

What is male pattern baldness? Can anything be done?

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Have you seen more hair in the shower or on the bathroom floor than

usual?

Grab a mirror and take a look at your head. If it looks like you're "going bald," you may have androgenic alopecia (male pattern [baldness](#)).

According to the [Cleveland Clinic](#), male pattern baldness is very common. If you want to do something about this condition, you do have options. Here, [experts](#) break down what male pattern baldness is, its causes and symptoms, and what medications and treatments may help.

What is male pattern baldness?

Male pattern baldness is a type of [hair](#) loss—specifically the [loss of hair](#) above your ears. This type develops slowly, notes the [American Academy of Dermatology](#). Most men experience hair loss at some point in their lives.

How old were you when you first noticed your [hair loss](#)? Most likely you were in your 30s, the Cleveland Clinic notes, but you may have been as young as a teenager. The older you get, the more likely you are to see the symptoms of male pattern baldness.

What causes male pattern baldness?

You may have heard about male pattern baldness genetics. Yes, male pattern baldness is usually influenced by the genes you're born with. There may be a history of it in your family. Interestingly, the genes passed down on your mother's side of the family can also affect your risk. So, if you want to get an idea about what you may look like as you get older, observe your maternal grandfather's hair.

Male pattern baldness symptoms

Male pattern baldness symptoms are not complex. There are only a few.

"First," dermatologist [Dr. Dawn Davis](#) said in a recent Mayo Clinic [article](#), men will "notice thinning around the temples, and then that continues to recede backward toward the back of the scalp. Those areas then eventually meet with a balding spot near the hair whorl in the back of the crown of the scalp."

The common pattern that gives male pattern baldness its name is the shape of the letter "M" left behind after the baldness spreads. You may see this shape made by your remaining hair if you look at your head from above.

Male pattern baldness treatments

Unfortunately, there isn't a one-size-fits-all instant cure for male pattern baldness. But, according to the American Academy of Dermatology, treatment can:

- Reduce the likelihood that you'll lose more hair
- Regrow some hair

Dermatologist [Dr. Amy Kassouf](#), of the Cleveland Clinic, stated in an [article](#) that, "Recent advances offer a lot of hope in both treating and preventing different types of baldness."

One popular male pattern baldness medication is called minoxidil, also known as Rogaine. At this time, minoxidil and finasteride (Propecia) are the only medications you can get to treat pattern baldness that are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Rogaine works by making your [blood vessels](#) wider, explains the

Cleveland Clinic. This helps more blood get to the hair follicles on your head. Propecia works with your hormones. It stops your testosterone from converting into a hormone called DHT. Experts think that DHT might influence the size of your hair follicles—making them smaller.

There are also surgical options, like a hair transplant. That's when your health care provider takes skin that has healthy hair and moves it to your scalp. You may need more than one transplant before your hair looks natural.

You could also try platelet-rich plasma injections. This process involves injecting your own plasma into your scalp to help it grow hair.

Finally, there are wigs that may look natural for you. You can also talk to a hair stylist about how to comb your hair best to hide the balding. If you notice that you're losing hair, talk to your [health care provider](#) about your options. It's important to begin treatment as soon as possible.

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