Message from the IFHRS Chair

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The Australian WCHR 2022 was a resounding success, with attendees enjoying the blend of professional and personal comradery. Congratulations to Rodney Sinclair and his team.

In keeping with an example of excellence, the Dallas WCHR 2024 program will embrace an international faculty to ensure attendees benefit from cutting-edge clinical experience and the latest scientific knowledge. I look forward to meeting with all of you at this congress and at upcoming virtual meetings.

Meanwhile, we all are happy to emerge from the COVID pandemic and to again embrace face-to-face meetings. Hopefully, each of you has fared well and returned to your usual activities, professions, and passions.

I am looking forward to our future meetings.

### 2026 AND BEYOND

The following dates and locations have been decided on by the IFHRS:

- **2026**
  - 14th WCHR
  - Korea
  - Hosting Society: KHRS

- **2028**
  - 15th WCHR
  - Europe
  - Hosting Society: EHRS, RHRS, or UHRS

- **2030**
  - 16th WCHR
  - Open Hub
  - Hosting Society: TBD

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2023 CONFERENCES

The first half of 2023 was full of excitement in the hair research community, and it was marked by several outstanding international conferences in which AHRS members were active participants, session chairs, and prominent speakers. Several of these conferences were taking place for the first time after COVID, and many of our members and colleagues had not seen one another in person in more than three years. There were many happy reunions among friends, as AHRS members finally had the chance to interact once again after so much time apart.

Among these was the May 2023 International Investigative Dermatology meeting in Tokyo, which takes place just once every 5 years when the world’s investigative dermatology community meets in a host country. Many AHRS members presented posters and talks and generally had an opportunity to catch up with one another at this extraordinary meeting.

Additionally, many AHRS members attended the June 2023 Gordon Conference on Epithelial Differentiation and Keratinization in Barcelona, Spain, which marked the first time this Gordon Conference was held since before COVID. These two meetings showcased the broad range of hair research being conducted by AHRS members, spanning from basic science studies to clinical trials and novel treatments for hair disorders.

FDA APPROVES second JAK INHIBITOR

More excitement came recently in June 2023, with the FDA approval of the second JAK inhibitor (ritlecitinib) for the treatment of alopecia areata. Many AHRS members have played integral roles in advancing the science and clinical application of JAK inhibitors in alopecia areata and other forms of hair loss. So much exciting research was undertaken in the past few years (even during COVID) that is now maturing into transformative novel advances in the field. We look forward to highlighting some of the research work of AHRS members in the coming year in our Webinar series and in person at the WCHR in April 2024 and the SID in May 2024.

AHRS EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Journey to JAKs and AHRS Luncheon at the AAD - New Orleans

The AHRS provided several educational offerings in the first half of 2023. The Journey to JAKs in Alopecia Areata was a one-day in-person and virtual meeting to provide education on the clinical use of JAK inhibitors for the treatment of alopecia areata. Around 120 participants gathered in New Orleans, USA, the day prior to the start of the American Academy of Dermatology Annual Scientific Meeting. The highlights of the meeting included a panel discussion with a variety of clinical professionals discussing their approach to incorporating JAKs into their practices. There was a working group that discussed the creation of treatment guidelines for alopecia areata, recognizing the need for there to be a living document. There are also efforts underway to define outcome measures after treatment of disease. The following day, a wider audience gathered for our annual AAD luncheon meeting, which focused on the role of JAK inhibitors in the treatment of hair loss disorders.

AHRS April Webinar

The AHRS offered a webinar on April 29, 2023, on the topic of oral minoxidil. Dr. Wilma Bergfeld organized this webinar, which was attended by over 100 people. Dr. Natasha Mesinkovska moderated a panel discussion among the faculty on the various protocols and considerations for using oral minoxidil. The AHRS will be holding its next webinar on December 2, 2023. We found that online programming has been a positive addition for our members, and we plan to continue hosting educational content in this dynamic and accessible format.
**AHRS Ancillary Meeting at the 25th World Congress of Dermatology – Singapore**

The AHRS held a half-day ancillary scientific meeting at the World Congress of Dermatology on July 3, 2023, in Singapore. This session was extremely well-attended with more than 300 participants in a standing-room-only meeting room. The meeting was chaired and moderated by AHRS member Jerry Shapiro and co-moderated by Natasha Mesinkovska. It covered several emerging topics in the diagnosis and treatment of hair loss disorders. George Cotsarelis presented on the hair cycle. Jerry Shapiro reviewed JAK inhibitors for alopecia areata, and Rachita Dhurat reviewed JAK inhibitors in the pediatric population. Maria Hordinsky spoke on topical gabapentin for symptomatic scalp. Natasha Mesinkovska talked about hair loss in women, and Aish Sridharan spoke on menopause and female hair loss.

