TELOGEN EFFLUVIUM

Telogen effluvium, a type of alopecia or hair loss, is one of the most common causes of hair loss. Patients with telogen effluvium notice shedding of hair throughout their entire scalp. The hair can come out in large numbers (e.g. greater than 100 hairs a day).

Common triggers of telogen effluvium include: childbirth, febrile episode, surgical operation, iron deficiency, crash dieting, and medications. The triggering event often precedes the hair shedding by 2-4 months and is sometimes difficult to determine. The shedding normally lasts anywhere from 3 months to one year. In some instances, the shedding can last for a few years. The reason for all the hair shedding is that growing hairs are shifted to resting hairs or telogen hairs which then shed easily. Telogen hairs have a tiny white bulb on their end and are easily obtained by gently running your hand through your hair several times. Although your hair appears thinner, you will not go bald.

Treatment can include the following:
1. Identify triggering event. For example, if iron deficiency is detected, then iron supplementation will result in improvement.
2. Nutrient supplementation may be beneficial. You may try a daily multi-vitamin.
3. Rogaine solution (2% or 5%) can decrease shedding. Rogaine needs to be applied twice daily.
4. A 60 second timed hair count allows you to monitor your hair shedding. The steps are:
   a. Comb/brush hair (prior to shampooing) over a pillow for 60 seconds.
      b. Count and record hairs in comb/brush and pillow
      c. Do this on 3 consecutive days/month and repeat monthly
5. Sometimes a scalp biopsy is necessary to confirm the diagnosis.

For more information please visit our website: www.pennstatehershey.org/web/dermatology/home and click on Health Information Library.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your provider at the location you were treated.
Hershey Medical Center, UPC I, Suite 100 (717) 531-6820 or Nyes Road, (717) 657-4045.
Penn State Hershey Medical Group, Colonnade Building (814)272-4445.