

Female Pattern Hair Loss

What is Female Pattern Hair Loss?

Female pattern hair loss (FPHL) is the most common cause of gradual hair thinning in women. It usually appears as reduced hair volume, especially over the top of the scalp, or a widening part line as women get older. Complete hair loss in one area is uncommon.

Who Gets It?

FPHL can affect women at any age but is more common:

- After **menopause**
- **Premature menopause**
- **Associated with hormonal problems such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS)**
- **With certain medications**
- After significant **illness like an underactive thyroid, anaemia, cancer, etc.**

A family history of hair thinning can increase risk.

What Are the Symptoms?

You may notice:

- Thinning on the top or crown of the scalp
- A wider **parting**
- A thinner or lighter ponytail
- Increased shedding when brushing or washing

Most women maintain their hairline at the front, though density may lessen over time.

How Is It Diagnosed?

Dr Buckley may:

- Examine your scalp
 - Review your symptoms and medical history
 - Arrange blood tests (for example low iron, thyroid diabetes, liver or kidney disease)
 - Use dermoscopy or take a scalp biopsy if necessary
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Treatment Options

Although not curable, FPHL can be managed effectively. Treatments can **slow progression, encourage regrowth, and improve overall hair density.**

1. Minoxidil (Topical Treatment)

- 5% Regian Foam applied once daily
- Improves blood flow to hair follicles
- Results typically appear after 3–6 months
- This may have to be continued for years

2. Oral Medications

Dr Bucklet may consider:

- **Oral minoxidil**
- **Spironolactone** (an anti-androgen)
- **Dutasteride** (for suitable patients; helps reduce hormone effects on hair follicles)

You should not become pregnant while on any of these medications

These medications require medical assessment and monitoring.

3. Low-Level Laser Therapy

Laser combs, helmets, or caps may help stimulate hair growth.

4. Hair Transplant Surgery

An option for women with stable thinning and enough donor hair.

5. Cosmetic & Supportive Options

- Hair fibres or camouflage products
- Volumising hairstyles
- Tape hair extensions or bonded hair extensions
- Wigs or hairpieces

Self-Care Tips

- Use gentle shampoos and conditioners
 - Avoid harsh chemicals or tight hairstyles
 - Limit heat styling
 - Eat a balanced diet rich in iron and protein
 - Manage stress through physical activity or relaxation techniques
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What Is the Outlook?

FPHL is long-term, but with professional treatment many women experience:

- Slowed thinning
- Improved hair density
- Better confidence and quality of life

Early treatment offers the best chance of improvement.

When to Seek Medical Advice

Seek help if you have:

- Rapid or sudden hair shedding
- Patchy hair loss
- Scalp redness, pain, or itching
- Other symptoms suggesting an underlying medical condition

For more information:

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