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Alopecia areata cosmetic guide sponsored by an unrestricted educational grant from Spencer Forrest
Introduction

As a foundation, we realize the importance of supplying as much information and help to our members as we can. We know that thousands of articles about cosmetic subjects can be accessed on the Internet, but in this publication we focus on information that might make your experience with alopecia areata easier. We hope you will find some pointers and new ideas that are helpful.

While people have different opinions and experiences, there are a few things that we all seem to share and that seem to be standard in the cosmetic industry. This guide will not have all the answers but it will offer a sampling of information that people with alopecia areata have found to be helpful. Of course your cosmetic professional will have the best advice for you.

We are also delighted to be able to direct you to the NAAF Marketplace as a resource. Go to NAAF’s website, www.naaf.org, and click on the Products for People page. There, you will find many useful products that have been tried and tested by people with alopecia areata.
Here are a variety of cosmetic products that can help cover thinning and balding areas of the scalp.

Where topical products can’t replace lost hair follicles, they can help to conceal thinning areas on the scalp and make thinning hair look thick and full. These topical treatments are made of pure keratin protein (just like human hair) and can be sprinkled, sprayed or painted onto the thinning area.

**keratin hair-building fibers**
These natural fibers work by sticking to existing hair with static electricity. They will not work on bald or almost bald areas.

These fibers will stay in your hair through wind, rain and even perspiration, and are easily removed with shampoo.

This is a very simple process and results can be very dramatic for those with areas of hair that are just beginning to thin.

**step 1:** Use only on dry hair. Shake liberally over thinning areas.

**step 2:** Gently pat hair to disperse fibers.

**step 3:** Lightly comb or style after applying fibers.

**tip:** Use a hair spray to help secure the bond of the fibers with the existing hair strands.
**aerosol sprays**

Many people prefer to use an aerosol spray to color their scalp to match their hair color so balding areas are less apparent. This method can be effective and easy to use.

**step 1:** Pick the color spray that best matches your hair color. Apply only to dry hair.

**step 2:** Comb hair away from the scalp area to be camouflaged.

**step 3:** Shake aerosol spray can well.

**step 4:** Hold can 4 to 8 inches away from your hair and spray evenly until thinning area is completely covered.

**step 5:** Allow the product to dry completely for 30 to 60 seconds.

**step 6:** Style gently with a brush or comb.

**tip:** When mixing colors for that perfect match, start with the darker color first and then add the lighter color on top.

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**alopecia lotions and other scalp makeup**

Using an alopecia lotion or scalp makeup (similar to base foundation applied to the face) to darken your scalp is another way to camouflage your hair loss. The products are easy to apply and inexpensive.

**step 1:** Be sure to pick a color that matches your hair color.

**step 2:** Comb hair away from scalp area to be camouflaged. Hair can be dry or damp, but application is easier on a damp scalp.

**step 3:** Put a small amount of lotion on the edge of the application sponge or your fingertip, and rub lightly into the scalp where hair is thinning. Blend into surrounding hair for a totally natural appearance.

**step 4:** Comb hair back over the area and style as usual.

**step 5:** Once dry (about 3 minutes), product will not wash off until you shampoo it out.

**step 6:** When enhancing the front hairline area, start further back and work forward.

**tip:** For extremely thin areas, use a minimal amount of lotion and spread it thinly over the scalp area. Blot off the excess with a tissue, and pat remainder onto your scalp.
Shaving Your Head (Scalp)

It is a difficult decision to decide when to shave your head. Sometimes the patches are so excessive that it is better to shave what remains for a more even look. Sometimes you need to shave it to be able to wear a hair piece. Whatever reason, please, please find solace in the fact that there are plenty of people who shave because they love the look or because it improves performance, such as the case of a swimmer or mixed martial artist. Of course those people have the choice to do so. We understand you would also rather have that choice.

Please know many men and some women shave because of other types of hair loss.

Alopecia or common male pattern baldness (MPB) accounts for hair loss in men and women. As people they experience some degree of appreciable hair loss.

Whether you have alopecia areata or any other type of hair loss here are some tips and guidelines to help get you started with your shaving experience.

When shaving your head for the first time try to consider it to be an opportunity to start with a fresh new look. You have made the decision to shave and might just become the next scarf fashionista, or decide to don a wig or hat, remember you are taking an active role in something that until now has been a passive choice. You have decided to embrace it and make it part of your new look. Let’s get ready and do it.

