

MATTING OF HAIR DUE TO "HALO - EGG" SHAMPOO

M. Z. MANI* AND P. S. SAHNI †

Summary

A case of hair matting in an 18 year old female is reported. The hair got densely entangled immediately after washing the hair with "Halo Egg" shampoo. The hair was disentangled completely, after prolonged dipping of the hair in arachis oil for 5 days.

KEY WORDS: Hair matting, "Halo Egg" shampoo, Arachis oil.

Introduction

Cases of matted or entangled hair have been reported very infrequently. The original term used to designate this condition was plica neuropathica, as it was thought to be due to repeated manipulation of the hair by psychologically disturbed women¹. Subsequently, it was observed that psychological disturbance was not a prerequisite for developing this condition². Many of the reported cases have occurred subsequent to the use of a detergent shampoo^{1,3,4}. We are reporting a case of entangled hair,

which occurred almost immediately after the use of "Halo Egg" shampoo.

Case Report

An eighteen year old female student came to our hospital on August 12th, 1980, with the complaint of densely matted hair for ten days. Ten days previously, she started taking a capsule for her complaint of purulent discharge from the right ear. The same night, she also applied "pragmatar"[‡] over her hair; and one hour later she washed her hair with "Halo-Egg" shampoo. She was advised this treatment for her complaint of diffuse hair fall of three years' duration. Immediately after application of the shampoo, her hair got densely entangled into bunches and could not be straightened out. She had been advised elsewhere to cut her hair, but was reluctant to do so.

Examination of the scalp showed that the hair on the frontal and temporal areas was normal in texture, of normal black colour. The hairs were separate from each other. Examination of individual uninvolved hair from the patient revealed that she had straight hair which neither curly nor kinked. There was no

* Assistant Professor,

† House Physician,

Dermatology Section,
Department of Medicine
Christian Medical College & Brown
Memorial Hospital, Ludhiana-141008,
Punjab.

Present address of principal author :

Dr. M. Z. Mani,
Reader in Dermatology,
Wanless Hospital,
Miraj Medical Centre,
Miraj-416410 (Maharashtra)

Received for publication on 2-5-1983

‡ "Pragmatar" is a preparation containing cetyl-tar distillate 4%, precipitated sulphur 3%, and salicylic acid 3% in a washable emulsion base (Smith Kline and French, India, Ltd).

abnormality of the hair shaft. In the occipital region, the whole hair was bunched into two or three masses. The matted hair, which was also black in colour, appeared to have a light brown tinge. The underlying scalp was normal. The patient was advised to dip her matted hair for a few hours every night, into a vessel containing arachis oil. An otorhinolaryngological examination revealed that she had chronic otitis media, with a polyp in the right ear. On her first follow up few days later, there was no improvement of hair matting. She had dipped her hair in arachis oil for only half an hour on one occasion. After this she followed the instructions completely, and within 5 days her matted hair became completely detangled.

Experiment

An experiment was performed, in which "Halo Egg" shampoo was applied to tressettes of straight, long hair. No major difference was observed in the tendency to felting, between tressettes to which "pragmatar" had previously been applied, and the controls to which no "pragmatar" was applied.

Discussion

The mechanism for the development of entangled hair is uncertain. The original cases, as well as the case described by Simpson and Mullins, occurred in psychologically disturbed women¹. In other cases there was no evidence of any psychological disturbance in patients². It has been postulated that this condition may be due to vigorous manipulation of long curly hair². This is unlikely to be the only cause, as there are innumerable people with long, curly hair, who massage shampoos vigorously, and yet do not develop this condition. The process of hair matting is considered to be similar to the "felting" of animal fibres which is due to compaction of contiguous fibres, which are exposed to friction in a liquid medium³. Such a

postulate, still does not explain the cause for the rarity of this condition in human hair. It has been shown experimentally that the matting tendency is independent of the type of shampoo used². In the genesis of hair matting, it is probable that there are other "conditioning" factors, which in association with the subsequent vigorous manipulation of the shampoo, may contribute to the development of this condition. Application of an oil or cream on a particular type of hair, shortly before shampooing, may constitute such a "conditioning" factor.