After a coffee break and thanking the sponsors of Cosmo, Nutrafol, Pfizer, and Vichy, session 2 took place. Jerry Shapiro led off with an update on FFA followed by Valerie Callender speaking on ethnic hair and how she manages it. Etienne Wang spoke on cell-to-cell interactions within the hair follicle niche in AGA, and Natasha Mesinkovska reviewed how she diagnoses alopecias. Ramon Grimalt rounded out the session by talking about pediatric hair disorders.

The AHRS session at WCD 2023 was of great interest to congress attendees; there was standing room only for the entire 4-hour program.
WORLD CONGRESS FOR HAIR RESEARCH 2024

The Scientific Committee is assembling an incredible program for basic scientists, clinicians, and all who have an interest in hair, hair loss, hair disorders, and hair research. The program grid below provides an overview of the sessions and schedule in Dallas. We hope you will join us for an incredible scientific meeting and viewing of the total solar eclipse.

Key Dates

- Abstracts submission (July – September 2023)
- Exhibit registration opens (July 2023)
- Attendee registration and housing block open (August 2023)
- Notifications sent to abstract submitters (November 2023)
Join Us April 6-9, 2024 | Dallas, Texas

Together with our sister societies of the International Federation of Hair Research Societies, we invite you to join us in Dallas and be enlightened by the TOTAL ECLIPSE of hair science. The Congress will be a comprehensive, international hair research meeting for the advancement of knowledge in hair growth, hair and scalp disease, and clinical care. Focusing on all areas of hair science, you’ll have four days to participate in as many sessions as you like. You won’t want to miss this opportunity to join together with international colleagues who will present on new research, share experiences, and discuss new directions.

Things to Do in Dallas

Visit the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza:
Explore the museum dedicated to the life, legacy, and assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It provides a comprehensive look at the events surrounding his death.

Explore the Dallas Arts District:
Discover the largest contiguous urban arts district in the United States, home to stunning architecture, world-class museums, and performing arts venues. Highlights include the Dallas Museum of Art, Nasher Sculpture Center, and the Meyerson Symphony Center.

Spend a day at the Dallas Zoo:
Enjoy a visit to the Dallas Zoo, which is home to a wide variety of animals from around the world. You can participate in interactive experiences, attend animal feedings, and explore the zoo’s numerous exhibits.

Discover the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden:
Experience the beauty of nature at the Dallas Arboretum, known for its lush gardens, vibrant flowers, and stunning views of White Rock Lake. In April, you can witness the blooming of tulips and other spring blossoms.

Visit the Perot Museum of Nature and Science:
Explore interactive exhibits on a wide range of topics, including dinosaurs, space, engineering, and more. The museum provides engaging and educational experiences for visitors of all ages.

Experience the Dallas World Aquarium:
Step into a unique underwater world and watch a variety of marine life, including sharks, rays, and tropical fish. The aquarium also features birds, reptiles, and other fascinating creatures.

Shop and dine at Bishop Arts District:
This trendy neighborhood is known for its independent boutiques, art galleries, and diverse dining options. Explore the streets, discover unique shops, and savor delicious meals at local restaurants.

The total solar eclipse of April 8, 2024, will be the next total solar eclipse visible in North America since August 21, 2017. Here are a couple cool facts:

• Path of Totality: The total solar eclipse of April 8, 2024, will follow a path of totality that stretches from Mexico, passing through the United States, and ending in eastern Canada. This path will include cities like Austin, Dallas, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Buffalo, and Montreal, among others.

