



Causes & Treatment of Dandruff

What are the causes of Dandruff?

The basic underlying disorder is excessive oil production by the skin glands which in turn is acted upon by microorganisms, that might be a fungus, called *Pityrosporum ovale*. This organism is normally present in the skin in small numbers, but sometimes its numbers increase, resulting in the skin disease.

Dandruff appears as scaling on the scalp without redness. Seborrhea is oiliness of the skin, especially of the scalp and face, without redness or scaling. Patients with seborrhea may later get seborrheic dermatitis. Seborrheic dermatitis has both redness and scaling.

Dandruff causes embarrassment to the patient , in that it manifests clinically as intractable itching and deposition of greasy white scales which are dislocated from the scalp during the process of itching.

Dandruff (Seborrheic Dermatitis) affects the skin of the scalp, face, nose, eyebrows, behind the ears, external ear. Stress, fatigue, extreme weather, oily skin, infrequent shampooing , skin disorders such as Dandruff and use of lotions that contain alcohol may increase the risk of seborrheic dermatitis. Neurologic conditions such as Parkinson's disease, head injury and stroke are also associated with seborrheic dermatitis.

How do we prevent Dandruff ?

There is no way to prevent or cure seborrheic dermatitis. However, it can be effectively treated. The tendency to develop this disorder appears to be inherited.

The severity can be lessened by :

Lessening stress.

Avoid exposure to extreme weather.

Use an oil balance formula for an oily skin.

Treatment of Dandruff.

How can Dandruff be treated ?

The treatment of seborrheic dermatitis depends on its location on the body.

Treatment also depends on the person's age. This skin disorder is treatable but may recur. Gentle shampooing with a mild shampoo is helpful for infants with cradle cap. A low strength corticosteroid cream or lotion may also be applied to the affected areas of skin. Adult patients may need to use a medicated shampoo and a stronger corticosteroid preparation. Shampoo the hair vigorously and frequently. Loosen scales with the fingers, scrub for at least 5 minutes and rinse thoroughly.

Nonprescription shampoos containing tar, zinc pyrithione, selenium sulfide, sulfur and/or salicylic acid may be recommended by a dermatologist or a prescription shampoo may be given. However, patients should follow their dermatologist's advice, excessive use of stronger preparations can cause side effects.

More Valuable information about Dandruff

Dandruff can appear on any part of the skin as patches of varying size. It manifests as white and yellow oily flakes associated with itching. Itching is usually harmless unless there is second degree infection associated. It may cause redness in the area affected with dandruff. Hair loss may also be associated with this disease.

Frequently asked questions about Dandruff

1. Which specialist should I see if I have Dandruff ?

You should see a Dermatologist (skin specialist) and get their opinion.

2. Can people who have dandruff use a conditioner?

Yes, people who have dandruff can use a conditioner to keep up the condition of their hair. A conditioner does not stop the effect of an anti-dandruff shampoo on the scalp.

3. Is it true that the more lather produced when shampooing the more effective the shampoo is and the cleaner the hair?

No, the amount of lather produced has nothing to do with the effectiveness of a shampoo. Lathering agents are generally added to shampoos because people believe that more lather means cleaner hair and it tells the user where and when to rinse.

4. Is it true that the more shampoo you use the cleaner the hair will be?

No, a small amount of shampoo slightly larger than the size of a small coin and slightly diluted is usually sufficient for all hair at shoulder length that is

washed frequently. The amount of shampoo will vary according to the length of the hair and how frequently it is washed.

Glossary

Seborrheic Dermatitis - Skin condition characterized by greasy or dry, white scales.

Dandruff and cradle cap are both forms of seborrheic dermatitis. Not contagious.

Dermatitis - Inflammation of the skin