried on heaps and finally found one that looked OK but was really expensive at \$300. At least now I had a bit of confidence to get out of the house and try and live a normal as possible life.

I have tried lots of treatments. I had some success with tablets, but the doctor decided to take me off them as it was too dangerous to stay on them for an extended time. I had side effects with my face looking like a moon and I had put on a lot of weight. As soon as he weaned me off them my hair fell out again. I tried naturopaths and shock treatment but nothing worked. I had to come to terms with being bald as a long term disease.

I hated the situation I was in. My wig was hot, uncomfortable, I couldn't go swimming. I hated windy days. I hated every day. I hated meeting people or going out in public.

I fell pregnant at age 29 with my second child and at about 7 months I noticed my hair was growing again. I thought yeah finally a breakthrough but once I had my son my hair fell out again.

I am 46 years old now and it still hasn't grown back not even a whisker.

I am still looking for answers and new treatments or a miracle. I have learnt to live with my condition but deep down I wish it would grow back as it would make my life so much easier. I don't work as I don't really like to go out in public much or socialise. I find it hard to afford wigs as the synthetic ones only last me a few months. My family has stood by me and my husband has hung in there with me for 26 years.

I just hope one day there will be some magical cure for this disease.

I hope you enjoy reading my story .