• Totality Duration: The duration of totality—the time when the Moon completely covers the Sun—varies along the path. It can last for up to 4 minutes and 28 seconds at its maximum. The duration will be shorter towards the beginning and end of the path.
AUSTRALIA TGA APPROVES BARICITINIB

In May 2023, baricitinib (brand name Olumiant®) was approved by the Australian Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) for the treatment of severe alopecia areata. The TGA is Australia’s equivalent of the United States FDA. This is the first ever oral medication specifically approved for the treatment of alopecia areata (AA) in Australia.

Having passed this hurdle, the next challenge for sponsor Eli Lilly is to convince the Australian Government Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) to expand reimbursement of baricitinib to include AA.

Currently, the only indication reimbursed by the PBS is severe active rheumatoid arthritis. Australian rheumatoid arthritis patients have a maximum co-payment of $30 for a 2 months’ supply. Australian AA patients are hoping for the same access to baricitinib, however, affordability is a major concern of government third-party payers. Endeavours to define severity in AA remain a challenge, and this is something all the hair research societies are striving to achieve.

The TGA delayed approval of baricitinib by more than 12 months while they conducted a review of the safety of Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitors. On completion of the review, the TGA issued a class-wide boxed warning for the JAK inhibitors baricitinib, upadacitinib, and tofacitinib when used in the treatment of chronic inflammatory disorders. The justification for the boxed warning is obscure. The TGA do not appear to be supported in their decision by the available safety data on the medication being evaluated and are relying on extrapolation of a different data set, from a different medication, in a different patient population.

Boxed warnings represent one of the most serious types of warnings that can be mandated by a regulatory agency. Only about 30 products on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods currently have a boxed warning. The boxed warning on baricitinib would seem to be an unscientific precedent that will impede patient access to treatments and potentially produce negative health outcomes.

Australian dermatologists have had access to “off-label” use of baricitinib since April 2021 and have published their experiences. Some highlights include the following:

- Patients with alopecia totalis and co-existing beard loss appear to have a poorer prognosis and less regrowth on treatment, and that there is a strong correlation between the extent of beard and scalp regrowth in the same individual.
- Adolescents, aged 12-17 years, with moderate to severe AA treated tolerated baricitinib well and when treated with baricitinib (mean dose 3.9mg/d) and low-dose oral minoxidil (mean dose 0.7mg/d), 79% experienced partial or complete scalp regrowth with a median percentage change in SALT score of 93%.
- In addition, pre-adolescent patients treated with a median dose of 4mg of baricitinib had a mean reduction in SALT of 68. Twenty-five percent of children achieved SALT 0 and 50% achieved SALT <20. No discontinuations due to adverse events occurred in this study. Similar findings have been previously reported with tofacitinib.
- Baricitinib may also prove to be of benefit for patients with cicatricial alopecia due to lichen planus or folliculitis decalvans, however, further work is required.

We also conducted a retrospective study (Kazmi et al; JAAD) assessing the outcome of switching between tofacitinib (pan JAK inhibitor) and baricitinib in patients with AA. Seventy-three patients received tofacitinib first. It appears that partial responders to tofacitinib or those who relapse on tofacitinib may benefit from switching to baricitinib while those who fail to regrow any hair with one JAK inhibitor may be less likely to respond to a second JAK inhibitor.

Baricitinib may also prove to be of benefit for patients with cicatricial alopecia due to lichen planus or folliculitis decalvans, however, further work is required.

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AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF DERMATOLOGY ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

Members of the AHWRS presented in an Alopecia Expert Panel (Prof. Rodney Sinclair, Dr. Samantha Eisman, Dr. Bevan Bhoyrul) at the Australian College of Dermatology, Annual Scientific meeting, in Sydney. The session, “Tips and Tricks from Our Real-World Clinical Experience and Evidence-Based Treatments,” was expertly chaired by Dr. Leona Yip. Dr. Ahmed Kazmi presented, “Recognising Uncommon and Variant Presentations of Common Hair Loss Disorders.”

