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Drugs in hair transplantation

It is very important to understand male pattern hairless is a progressive condition and hence patients need a combination of drugs in addition to HT. Otherwise, fresh areas will become bald in future. Presently, there are different options:

Approved drugs for this purpose:

- a) Minoxidil lotions 2%, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12.5%-it has to be applied daily twice
Over the affected area
- b) Finasteride 1mg tablets (propecia) - one tablet daily for 3-4 years and is more effective over vortex
- c) Combination of minoxidil with other drugs such as retinoic acid, azelaic Acid
- d) Peptides, which are new drugs

Other nondrug options include Platelet rich plasma micro needling. and low level laser. These are second line options and are used when drugs don't work well.

THE DRUGS ARE OF GREAT VALUE IN PREVENTING FUTURE BALDNESS AND THEREFORE IN ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WITH EARLY HAIRLOSS, THEY ARE NEEDED TO BE TAKEN. Most young patients with early and moderate baldness need drugs, even after they do

transplantation. Otherwise, they will lose their existing hairs and need further sessions of transplantations.

How long to take drugs?

There is no fixed period and course, as there is no curative effect of these drugs. The drugs need to be taken as long as one wants to maintain hairs. Usually for most people this means till they marry, establish their careers and settle down. This means several years for any young man.

Do these drugs have side effects?

This is the most frequently asked question; there is a lot of misinformation and exaggeration about the side effects. The patients need to understand that:

- a) Any drug that has an effect will always have a side effect; there is no drug, which has no side effects.
- b) So the real question should be: are these side effects serious, are they permanent and are they treatable?

Minoxidil cause minor itching; other wise it is safe. Finasteride is currently the best drug for treating baldness. There is much exaggerated fear about its side effects of impotence and infertility. This has been researched in detail in several studies- and has been found that at the dosage at which it is given for baldness, which is 1 mg daily or 5 mg weekly, it has been found to be relatively safe. The side effects which have happened in 2% of patients include sexual side effects such as sexual dysfunction, impotence. Even these have been found to be temporary and reversible in most patients. So the patient can stop them any time he wants to, around marriage time or pregnancy time. FDA (federal drug administration USA) has recommended that there is no causal relationship between the drugs and the side effect.

What is our experience and position?

In our experience, we have found the drug to be safe. As a matter of caution, we use the drug at half the recommended dose.i.e. 1 tab alternate days and have found it to be effective and safe. We recommend that the drug be taken

without any hesitation, At the same time, we recognize the right of a patient .In case the patient is not willing to take the drug, we emphasise that the patient should understand :

a) There are only two proven drugs for treating pattern hair loss.

b) **The intake of drugs is not compulsory, but entirely voluntary.**

These are not life saving drugs; therefore, a doctor does not force any patient to take them.

c) If out of any fear improper evidence, patient decides not to take them, it is entirely his decision-however, there are no other proven drug alternatives and therefore he should accept future hair loss and further sessions of transplantations

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