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Afro-american alopecia: specific treatments and transplantation

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INTRODUCTION

Afro-american hair and scalp present typical aspects in ethnic hairdressing and grooming, morphology and physiology (coiled and helical hair shaft, elliptic or flattened cross section, curved hair root, low hair density and slow hair growth), leading to specific pathological problems and to adapted treatments.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Specific Afro-American hair pathologies include traction alopecia, hot-comb alopecia, folliculitis and pseudofolliculitis, acne keloidalis, dissecting cellulitis and cicatricial alopecia.

Medical and cosmetological treatments should be adapted to dry and brittle hair shafts and to the specific inflammatory sensitivity of black patients scalp.

Hair transplant, procedure, instruments and techniques, should be adapted according to the widness of the alopecia area and to scalp and hair ethnic specificity. Before doing any treatments, all the traction of the hair roots and hair shafts have to be completely stopped for more than 6 months. Minoxidil lotion (2% or 5%) may initiate a quickest regrowth.

For Afro-American patients it is easier to achieve a good and dense esthetic result with the FUL follicular unit long hair rather than the FUE follicular unit extraction procedure. This is almost due to the curved hair roots and the lowest donor hair density.

Afro-American patients are notably susceptible to postinflammatory hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation, and hypertrophic or even keloidal scarring process.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays for quiescent Afro-Americans alopecia and non-aggressive hair styling it is possible with follicular unit transplant to get a definitive and aesthetic reconstruction. With the medical and cosmetologic advices the specific African hair and scalp pathologies can be corrected.