A poster on the incidence and prevalence of alopecia areata in Australian general practice was also presented at this meeting (Sinclair R, Eisman S et al). Based on a patient cohort of 413,573 patient records, the incidence of new onset AA was 27.8 per 100,000 person-years (95% CI 26.0 to 29.5) and the point prevalence of AA was estimated on 31 December 2020 to be 0.126% (95% CI: 0.115-0.137). Comorbid depression and anxiety was observed in 8.7% and 1.7% of AA patients, respectively. A better understanding of the epidemiology of AA in the Australian setting is vital in motivating for new therapeutic options.

GLOBAL REGISTRY OF ALOPECIA AREATA DISEASE
SEVERITY AND TREATMENT SAFETY (GRASS)

The AHWRS has also completed the pilot phase of GRASS with the enrollment of the first 1,000 patients. Led by Dr. Huw Rees, a registry expert who recently moved to Australia from Ireland, GRASS is an international collaboration involving over 80 dermatologists from 20 countries. This project began in 2020 with the development of expert consensus statements, defining the core domains for the registry and then enlisting support for Australian, Irish, Italian, and Spanish partners to enroll patients in the pilot phase.

The AHWRS has received funding support from Pfizer to further expand the global registry and is looking for further support from other industry partners. This will be increasingly important as other medications such as Ritlecitinib and Ruxolitinib enter the registration phase of their development program and as upadacitinib, Brepocitinib, Ivarmacitinib, and Filgotinib progress through the trial phases.

Combination therapies also remain an area of endeavour as we strive for the magical SALT 0 in our patients and minoxidil has shown promise in this regard both to improve patient response and also as a maintenance therapy post JAK withdrawal.

There is also a lot of activity in Australia in new treatments for male and female pattern hair loss, but we will leave that report for the next newsletter.

AHWRS CLINICAL HAIR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The AHWRS Clinical Hair Fellowship Program continues to support Dermatologists from all over the world seeking to sub-specialize in diseases of the hair and scalp. Recently, Dr Laila Asfour from England, Dr. Karlyn Clarisse from Belgium, Dr. Themis Colla from Brazil, Dr. Janina Poa from the Philippines, Dr. Phillip Bruder form the USA, Dr. Niranjan Ariyasinghe, and Dr. Prateek Sharma form India completed their fellowships, and Dr. Daranporn Triwongwaranat from Thailand commenced her training.

Other alumni of the 12-month AHWRS Hair Fellowship Program include Dr. Nekma Meah from England, Dr. Dmitri Wall from Ireland, Dr. Katherine York from South Africa, Dr. Amershin Moodley from South Africa, Dr. Kevin Wei Liang from Singapore, Dr. Bevin Bhoyrul from England, Dr. Ahmed Kazmi from England, and Dr. Lara Trindade de Carvalho from Brazil.

References


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Chinese Hair Research Society

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The annual meeting of the Chinese Hair Research Society will be held at the end of August. We look forward to sharing happenings from the event with you in the December IFHRS newsletter.
EHRS 2023 ANNUAL MEETING (submitted by Dr. Claire Higgins)

We have just finished our annual meeting, which was held in the quintessential English city of Sheffield from 14-16th June 2023. The organizing committee had our first planning meeting in 2018 as the meeting was originally scheduled for 2020. A global pandemic and 3 years later, here we are having just hosted the first EHRS annual meeting in the post-COVID era.

In the first iteration (back in 2020), we had a complex programme with concurrent sessions; however, when we were given the opportunity to redesign everything, we decided to go back to basics and create a programme that reflected the original ethos and goals of the EHRS—to bring together clinicians and basic scientists with an interest in hair disease and hair research. We had one main room where all talks were held, and we spent a long time in planning meetings to ensure the programme was balanced. To achieve this, each session had only two invited speakers—typically one clinical researcher and one basic researcher—and the remaining talks were selected from the abstracts. In total, there were 49 presentations with greater than 50% selected from the abstracts and approximately half clinical research and half basic science research. We had more than 250 delegates in attendance from 26 countries; this same diversity and breadth was also represented in the 69 posters on display. We also had a significant patient presence and involvement in the meeting, and we were pleased to host Alopecia UK as an exhibitor and their CEO Sue Schilling as a presenter at our opening ceremony. Attendees took advantage of the opportunity to meet with them and the other exhibitors/delegates during the four coffee breaks and three poster sessions.

