Study of psycho-social aspects of hairloss

Viral Desai
Sarla Hospital, India

Hair loss is one of the most common complaints in patients attending doctor’s clinic. Whether its male pattern baldness or female pattern, hair loss spares no caste, creed or ethnicity. It not only affects the physical being of the individual, it also affects the psychological domain such as self confidence. Considering how lifestyle factors influence hormonal levels greatly, it could be presumed that lifestyle and behavioral patterns may contribute to the occurrence and severity of hair loss. This view is supported by various studies in male subjects with Androgenetic Alopecia (AGA), where a majority of them reported that hair loss affected their personal attractiveness and social life. Low self-esteem and loss of self-confidence have also been reported. There was a greater degree of psychological impact of hair loss among younger men and those with earlier onset hair loss. Since adolescents and young adults meet with the challenge of fitting in with their peers, an additional stress of hair loss could be a burden to their coping abilities. Thus to ascertain the degree of psychological adversity we decided to study the psychological impacts on individuals attending the clinic for hair loss treatment by putting forth certain questionnaire. To study the psychological aspects of patients attending the clinic for hair loss treatment. To study their willingness to take up medical or surgical treatment after an explanation. A group of 300 patients were taken in this study. Each one was given a set of questionnaire encompassing their lifestyle patterns and behavioral changes to hair loss focusing on personal and social well being. All patients requiring only medical treatment were excluded from the study.

According to the study, maximum of the patients visiting the clinic with complaint of hair loss was between the ages 21 to 25 years(37%) and minimum (3%) were between 36 to 40 years with 94% of the total comprising of males and only 6% females. Their professional domains ranged from actors, businessmen, doctors engineers and students. According to our study, the maximum population belonged to business class (25%) and service class people (24.33%). When enquired about their effect of hair loss on daily life, majority of them suffered from psychological stress (35.33%). All of them had taken some form of treatment in the past, which consisted of using cosmetic products(60%), laser comb(8%) or application of minoxidil (17%). 9% had even had FUT procedure before and the remaining 3% had done hair weaving. When asked about satisfaction rate 44% were very disappointed and 40% were disappointed. The main reason for hair consultation was for their personal reasons (45%) followed by psychological with aesthetic (25%) and health reasons (19%) When asked about the factors which held them back from getting a treatment for their hair loss majority of them were apprehensive about the final outcome after the treatment(67%). 14% of them rated the treatment as too costly and 10% regarded the procedure as invasive. Among the patients under study, majority of the patients communicated with DHI through friends and relatives followed by search engines and website When given a treatment option after consulting about 80 percent of them took up medical therapy despite knowing the pros and cons of the same due to various reasons (majority being concerned about the cost of the procedures).60% of the patients willingly took up surgical treatment. Out of the 60% of patients who took up surgical options 97.7% opted for minimally invasive surgery i.e. DHI and only 2.22% opted for more invasive techniques like Strip or FUE. The patients who did not opt for any surgical treatment were given a set of questionnaire to understand the reason for the same. Out of 66 patients who had hesitations in going ahead with the procedure 51.5% had a reason for un affordability, 25.75% were not interested and some of them were awaiting results of their known people(7.57%) and others are waiting for their own hair pattern to be defined(15.15%).

vrdesai@email.com