**what you need:**

- Clippers
- Razor
- Shave Cream (any will do but you may be able to find one designed to be used on the scalp)
- Moisturizing Lotion
- Towel
- Water Source
- Sunscreen (if keeping your head exposed)

**step 1: shaving with clippers.**

Even if you have very little or very short hair; you will need to clip your hair down to the lowest setting on the clippers. This will allow you to follow up with a real blade/razor.

Be sure to clean the hair off the blade often to prevent clogging.

You’ll want to choose a location that allows for easy clean up. If you are OK with going public with your shaved head, going to a barber may be worth the cost.
step 2: using the blade.
If this is your first shave you will want to be extremely careful. After the first few times you will be able to do this in less than 3 minutes. Use a large mirror so you will be able to see what you are doing. Rinse your head. This will help get rid of any remaining shaved hairs. Rinsing will also lift up and soften the hair you are about to shave. You can opt to use soap, shampoo or a scrub. Rinse with warm water.

If you are nervous or feeling anxious about your first shave, ask a trusted friend or family member to help you by being there with you for encouragement and support. They can even help shave the difficult to see or hard to reach sections until you get the hang of it.

Apply shave cream. There are some shave creams and razors designed to be used on the scalp. Apply shave cream to one section or quadrant of the head at a time and rub into scalp. Think of your head in quadrants: right front, left front, right rear, left rear.

After you lather it’s shave time! If this is your first time you will want to shave “with the grain” which means shaving in the direction your hair grows or grew from top to bottom and will minimize bumps on the scalp after shaving.

Once your scalp is used to being shaved you can then start to shave “against the grain”. This will give you a very smooth close shave.

Starting on the right front, shave down in long smooth strokes. Use enough pressure to make sure the blade is shaving. Start back on top and make another long smooth parallel stroke slightly overlapping the first stroke.

After you have completed the front sections it is time to move to the back of the head. This will be a bit more challenging. With practice you will become an expert.

step 3: check for areas that will need to be touched up.
Rinse with COLD water. This will help close the pores. You may also want to follow up with an optional bump control lotion. Finish off with a noncomedogenic moisturizing lotion and sunscreen if needed.

step 4: when you look at the ‘new you’ you may be a bit startled by what you see.
To keep things in perspective and to help ameliorate the sudden change you may also want to make another change in your appearance. For example: try a new pair of earrings or lipstick. You may want to try a scarf or bandana. Men may want to try new sunglasses or make the switch to contacts if they wear eyeglasses. Use this as an opportunity to introduce something else that’s new and fresh. You’ll realize people will notice your change in style and not just that you shaved your head.

step 5: own it! you look great.
We don’t know why alopecia areata causes hair loss. We do know that hair loss often results in loss of self-esteem and self-confidence. Often, the media sensationalize and magnify advantages of luxurious flowing hair. This often results in additional stress and frustration for the person losing their hair. Some companies advertise that the use of their products will restore the hair. That information is misleading and false.

Wigs and hairpieces are available to those who are seeking natural looking hair replacement. Advertisements for these products do not always fully disclose the details. Over the last several years, many wigs and hairpieces have advertised their products as medical wigs, new hair systems or hair units. Don’t assume that because the name is fancy, that you are getting the best product. Because a wig is expensive does not mean it is the best. We encourage you to become a knowledgeable consumer and do your own research. There are hairpieces in many different price ranges and types.

For someone experiencing alopecia totalis or alopecia universalis, a wig or a full hairpiece might be the only answer. However, for those experiencing alopecia areata, more often than not, the solution could very well be in a 3/4 wig or 3/4 hairpiece, where the remaining hair on the lower nape of the neck and sides is blended into the smaller wig or hairpiece.

Q: What is the difference between a wig and hairpiece?
A: No matter how the product is attached to your head (with double-sided adhesive tape, clips, combs, glue or bonding, suction cups, or weaved onto your own remaining hair) the item is a wig or a hairpiece. They are synonymous.

Q: Should I expect to see sample wigs and hairpieces rather than just photographs or videos?
A: No. With the advent of the internet, most companies do not send samples of hairpieces. However, many wig vendors can make the types of foundations and different hair color samples, and texture available to you upon request. If you are investing in a “custom made” hair unit, absolutely insist on seeing the actual product before you place an order.

Q: Wigs and hairpieces are secured to the head by using several methods. Bonding glue which can be purchased at Sally’s Beauty can be used, or weaving or biolock techniques to attach the outer perimeter of the hairpiece to remaining hair. Should I be concerned with the type of attachment?
A: Definitely. Bonding glue often causes irritation, itching, and discomfort to your scalp. And any form of attachment to your existing hair, be it a weave or biolock, can potentially cause further damage to whatever remaining hair you may have.