Graham reported a case of matting, occurring in a nine year old girl, after use of a detergent shampoo⁴. In this patient, after her clipped hair had regrown, the same shampoo when used again did not cause matting. Graham has also quoted another identical case which occurred after 'Halo' shampoo⁴. Another report has described a case of densely entangled "bird's nest" after use of cetrimide shampoo⁵. Bogaty and Dunlap have stated that matted hair can be untangled, by careful combing with cosmetic lubricants². In our case, prolonged dipping of the matted hair in arachis oil untangled the hair within 5 days. Our patient had used shampoos in the past, but had never previously developed matted hair. On this occasion, she developed matting when she shampooed her hair shortly after the application of "pragmatar". Such a correlation was observed experimentally by Bogaty and Dunlap, who noticed that there was an increased tendency to "felting" when chemical reactants (which are used in bleaching and waving of hair) had been applied to tressettes of hair, prior to application of shampoo². It is thus possible, that the "Halo Egg" shampoo used by our patient, combined reversibly in a physical or chemical reaction with "pragmatar", which had been applied only an hour earlier. Such a possibility, however, could not

be confirmed in the experiment performed by us, in which the hair used was not the patient's own hair.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Dr. R. R. M. Harman, Consultant Dermatologist, Bristol, for useful suggestions.

References

1. Simpson MH and Mullins JF: Plica Neuropathica, Report of a case, Arch Dermatol, 1969; 100 : 457-458.
2. Bogaty H and Dunlap FE: Matting of hair, Arch Dermatol, 1970; 101 : 348-351.
3. Dawber RPR and Calnan CD, Quoted by Ebling FJG and Rook A, Hair, Textbook of Dermatology, Vol 2; 3rd Edn, Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, 1979; p 1733.
4. Graham PV: Tangled Hair, Bizaree occurrence after use of Detergent Shampoo, Arch Dermatol, 1953; 67 ; 515.

ABSTRACT

Sexual Transmission of Viral Hepatitis B and its carrier state in patients with Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD).

Group Captain R K Dutta and Flt Lt S M Sachdeva, Command Hospital, Air Force, Bangalore. The Journal of the Association of Physicians of India, 1982, 30 : 861.

100 cases of hepatitis B, 100 patients with STDs and 25 healthy controls were studied with an aim to throw more insight on the role of sexual contacts on transmission of surface hepatitis B antigen and to detect carrier state among patients with STDs. All patients were subjected to detailed history and examinations with particular attention to liver functions like serum bilirubin and serum proteins, serology and tests for hepatitis surface B antigens and antibodies.

Majority were male patients (94%) between 21-30 years of age (58%). The high incidence of parenteral therapy (78%) noted in the subject group, could not be taken as significant since all our subjects were routinely inoculated. None of the STD patients showed evidence of viral hepatitis. 47% of patients with hepatitis gave history of homo/heterosexual contacts. The differences in proportions of HbsAg positivity between contacts of hepatitis B subjects and contacts of healthy controls were found statistically not significant. In the present study Viral hepatitis B infection was found not to be related to sexual contacts in India.

Study of Dermatoglyphics in Diabetes Mellitus, Essential Hypertension and Ischaemic Heart Diseases.

Lt Col T R Kapur et al, Classified Specialist (Derm & Vener), Military Hospital, Bareilly (UP), Indian Med Gaz 1983; 117: 128-131.

Dermatoglyphic patterns and total ridge count were studied in 100 random selected Indian Army personnel of mixed Indian population. They included 25 males each of control, with diabetes mellitus, with essential hypertension and with ischaemic heart disease. In diabetes mellitus there was statistically significant decrease in loop (44.4%) and increase in whorls (52.4%). There were more radial loops over second digits of left hand and increase in number of arches over right digits and both were statistically significant in essential hypertension. In ischaemic heart disease though there were more ulnar loops over second digits, this was statistically not significant. There was increase in total ridge count in diabetes mellitus and ischaemic heart but which was not significant. Decrease in ridge count was statistically significant in essential hypertension.