Alopecias – Practical Evaluation and Management
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Preface

Current interest in alopecias and hair growth is very intense and steadily rising. This interest is accompanied by a marked increase in the world’s population and the life spans of individuals in many developed countries. The overwhelming desire of this growing population to look younger has led to great efforts to retain beautiful hair as late in life as possible, among others. Both the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries and the dermatologic community are participating in these efforts. One of the most frequent causes of hair shedding is the development of common baldness. Hairs are subject to intrinsic or physiological aging and extrinsic or premature aging due to external factors. Intrinsic factors are associated with genetic mechanisms with individual variations, whereas external factors include ultraviolet radiation, air pollution, smoking and possibly nutrition.

On the other hand, there are various hair diseases that lead to alopecia, scalp disorders that cause scarring, or other autoimmune disorders that trigger hair loss. Furthermore, the administration of certain drugs may cause hair loss by a variety of mechanisms, such as telogen effluvium, anagen arrest, or the accentuation of androgenetic alopecia in the case of androgen uptake. All of these clinical variants of alopecia are thoroughly discussed in this volume.

With advancements in molecular biological techniques, the current understanding of the science of hair follicles is improving, permitting the development of various treatment methods, according to the main cause of alopecia. The internet, with its powerful informative capabilities, has increased the demands of patients and other individuals on dermatologists for even more treatment options. As a consequence, dermatologists are now more interested in hair issues than ever before.

There are several medical societies that are devoted to hair growth and disorders as well as societies organized by patients who suffer from specific hair diseases, such as alopecia areata or scarring alopecias. Many sessions have been organized during international congresses on trichology, and entire meetings and even congresses have been dedicated to hair research and the development of new medical and surgical treatments for various hair disorders.

This issue of Current Problems in Dermatology offers a practical approach to the evaluation and management of various forms of alopecias, including their pathogeneses, associated diagnostic procedures, medical treatments, and nutritional issues and the description of a completely new surgical technique for hair transplantation that leaves behind sufficient follicle unit tissue to regenerate hairs. We believe that there is a need for a comprehensive and easy-to-read book, which we hope will motivate dermatologists to diagnose and treat their patients with hair problems more effectively.

We are extremely grateful to the leading experts for their excellent contributions and time.
spent in putting together this edition on alopecias. We would also like to thank the co-series editorial professors Peter Itin and Gregor Jemec for the opportunity to guest edit this issue. In addition, we would like to thank Sandra Braun, who was the product manager, and Ricarda Cueni, who was the production manager of this volume, for their professional editorial assistance.

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