

How To Deal With Thinning Hair

By Charles Hammond

In today's competitive world, like it or not, appearance is just about everything, particularly as you get older. If you're one of those many millions of men born between 1946 and 1964 that have the distinction of being called Baby Boomers, you know what I'm talking about. There's not a day at the office that you don't feel the hot breath of the younger and hipper on the back of your neck. There's nothing wrong with looking experienced, but looking downright old before your time is not going to do you any favors, at work or at home. And, unless you're one of those guys that can really pull off bald (and there are a lot fewer of them than you think) hair loss is one of those often premature indicators that time is passing more quickly than you would like. In fact, about 50 million (and growing) of you out there suffer from some form of male pattern baldness. And let's not forget the women. Thinning hair is becoming a more talked about problem for women too. Fortunately there are a lot of things (non-embarrassing things) you can do about hair loss.

- a.) **Lasers.** One of the latest and greatest ways people are renewing their hairlines and lush thick growth of hair is through laser treatment. This can be particularly effective if your hair loss is just beginning and in combination with topical and drug treatments (see below.) Special lasers are used to stimulate the hair follicles to actually reverse the process that causes them to stop producing hair in the first place. Since this often takes the form of reviving what appear to be "dead" follicles it's sometimes called "laser hair replacement." But whatever it's called, it has a number of advantages. Number one is cost. Compared to hair replacement surgery and ongoing drug treatment it's relatively inexpensive. Second, and maybe this would be first with you, it's completely painless.
- b.) **Toupees (wigs) and weaves.** Do the words "Hair Club" sound familiar? Some people choose integrating other hair, either a wig which sits on top of your head or a subtle weaving together of your own hair with other hair, natural or synthetic, as a hair replacement solution. Weaves and wigs can be a good stopgap measure while you're considering other forms of treatment, particularly if baldness or a receding hairline is just becoming noticeable, though laser treatment is quickly becoming a real alternative as the solution du jour.
- c.) **Hair replacement surgery.** Like all surgery, hair replacement is not to be entered into lightly, though like other forms of hair replacement, it has grown in sophistication and safety over the last twenty years. Gone are the "hair plugs" that brought to mind doll

heads more than natural human hair. Hair transplants now consist of follicular units or FUT's. These are very small "bunches" of hair that looks exactly like natural hair growth. New hair usually begins to appear in three to six months time. Major disadvantage? Pain.

- d.) **Drugs.** There are a couple of major drugs for the treatment of hair loss. Each was discovered in the process of using the drugs to treat other ailments. Finasteride, more commonly known as Propecia, is taken orally and Minoxidil, more commonly known as Rogaine, is administered topically. If you're just beginning to notice thinning hair either of these solutions can be a good choice but also represent an ongoing financial investment in maintaining your healthy head of hair. If the drug stops, so does your renewed hair growth.
- e.) **Scams.** Human beings have a touching faith and seemingly an endless supply of rose-colored glasses when it comes to things that claim to improve their appearance. While you may be desperate for a hair replacement solution, remember it takes time, research and a certain investment in quality treatment whether that is from a hairdresser or a doctor. Buying pills over the Internet is both illegal and dangerous. And sprays and creams which pretend to either grow hair or "fool" people into thinking you have hair? Follow the old rules of "if it seems too good to be true, it probably is" and "let the buyer beware."