In addition to the thought-provoking presentations that generated a lot of excitement and discussion, another highlight of the meeting were the two social events. First, our Welcome Reception was held in the Winter Gardens where we were welcomed by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Councillor Colin Ross. The brass band and magicians walking around brought a touch of magic to the evening and kept us entertained while we sipped prosecco amongst the more than 2,500 species of plants.

On the second evening, we had our Gala Dinner in the breathtaking Sheffield Cathedral. Still a functioning cathedral, the oldest parts of the building date back to c.1200. We were entertained by our talented colleagues: first enjoying the delightful music of Professors Vicky Jolliffe and Richard Logan who played the violin and accordion as we had welcome drinks, then soaking in the words of our talented emcee for the night, Dr. Ahmed Kazmi. Renditions of (Continued next page)
songs in Greek, French, and English with jokes sprinkled in between kept everyone laughing and in high spirits. For the meal, we were treated to roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, which is a local delicacy.

As I sat down to write this, it had been less than a week since the close of the meeting but the early feedback coming in is very positive. Delegates loved the varied nature of the programme...the balance...and many new collaborations were born. When we set out on this journey in 2018, I didn’t really appreciate the wonder of the EHRS, but on reflection, it is a meeting like no other. Unlike clinical meetings, basic science meetings, or patient focused meetings, the EHRS meeting brings these different worlds together. I am honoured, as a basic science researcher, to have been able to Chair this wonderful conference.

**EHRS 2023 – John Ebling Lecture**

Prof. Ramon Grimalt from Spain was honored to receive the esteemed John Ebling Award, a prestigious recognition bestowed by the EHRS upon exceptional clinicians and scientists in the field of hair research. During his captivating John Ebling Lecture, Prof. Grimalt delivered an engaging presentation that drew intriguing parallels between diagnosing hair diseases and avian diagnosis, his newfound hobby. In this enlightening talk, he underscored the significance of observing the overall impression or appearance when arriving at a diagnosis, be it related to a skin or a hair condition or pertaining to avian specimens.

**EHRS 2023 – Keynote Lectures**

Prof. Ncoza Dlova, Head of Dermatology at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, presented the clinical science keynote lecture dedicated to unique hair disorders prevalent among South African individuals of African descent. She shed light on the profound importance of hair styling within this population and highlighted the potential adverse effects associated with certain styling practices that can lead to scarring alopecia. In her discourse, Prof. Dlova provided examples of special educational programs designed to empower South African women of African descent, encouraging them to adopt hair styling techniques that promote hair health and minimize harm.

The basic science keynote lecture was delivered by Dr. Mirna Perez-Moreno, an Associate Professor in Cell Biology and Physiology in the Department of Biology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Prof. Perez-Moreno delved into the intricate interplay
between lymphatic vessels and the hair follicle stem cell niche, elucidating how this intricate interaction contributes to both skin and hair regeneration, unveiling the complexity of these processes. The beautiful images she presented during her talk highlighted the expanse of the lymphatic system, while the elegant experimental models used unveiled the complexity of the interaction of the lymphatic vessels with the hair follicle.

**EHRS 2023 Prizes**

During the congress, 26 oral communications and 69 posters were selected from the abstracts for presentation. The scientific committee awarded the following prizes:

**Jurgen Schweizer Prize for the Best Basic Science Oral Presentation**

**T11: Summik Limbu | UK**

Miniaturisation of Hair Follicles in Androgenetic Alopecia May Be Driven by Accelerated Localised Ageing

**Best Clinical – Oral**

**T2: Buket Basmanav | Germany**

Clinical and Etiological Basis of Comorbidities and Therapy Response in Alopecia Areata

**Best Basic Science Poster**

**P46: Leah Redmond | UK**

Transcriptomics to Uncover the Role of the Dermal Papilla in Human Hair Fibre Pigmentation

**Runner Up – Basic Science Poster**

**P49: Ana Rita Castro | Portugal**

Unveiling the Trichogenic Signature of the Human Native Dermal Papilla

**Best Poster – Clinical Research**

**P24: Sang-Min Choi | Korea**

Efficacy of Oral Retinoids as a Maintenance Therapy in Cicatricial Alopecia: A Retrospective Study

**Runner-Up Poster – Clinical Research**

**P25: Zoe Passam | UK**

Minoxidil-induced Trichostasis Spinulosa of Vellus Hair?