Q: Does a hairpiece need to be handmade?
A: Not necessarily. Many machine made units are of very good quality too.
Q: Although more expensive, will a custom and handmade wig or hairpiece accomplish a more natural look?
A: Not necessarily. Inexpensive hairpieces can look very natural too. There have been a lot of advancements in the hair industry. If you are going with a custom and handmade wig or hairpiece, it should fit your head perfectly. The hair color and texture should be exactly the same as the hair color you chose when you ordered the wig. Also, the volume of the hair varies. It may be light, medium or heavy. You should get exactly what you order. If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact the company and ask questions.

Q: I have been told that the hair used in my wig or hairpiece will be human hair. What does that mean?
A: Human hair means hair taken from an individual(s) and machine or hand tied into the base. There are only a handful of companies that use 100 percent European human hair. It is not necessarily the best, but certainly very high quality.

Q: Is it better to have a wig or hairpiece made of synthetic rather than human hair?
A: Although synthetic hair will not oxidize (fade in color), there are several issues. Synthetic wigs tend to have an artificial feel when you touch them, and tend not to move as well. Some synthetic units have a high shine beyond the normal look of quality human hair, which may look unnatural. When worn near heat, synthetic hair will frizz, usually permanently damaging the wig. Be careful!

Q: How long should I expect to wait for delivery of a custom, handmade wig or hairpiece, especially if it is to be made at the establishment where I've purchased it?
A: Delivery time should be estimated by the company. If there is a delay with delivery, be sure to contact the company and inquire as to the delay. Some custom made hairpieces can only offer final adjustments at the establishment selling the product, which can add to the price. Be sure to ask first!

Q: Is it realistic to expect a wig or hairpiece to last more than two or three years?
A: Provided it is a quality wig or hairpiece made of quality material and provided that you periodically have it professionally serviced and/or repaired, a quality wig or hairpiece should last for several years. It is important that you care for it properly, have needed repairs, and keep the wig clean.

Q: If the hair color is not what I ordered, or the hair length is not correct (it is too short), or the hair texture is not what I expected, should I allow the firm to dye or perm the hair in order to correct the error?
A: Absolutely not. If this is a custom made wig or hairpiece, color, texture, length, and fit should be exactly what you ordered.

Q: If I am not satisfied upon pickup of my order, should I accept it and pay my balance?
A: Absolutely not. The establishment must either adjust what is wrong at no further expense to you, or remake the wig or hairpiece as per the original order. If for what-ever reason the establishment refuses to do so, do not pay the balance and demand a refund of the original deposit, or take legal action.
How to Care for Human Hair

by Lisa Ciancio

Human Hair wigs are the premier choice if you want versatility and luxury. Human hair is soft to the touch and can be styled endless ways. Due to the high demand of quality human hair, human hair wigs are also the most expensive type of wig you can buy. This is why it is so important to use the right products and the proper techniques to care for your human hair wigs. Wigs made with human hair can last a long time, much longer than synthetic wigs. However, using the wrong care products or washing techniques can drastically reduce the life expectancy of your human hair wig.

The Secret to Beautiful Human Hair

All human hair wigs are chemically processed to achieve the most natural look and feel and different color variations. For this reason, it is very important to use sulfate-free care products specifically made for chemically processed hair to keep your human hair wig looking beautiful, longer.

How to Wash a Human Hair Wig

detangle
Gently remove tangles using a wide tooth comb, working gradually from the ends to the root of the hair. Don’t pull on knots, they will come out of the wig. Gently untangle them.

washing
While holding the hair in your hands, gently wet with luke warm water, but do not soak as this may cause the hair to tangle. Once wet, apply a small amount of shampoo without sulfates and parabens on your piece and distribute evenly throughout hair using your fingers, while holding the wig front in one hand, and then running the water and products through with the other. Ask your wig professional for information about products to use while caring for your wig.

rinsing
Rinse with cool to luke warm water to remove shampoo. DO NOT WRING OR SQUEEZE.
conditioning
Apply a small amount of conditioner and distribute evenly throughout hair using your fingers. Let sit on unit for a few minutes and then rinse with luke warm water until the water is clear. Again, DO NOT WRING, very gentle towel blot to reduce the moisture.

rinsing (repeat)
Rinse with cool water to remove conditioner. Gently pat and press with a soft towel to remove excess water. Do not rub, squeeze, twist or wring hair.

drying
Place on a folding stand or large canister of spray and allow to air dry. Human hair wigs can also be dried with a low setting dryer and then a low setting curling iron or rollers after dry to style.

styling
Once dry, use your fingers or a wide tooth comb to comb through the hair.

