



With the hereditary form, the patient may consider a hair transplant, which is not an option with the stress form because the newly transplanted hair will just be shed again. Also, with the hereditary form, the hormones may be imbalanced, so hormone therapy will help, whereas it won't for the stress form.

Linzon tells me that one treatment shared between both the stress and the hereditary forms of hair loss is topical minoxidil, also known as Rogaine.

She explains that the treatment works by keeping the hair in its growing phase - called anagen - longer. Anagen usually lasts three to six years. With female hair loss, the cycle enters the telogen phase, when the hair falls out, too soon.

Then, to make things worse, in androgenetic alopecia, the new hair follicle regrows miniaturized.

"Rogaine works by prolonging anagen and keeping the hair from passing into telogen or cycling into a miniaturized hair," Linzon says. "Therefore starting early is helpful since it minimizes the number of times the hair follicle cycles and miniaturizes."

In Canada, you can get the two per cent concentration over the counter. Don't worry that it's in the blue box that says Rogaine for Men. According to Linzon, it's the same product sold in other countries in the pink box, but the company just didn't get approval in Canada to sell to the ladies. You can get a prescription for a five per cent concentration from your doctor that the pharmacist will mix up or you can order a five per cent foam from the States.

According to Linzon, topical minoxidil is even helpful when the hair loss is from chemotherapy, as some patients find their hair grows in thinner.

Recently, my own hair loss has slowed, and the regrowth seems normal. Before I talked to Linzon, I assumed it was because my body had adjusted to my migraine prescription or the vitamins I was taking were counteracting its effects. Now, given the timing and the pattern of hair loss, I'm pretty sure it was stress-related. Needless to say, I'm off to the drugstore to pick up some minoxidil in case I start to notice my hair falling out again. If life guarantees anything, it's stress. I'm warned that the side effects of Rogaine may be some increase in facial hair, but there are plenty of great products on the market to deal with that small inconvenience. The pearly gleam of depilatory cream on my upper lip holds far more appeal than the white sheen of my scalp. ■



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## HAIR TO HELP

Transplants and wigs are always an option but can be expensive. We've tested these cost-effective and easy-to-use supplements, treatments and tools.

### 1. Viviscal Hair Nourishment System

A supplement composed of vitamin C, silica compounds and a marine protein complex that

promotes the growth of weaker, less visible hair and nourishes existing hair. \$50

### 2. Dr. Robert Jones Instant Hair Thickening Fibers

Also effective in covering grey roots, these keratin fibres disguise thinning areas. Available in eight different shades, the fibres are charged with a static electricity and stay in place in windy and rainy

conditions. \$44

### 3. Nioxin 3-Part System

A shampoo, conditioner and leave-in treatment formulated to strengthen hair to protect against damage, help amplify strands at the root and thicken each hair to make it appear fuller. \$47

4. femMED Hair, Skin and Nails Poor nutrition can contribute to hair

loss. Cover all your bases with a multivitamin and a supplement with ingredients specific to hair health. \$30

### 5. Conair Infiniti Pro

Spin Air Brush For added root lift and volume, try this styling tool with its spinning brush. Great for those who find it difficult to manage a separate hair dryer and round brush. \$70