



HAIR DISORDERS

“25 SHADES OF GREY” - ALOPECIA AREATA WITH DIFFUSE NON-PIGMENTED HAIR GROWTH

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Background: Alopecia areata is an auto immune condition that attacks the hair follicle causing a non-scarring alopecia the disorder can present at any age. Clinically Alopecia presents with smooth sharply demarcated round patches of hair loss without atrophy with “exclamation mark hairs” observed on the periphery of the patches the different types of alopecia, patchy alopecia areata, alopecia universalis, alopecia totalis and the less common ophiasis and sisapho patterns. Diagnosis of alopecia is clinical with a positive hair pull test and trichoscopy and vellus hairs which present in late cases. Widespread non – pigmented hair regrowth in patients with alopecia areata has rarely been described in the literature. The rapid whitening of hair in a short period of time characterizes the phenomenon called “overnight greying”.

The first episode reported was in the sacred book of the Babylonian in the year 83aC. Different explanations have been proposed to explain this phenomenon, vitiligo, telegenic effluvium and diffuse alopecia areata, which is the most likely cause.

Observation: Our patient presented with a 2-month history of alopecia universalis, on the scalp, eyelashes, eyebrows and groin with complete regrowth of hair with non-pigmented hairs of the groin, axilla, pubic and eye brows. Our patient was retroviral disease positive and on antiretroviral treatment.

She had no history of active alopecia, thyroid disease, vitiligo or stress. She was systemically well and had no other significant drug history.

Key message: We report the first known documented case in Africa of a 25-year-old female with diffuse non-pigmented hair regrowth following alopecia areata universalis which remained depigmented for 3 years.

