

Session/Poster#

Presenter

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Understanding and Mitigating the Risks of Religious Headwear-Associated Alopecia

Many religions prescribe specific head-covering practices. Despite variations in the level of practice, there is a substantial number of people worldwide who wear headgear as part of their faith. Religious head coverings have been associated with alopecia, particularly traction alopecia. The traction alopecia can result from the way the headwear is secured on the head, the way it is styled, or other practices regarding the head covering that may lead to tension on the hair and scalp. Increased awareness of headwear-associated alopecia is essential, as there are ways to prevent alopecia while still conforming to religious practices. Herein, we examine various religious head coverings, factors related to headwear that promote alopecia, and ways to mitigate the risk of alopecia. We include visual presentations of the headwear and associated locations of alopecia. Additionally, we address culturally sensitive considerations when approaching hair loss in patients who observe religious head-covering practices. Our goal is to raise awareness regarding the risk of headwear-associated alopecia to facilitate timely diagnosis, treatment, and mitigation strategies, and promote culturally competent care.