

Hair Loss

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Hair loss or “hair shedding”

It can be very distressing when your hair starts to fall out after recovering from COVID-19, but you are not alone.

Many COVID-19 survivors experience hair loss after their initial COVID infection. In fact, temporary hair loss is possible after any fever or illness.

What you are experiencing is actually more accurately called “hair shedding.” The medical name is *telogen effluvium*.

Shedding is a normal part of the hair growth cycle, but after a fever or illness, more hairs than normal can enter the shedding phase of the hair growth cycle at the same time.

Hair shedding may cause noticeable hair loss and lead to your scalp being more visible in some areas.



Hair shedding can be normal if you have a fever or illness

Most people notice more hair shedding 2 to 3 months after having a fever or illness.

Handfuls of hair can come out when you shower or when you brush your hair. This hair shedding can last for 6 to 9 months before it stops. For most people, their hair stops shedding, grows back, and starts to look normal again.

As your hair grows back, you'll notice short hairs that are all the same length, often along your hairline but it could be throughout your hair as well.

Treatments for hair shedding

There is no treatment for hair shedding if the only cause of your hair shedding is a fever, illness, or stress. You just have to give it time after you recover from COVID-19 or whatever the initial trigger was.

However, it's possible that you have an additional condition that may be contributing to your hair loss. In these cases, treatment of this additional condition may help with regrowth of your hair. Below are just a few of these conditions:

- **Androgenic alopecia (also known as male pattern baldness):** this can be treated with a topical treatments like minoxidil (Rogaine) and medications like finasteride (Propecia)
- **Psoriasis:** this has multiple treatments including topical steroids and medications
- **Low thyroid levels (hypothyroidism):** this can be treated with thyroid replacement

- **Low iron levels (iron deficiency):** this can be treated with iron supplementation (by mouth or intravenously)

You should talk to your doctor if you are concerned that you may have one or more of these conditions.

When to call your doctor

If you develop one or more isolated bald patches or rashes, itching, or burning in your scalp, this is not typical and you should see a doctor.