**Alopecia UK Prize – Poster Most Likely to Impact Patients**

**P28: Matthew Wynne | UK**

Vibration Assisted Analgesia During Intralesional Corticosteroid Therapy for Alopecia

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WESTON PARK MUSEUM HAIR EXHIBITION (submitted by Dr. Yuval Ramot)

By a remarkable coincidence, our EHRS hair meeting in Sheffield coincided with an extraordinary exhibition at the Weston Park Museum, also in Sheffield, focusing on the topic of hair. Titled “Hair: Untold Stories,” this exhibition was conveniently located just a 10-minute walk from the congress venue and offered free admission.

While most of us, being hair enthusiasts, don’t need a reminder of the importance of hair to people, the exhibition still served as a gentle reminder of the profound significance of hair in both cultural and everyday contexts.

The exhibition hall was separated into three sections, with the first section capturing my greatest interest. Traditionally, we perceive hair solely as a component of the human body, functioning as a covering for the scalp and face. However, this section of the exhibition showcased how hair can be utilized as a versatile material. Intriguing examples included a dress and shoes crafted from blonde hair, as well as exquisite jewelry and durable ropes made from human hair. Interestingly, due to its extensive surface area, hair can even be employed in the absorption of oil spills.

The second section offered a dedicated exploration of hair care, showcasing an array of astonishing hair styles. Within this section, a series of captivating portraits featured hairdressers from Sheffield, each with their own unique and heartwarming stories. Among them, there were tales of hairdressers who created special spaces for individuals on the autistic spectrum or established services offering support to those with mental health challenges. Reading their stories and witnessing how hair can serve as a means of aiding those in need was truly touching.

Moving on to the third section, the focus shifted towards the role of hair in diverse cultures and societies. This captivating display included remarkable objects crafted from hair, integrated into ceremonial attire and hair jewelry spanning from Norway to Naga land in Northern India. I found this section particularly captivating as it highlighted the immense importance of hair in nearly every culture across the globe, emphasizing its universal significance.

Attending the exhibition after the conclusion of the meeting proved to be a brilliant decision as it provided a tangible reflection of the scientific discussions that had taken place. Notably, a significant portion of the exhibition centered around the profound impact of hair styling in Afro-Caribbean culture, featuring a mesmerizing artwork by Kedisha Coakley, a talented artist based in Sheffield. This section served as a poignant reminder of the exceptional keynote address delivered by Prof. Ncoza Dlova from South Africa, underscoring the significance of hair styling in Africa and the potential hair conditions associated with it.

Furthermore, the exhibition showcased heartwarming stories of hairdressers diligently fitting wigs for cancer patients and children undergoing chemotherapy, drawing a connection to the efforts made by scientists to prevent hair loss during chemotherapy treatments. This resonated with the enlightening conference talk by Prof. Nikolas Georgopoulos from the UK, which explored scalp cooling interventions. Additionally, an informative poster was displayed, providing guidance on treating trichotillomania through habit reversal therapy.

Visiting the exhibition offered me the perfect conclusion to an outstanding hair meeting, establishing a vital connection between our scientific endeavours and the individuals for whom our work is dedicated. It reinforced the fundamental importance of our efforts, underscoring our commitment to the well-being of those we hope to provide cure.
THE ALOPECIA AREATA FOUNDATION HOPE FESTIVAL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Alopecia Areata Foundation Hope Festival and General Assembly was held on Sunday, December 18, 2022. It opened with a magic performance by an invited singer, followed by a lecture on the latest treatments for alopecia areata for parents of patients and adolescent patients. It was also a meaningful time to present an appreciation to the Korean Hair Research Society (KHRS) for their support of the Alopecia Areata Foundation. The event was held to heal and empathize with the suffering of people with alopecia areata and to seek and call for the support they need to live as members of society. This year, the event was simulcast online on YouTube, allowing several families to attend, and participants actively participated and showed their support through a live chat window.

