



## IS ALOPECIA AREATA INHERITED?

### The Genetic Link

- Alopecia Areata has a genetic component.
- Research shows that it can run in families, suggesting a hereditary influence.
- About 17–20% of people with Alopecia Areata report that a family member also has the condition.
- However, most cases occur in people with no family history at all.
- Genetics may increase susceptibility, but don't guarantee you'll develop the condition.

#### Sources:

- Epidemiology and burden of alopecia areata: a systematic review. CCID. (2015). [Link](#)
- Familial patterns of alopecia areata: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PubMed. (2025). [Link](#)



## WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

- Large studies confirm a familial trend, especially among first-degree relatives (parents, siblings, children).
- In first-degree relatives, prevalence is about 3.22%, higher than the general population (~2%).
- The familial rate (at least one other affected family member) averages around 17.6% globally.
- Multiple genes involved in immune regulation and inflammation may contribute to risk.

#### Sources:

- Familial patterns of alopecia areata: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PubMed. (2025). [Link](#)
- Epidemiology and burden of alopecia areata: a systematic review. CCID. (2015). [Link](#)

## GENES AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Genetic studies have identified several regions in the genome linked to autoimmune function, including:
  - HLA genes (immune recognition)
  - CTLA4, IL2/IL21, and Eos (IKZF4) pathways
- These same genes are also seen in other autoimmune diseases like thyroid disease and vitiligo, explaining why they sometimes occur together.

### Sources:

- Alopecia Areata: An Updated Review for 2023. JCMS. (2023). [Link](#)
- Familial patterns of alopecia areata: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PubMed. (2025). [Link](#)



## WHAT THIS MEANS

- Having a parent or sibling with Alopecia Areata increases your risk slightly, but doesn't mean you'll develop it.
- Environmental triggers and immune responses still play major roles.
- Researchers continue to explore which genes affect how and when the condition appears.

In short: Alopecia Areata can be inherited but it's not purely genetic.

### Sources:

- Epidemiology and burden of alopecia areata: a systematic review. CCID. (2015). [Link](#)
- Alopecia Areata: An Updated Review for 2023. JCMS. (2023). [Link](#)
- Familial patterns of alopecia areata: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PubMed. (2025). [Link](#)

### Quick Facts Box

Fact	Information	Source
<b>Genetic role</b>	Strong autoimmune & immune-regulation gene involvement	JCMS (2023)
<b>Familial cases</b>	17.6% report a family member with AA	PubMed (2025)
<b>First-degree relatives</b>	3.22% prevalence	PubMed (2025)
<b>Gender risk</b>	Affects males and females equally	CCID (2015)
<b>Inheritance type</b>	Multifactorial (not single-gene)	JCMS (2023)

**Sources:**

- Epidemiology and burden of alopecia areata: a systematic review. CCID. (2015). [Link](#)
- Alopecia Areata: An Updated Review for 2023. JCMS. (2023). [Link](#)
- Familial patterns of alopecia areata: A systematic review and meta-analysis. PubMed. (2025). [Link](#)

Learn more about Alopecia Areata, treatment options, and real-life stories at [aaaf.org.au](https://aaaf.org.au)

Join our community, find support, and help raise awareness.