8 human hair care tips you should know

1. Have two wigs ready to wear at all times. This way when you are washing one wig, you have a backup which is ready to go. Plus, rotating between wigs also helps to extend the life of both.

2. Wash your wig every 2 to 3 weeks or every few wearings, as needed.

3. Always use sulfate-free care products formulated for chemically processed hair to wash and style your human hair wigs to keep the hair soft and manageable.

4. Always rinse human hair with the water flowing in the same direction of the hair to avoid matting and tangles.

5. When washing, pay special attention to the area around the face which may accumulate dirt, oil, and makeup.

6. To avoid stretching the cap, never place a wet wig on a mannequin or Styrofoam head. A folding wig stands or tall can of hairspray make the best drying platforms.

7. Never use hot water when washing, as it may loosen the wig construction.

8. Never twist or rub your wig vigorously while washing or drying.
How to Care for Synthetic Hair
by marty monroe and patty reinhardt (edited 2011)

washing
- Gently remove tangles using a wide tooth comb.
- Use a mild shampoo (or a shampoo formulated to clean synthetic hair).
- In a sink or basin, mix a capful of shampoo in cool water and immerse your hairpiece.
- Let soak for several minutes. Gently swish and rinse the hairpiece in cool water until shampoo is removed.
- Do not rub/scrub the wig; just swish from side to side and dunk up and down.
- Rinse thoroughly until water runs clear.

c conditioning
- Using conditioner is highly recommended to reduce tangling.
- Refill the sink or basin with clean cool water and add a capful or conditioner.
- Immerse hairpiece and agitate gently.
- Blot dry in a towel and then gently shake.
- You can also use a “spray-in” conditioner. Simply spray your wig thoroughly after washing and blot dry with a towel.

drying
To avoid damage, be sure not to rub, tightly wring or tightly twist in a towel to remove excess water. Allow your hairpiece to air dry on a wig stand or on top of a hair spray canister. Avoid using a styrofoam head form. It may damage your wig when drying. When dry, spray hair sheen or detangling spray onto the wig and gently comb through and allow to dry.

styling
- Synthetic wigs can be set or styled quite easily using brush rollers when damp or shaking the hair and finger styling it. Let sit and air dry before wearing.
- Because synthetic wigs come pre-styled, sometimes a little shake and air dry is all you need.
- If the wig starts to get frizzy, make sure it’s clean. You can use a spray shine or spray conditioner to restore the hair and calm the frizz or matting.
tools for designing eyebrows

- Foundation
- Loose powder and sponge or powder puff
- Eyebrow pencils Eyebrow shadow
- Eyebrow brush
- Pencil sharpener - Keep pencil sharp!
- Q-tips

application steps

1. Start by applying lipstick and make-up foundation to face, including brow bone and eyelid. That will give you a base and some color on your palette to start. Apply loose powder over make-up foundation on brow bone and eyelid.

2. Study your brow bone - your goal is to outline the brow bone. (This adds depth, definition, harmony and balance to your face.)

3. Use eyebrow pencil to make dots (points) to outline the shape of an eyebrow.

4. The outline of the eyebrow should begin at Point 1, directly over the corner of the eye. Take a long pencil and align it with the edge of your nose and the inside corner of the eye. Use an eyebrow pencil to make the first dot at Point 1.

5. The highest point of the eyebrow (or arch) is at Point 2, directly over the outer edge of the iris. Align a long pencil with the outer edge of the iris. Use an eyebrow pencil to make the 2nd dot at Point 2. The dot made at Point 2 should be higher than Point 1.

6. The eyebrow ends at Point 3. Align a long pencil again with the outer edge of your nose and the outside of the eye. Use an eyebrow pencil to make a third dot at Point 3. The third dot should be parallel to the first dot.

7. Use eyebrow powder to connect Points 1, 2, & 3 to form the shape of an eyebrow. Make outward strokes.

8. Pick up a very sharp eyebrow pencil. Anchor your fist to your cheek bone with the eyebrow pencil in hand. (This helps to give you more control.)

9. Starting at Point 1, use the very sharp eyebrow pencil to make short upward strokes at and slightly above the eyebrow line drawn with eyebrow powder. (This helps to create the illusion of eyebrow hair.) Make strokes from Point 1 to Point 2 straight up. Angle the strokes from Point 2 to Point 3. Add a few wild strokes to make the eyebrow look real.