Figure 1. The Alopecia Areata Foundation Hope Festival and General Assembly, 2023

AN AWARD FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

On December 14, 2022, the 1st policy discussion for supporting hermit patients was held to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Health Kyunghyang. Several members of the National Assembly Health and Welfare Committee participated in this policy discussion. During the policy discussion, an award ceremony was held for contributions to the medical support project for hermit patients, and the KHRS, as an angel society for the medical support project for hermit patients for the past five years, received the National Assembly Health and Welfare Committee Chairman’s Award in recognition of its contribution to the health recovery and social reintegration of hermit patients through patient identification and treatment support in the field of pediatric alopecia areata.

THE 24TH KOREAN DERMATOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION TRAINING PROGRAM IN 2023

On March 26, 2023, the 24th Korean Academy of Dermatology Training Course was held at the Samjeong Hotel in Seoul. The Korean Academy of Dermatology Training Course, which is planned every two years, covers all fields of dermatology. At this training, the KHRS, the Korean Society of Skin Cancer, the Korean Society of Skin Fungi and Infections, and the Korean Society of Nail and Hand provided educational lectures on the topic of dermoscopy, a core technique of dermatology, and the KHRS provided education on the use of dermoscopy in hair loss diseases.

Figure 2. An award from the Chairman of the National Assembly Health and Welfare Committee

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THE 19TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE KHRS

The 19th Annual Meeting of the KHRS was held on May 28, 2023, at The K Hotel in Seoul. The conference was organized to cover the basics of hair science and various clinical fields. Eminent researchers from abroad (Maksim Plikus and Reiko Kageyama in the field of hair biology and Amos Gilhar, Jerry Shapiro, and Taisuke Ito in the field of alopecia areata) and domestic scholars shared their latest views and research trends. Especially, in the past years, lectures by overseas speakers were held online, but this conference was held offline and many overseas speakers attended in person, resulting in active academic interchanges.

THE HAIR FORUM TO BE HELD AUGUST 19, 2023

The Hair Forum aims for an informal meeting where researchers interested in hair research can freely discuss their research topics.

NOTABLE RESEARCH


   **Summary:** SIRT1, a histone deacetylase, plays a role in autoimmune diseases, but its involvement in alopecia areata (AA) is unclear. This study found that SIRT1 expression is reduced in AA scalp tissue. Inhibition of SIRT1 increased immune-inflammatory responses in hair follicle cells, while activation of SIRT1 suppressed these responses. The effects were mediated through NF-κB deacetylation and STAT3 phosphorylation. SIRT1 downregulation may contribute to AA development.


   **Summary:** AA is an autoimmune disease causing hair loss. Recent research suggests a connection between inflammasomes and mitophagy, the removal of damaged mitochondria. The study found mitochondrial DNA damage and increased reactive oxygen species in affected scalp tissues and outer root sheath cells treated with IFNγ and poly(I:C). Inducing mitophagy reduced inflammasome activation. PINK1-mediated mitophagy was found to be crucial in inflammasome activation. This study highlights the role of oxidative stress and the importance of mitophagy-inflammasome crosstalk in AA, suggesting potential therapeutic targets.


   **Summary:** Alopecia totalis (AT) and alopecia universalis (AU) have traditionally been difficult to treat, with high relapse rates and treatment failures. Old data are routinely cited in recent review papers without questioning them. Researchers retrospectively reviewed 419 patients diagnosed with AT and AU between 2006 and 2017. They found that 53.9% experienced more than 50% hair regrowth, and 19.6% achieved greater than 90% regrowth. In early studies, fewer than 10% of patients achieved full regrowth, but this study showed improved outcomes, with 19.6% reaching > 90% improvement. The study provides updated prognosis data for AT and AU.

**Summary:** A 24-week, randomized, double-blind study evaluated the effectiveness and safety of photobiomodulation therapy (PBMT) and pulsed electromagnetic field therapy (PEMF) for androgenetic alopecia (AGA). Eighty participants received weekly treatments for the first 12 weeks and every other week for the following 8 weeks. The treatment group showed a significant increase in hair density compared to the control group. Independent experts also rated the treatment group more positively. Mild side effects were reported, and no serious adverse reactions occurred. PBMT and PEMF combination is considered a safe and effective treatment option for AGA.


