

Alopecia Areata



Understand the condition. Protect exposed skin. Find support.

Understanding autoimmune hair loss

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01 What alopecia areata means

Alopecia areata is an autoimmune condition: the immune system mistakenly attacks hair follicles, causing hair loss. It often starts as smooth, round or oval patches on the scalp or beard, but other body areas can be affected. Follicles usually remain intact, so regrowth is possible, though unpredictable. [2](#), [3](#), [1](#)

Changes you may notice [3](#)

- Smooth patches of hair loss
- Beard, brow or lash involvement
- Tiny dents or other nail changes
- Regrowth and new loss can overlap

02 Three care priorities

1 Confirm the diagnosis

See a dermatologist for new patches or unexplained hair loss. Examination helps distinguish alopecia areata from other causes and guide care. [4](#)

2 Protect exposed areas

Use sun-protective headwear and broad-spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ on uncovered skin. If lashes or brows are lost, glasses can help protect eyes. [5](#)

3 Choose care together

Discuss treatment, monitoring and your goals with your clinician. Emotional support and optional wigs or coverings can also be part of care. [4](#), [5](#)

03 What to know about care

Not simply stress

Genes and immune-system changes play a role; the exact trigger is often unclear. [2](#), [1](#)

Stress is not a complete explanation, and a family history is not required.

An individual course

Hair may regrow, then fall out again. Extent and recovery vary between people. [1](#)

There is no cure currently; treatment can help, but regrowth is not guaranteed.

Medical treatment options

Options include prescribed corticosteroids and, for extensive loss, other immune-targeting treatments. [4](#)

Age, severity and health affect the plan. Ask about benefits, risks and follow-up.

Care for skin and confidence. Choose gentle, fragrance-free hair and scalp care and loose styles. Reapply sunscreen every two hours outdoors and after swimming or sweating. Seek support if hair loss affects your well-being; cosmetic care does not replace medical treatment. [5](#), [4](#)

Educational, not diagnostic. Arrange assessment for new or rapidly spreading hair loss, nail changes, or eyebrow/eyelash loss. Do not self-treat patches with prescription medicines.

Sources & product details

Sources checked 2026-09-14

- [1. NIAMS: Alopecia areata overview](#)
- [2. AAD: Causes & risk factors](#)
- [3. AAD: Signs & symptoms](#)
- [4. AAD: Diagnosis & treatment](#)
- [5. AAD: Alopecia areata self-care](#)