

## Kara — I'm the same person!

Hi, my name is Kara. I'm 15 years of age. My mum had told me when I was 5 years old she found a round patch on the back of my head, but within a few weeks it had all grown back and just thought no more of it. I was living in the UK back then.

We had moved to Australia in 2011 and in 2013, I started noticing my hair was getting thinner and thinner. I could feel some round bald patches at the back of my head and then I was finding strands of hair on my pillow. My mum and dad took me to see a dermatologist, who confirmed that I had Alopecia Areata. We had tried all different kinds of treatment and diets, but nothing worked. We then had to make a decision about getting a wig. I just didn't understand what was happening to me! I was devastated, angry, sad, confused, frightened and I had all these mixed feelings and I just didn't know what to do!

The worst thing for me was having no family or friends in Australia apart from my mum, dad and my younger sister who were so supportive. I couldn't have got through this without their constant love and support.

It's hard being different and not having hair but I have to be strong. I need to like myself and believe in me!

My biggest fear was the thought of having to wear a wig and that everyone would know that it was a wig and that it might fall off. I was overthinking it all.

To me Alopecia is not something I must "deal with", it's something I will always have and I'm ok with being bald and even though there will be tough times, I know that I can get through it with the love and support from my family and friends.

Alopecia Areata has made me the person I am today. It's made me stronger, more confident, a more understanding and easy going person, and I am not afraid of what other people think of me!

I have no hair but I have my wig, which is a suction wig as I can wear it where and when I want and don't need to worry about it falling off!

Just because I look different "it doesn't mean I'm someone different,"

"I'm the same person"!

Knowing I'm not the only one and there's more just like me out there!

