TRACTION ALOPECIA

Traction alopecia is the term used for bald patches caused by chronic mechanical traction, or pulling, on the hair. The commonest cause is braiding, hair extensions or hair weaves. It affects all ethnicities, men and women, but is most common in black women.

4 common causes:

1. Hairstyles:
   - Tight braiding
   - Hair extensions
   - Hair weaves
   - Tight ponytails
   - Ballet buns
2. Chemical treatments like relaxers or dyes
3. Tight headwear like hats, helmets or turbans
4. Excessive brushing or heating

How do these make you lose your hair?

These are mechanical causes and not a disease. Hairstyles that cause one directional weight or pulling on the hair can result in the affected hair follicles becoming inflamed. A follicle is where each hair grows. It contains a small oil gland and stem cells. Loss of the stem cells leads to baldness. This is permanent. The skin looks shiny when this happens. Chemicals can also damage the hair growth as well as the existing hair.
5 signs of traction alopecia

1. The “fringe” sign. Loss of hair along the hairline, with only very short hairs visible.
2. Scaly dryness along hairline.
3. Pain or redness.
4. Itching
5. Tiny pimples in the hairline.
6. Pigmentation changes.
6 Practical tips to help prevent traction baldness:

1. MAKE SURE HAIR AND SCALP IS HYDRATED – there are a lot of great products that can be used on the scalp and hairline. (Plain Ordinary Moisturising Balm).
2. Change braids (the pattern and style) or extensions every few months.
3. Avoid harsh chemicals. It is best to always go to a trained hair stylist.
4. Wear your hair natural for a few weeks – there are lots of great styles for all hair.
5. Try satin or silk pillowcases and silk wig nets to reduce pulling.
6. Take great care with children's hair as they are at risk too.

Treatment:

Antibiotics may be needed if there is infection in the follicles. Corticosteroids can reduce inflammation to prevent permanent damage.
Remove the mechanical weight.
Pay attention to scalp hygiene.
When the active inflammation is healed take advice about the safest hairstyling practices available.
In extreme cases hair transplants are available.
The beautiful Naomi Campbell is well known to suffer from this preventable condition.

For more information:

Ordinary Skincare Co Website

For the BEST product for Traction Alopecia:

Moisturising Balm