10. A makeup fixative can be used to set eyebrows. A fixative is a product similar to hairspray or products that are made to lengthen the “stay time” for eyebrows and makeup. Sometimes it’s in the form of a paint on, using a brush the same size as nail polish, others come in spray.
additional tips – eyebrows

- You can purchase eyebrow pencils and eyebrow powder at most make-up counters in department stores, beauty supply stores and drug stores.

- (Sally’s Beauty Supply) stores carry eyebrow stencils that help you shape your eyebrows.

- If you have trouble keeping make-up on because of the climate in which you live, and/or perspiration, you may want to consider eyebrow stencils, semi-permanent stamps or temporary tattoo eyebrows.

- Remember to sharpen your eyebrow pencils often - with every use, at the very least.

- The color of your eyebrows should be close to your hair color. Here is guide for you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hair color</th>
<th>eyebrow color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashy, cool tones, brown or blonde</td>
<td>Ashy, cool tones, light to medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red or with reddish highlights</td>
<td>Auburn or brownish red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum Blonde</td>
<td>Taupe, light brown, medium brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden, dark blonde</td>
<td>Medium brown or golden brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunettes</td>
<td>Dark brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Dark brown or charcoal black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey or white</td>
<td>Medium brown or slate grey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the items mentioned on this page are available at the Alopecia Areata Marketplace at www.naaf.org.
tools for applying eyelashes

- Tweezers
- Eye lining pencil
- Glue
- Mascara
- Eyelashes - Upper
- Toothpicks and scissors

application steps top lashes

1. Pull the eyelashes off of the package.
2. Hold the eyelash up to your eye to see if you need to trim it. You may need to trim the end of the eye lash to fit the width of your eyelid, or you may need to trim the overall length of the lashes is they are too long. Make jagged cuts to help create the illusion of real lashes.
3. New eyelashes have a bit of glue on them from the package. Be sure to remove the glue before you start to apply the lashes.
4. Line the edges of your eyelids with eyeliner. Start with the upper lid, and get as close as you can to the bottom edge of your upper eyelid. Then line your lower lid.
5. Squeeze a thin line of eyelash glue onto your finger or flat surface. Then, with a pair of tweezers, pick up the eyelashes in the center and apply a thin line of glue along the edge of the eyelashes.
6. Let the glue sit on the eyelash for one minute before trying to apply it to your eyelid, until it gets tacky. If you apply the eyelashes before the glue is tacky, it will slide all around. If you wait too long, it will be too dry to stick. A light hair dryer can be helpful to speed up the process.
7. Lift the eyelash to your eyelid. Place it as close as possible to the bottom edge of your upper eyelid. Press the eyelash to the middle of your eyelid to get it to stick. Then, use the tweezers to place each end of the eyelash on the ends of your upper eyelid. You may need to adjust the entire lash a bit.
8. Reline eyelid, if necessary. Use mascara, if desired.

tips

- Clean glue off daily – just pull it off with your fingers.
- Clean mascara (or glue) off lashes with a lash comb.
- Lashes can last with care for several uses.
- Bring a tune-up kit with you – glue, tweezers and toothpicks – in case you become unglued.
- Duo glue is highly recommended and can be found at Walgreens or Sally’s Beauty
- You can also find various lash adhesives on the NAAF Marketplace.
In addition to wigs and hairpieces, there are also hats, scarves and hats with hair that are good alternatives to wigs. These products can be found on the Alopecia Areata Marketplace, which you can access by going to www.naaf.org and clicking on the Products for People link.

You may find that a Buff is helpful. A Buff is a microfiber sleeve that can be worn in a myriad of ways throughout the day, during workouts and under scratchy hats.

There are also pre-tied scarves like the BeauBeau which offers comfort and style. Hip Hats with Hair offers options like Underhair that can be worn under a wig, Ponylettes that are made to be worn under hats and ball caps, as well as swim caps with hair.

Turbans too can be worn in many different ways. For instance, you can find the All-in-One from Doma Designs. The same location also offers teaching books, dolls and t-shirts with inspirational sayings that make great gift items. There are over 50 companies that carry many different items in the Products section of the NAAF Marketplace, which can be viewed at www.naaf.org.

For more information about any of the items on the Marketplace or any of the companies on it, contact Lisa Ciancio at videsign@comcast.net. She can also help you locate specific items to suit your needs. We are proud to say that each company donates 10% of each sale made through the Alopecia Areata Marketplace to NAAF if notified by the buyer.
Notes and References