**Summary:** A new classification and scoring system called the Scalp Photographic Index (SPI) was developed and validated to objectively assess scalp conditions. The SPI grades five features (dryness, oiliness, erythema, folliculitis, and dandruff) on a scale of 0-3. The SPI showed good correlations with dermatologist assessments and subjective symptom surveys. It demonstrated excellent internal consistency and strong reliability, making it a reliable tool for evaluating and scoring scalp conditions.


**Summary:** AA in mothers is linked with diverse autoimmune and psychiatric disorders in their offspring. This retrospective study analyzed data from 67,364 children born to mothers with AA and 673,640 controls. The offspring of mothers with AA had higher risks of developing AA, AT/AU, vitiligo, atopic disorders, hypothyroidism, and psychiatric disorders. Children born to mothers with alopecia totalis/universalis had an even higher risk. Clinicians and parents should be aware of these potential comorbidities.
Dear colleagues,

Without doubt, the first half of 2023 has been a very difficult time in all aspects of life for our society. We make every effort to keep the RHRS work at the highest efficiency, and we are very grateful to our international colleagues for their professional support. From January to June 2023, a few dozen physicians joined RHRS and now we have 358 active members.

WEBINARS/TRAINING COURSES

At the beginning of the year, we organized two webinars. On March 28, we held the webinar “World Trichology News and Updates,” which had 135 participants from 8 countries, and on April 25 we held “Is It Harmful to Dye Your Hair? Your Responses to the Patient,” which had 107 participants from 4 countries.

We also held several annual RHRS training courses: “Trichoscopy” was held in Saint Petersburg and had 29 attendees, “Scarring Alopecia” was held in Moscow and had 30 attendees, and “Therapy of Hair Disorders” was held in Moscow and had 32 attendees (Figure 1). The training course format of personal communication was highly enjoyed by all participants.

BASIC STUDIES

The basic studies conducted by RHRS members during the past few months were mainly focused on hair follicle bioengineering, cell kinetics at different stages of hair cycle progression, and molecular mechanisms controlling keratin gene expression in defined cell populations of anagen hair follicle (e.g., in the hair matrix and precortex). In particular, significant progress has been achieved in the generation of epithelial organoids containing hair follicle primordia using human pluripotent stem cells and spatial transcriptomics approach (laboratory of Prof. Ekaterina Vorotelyak). Novel regulatory pathways associated with hair follicle cell transition from quiescent to proliferating and then to differentiating state also have been identified as well as the role of cell non-autonomous (external) factors in cell fate determination in anagen human hair follicles (laboratory of Dr. Andrey Panteleyev).
ANNUAL RHRS CONGRESS

On June 29–July 1, St. Petersburg hosted the annual RHRS Congress (Figure 2). This joint event brought together 272 participants from 68 cities of Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. A substantial list of speakers included several online presentations from Italy, the USA, the UK, Spain, and Brazil. We are grateful to Bianca Maria Piraccini, Michela Starace, Vladimir Botchkarev, Andrei Mardaryev, David Saceda Corralo, and Daniel Fernandes Melo for the valuable scientific contribution to the program of the Congress! The main presentations at the Congress were “Trichoscopy,” “Chronic Telogen Effluvium,” and “Hair Graying.” The basic science part of the Congress agenda covered hair biology studies performed by research groups from all over Russia but mainly located in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. The social program of the Congress included a gala dinner and a boat trip along the Neva River.

UPCOMING

For the second half of the year, we plan to organize several educational courses and a one-day conference. More about these will be shared in the next issue of this newsletter.
22ND CONGRESS OF THE JAPANESE SOCIETY FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

From 23-25 March 2023, the 22nd Congress of the Japanese Society for Regenerative Medicine was held in Kyoto. This was the first in-person meeting in the last three years and it was quite successful. A symposium focusing on the new therapeutic approaches for hair loss diseases took place, at which SHSR honorary member Prof. Ryoji Tsuboi (Nishi-Shinjuku Satellite Clinic/Tokyo Medical University), Prof. Emi Nishimura (Univ. of Tokyo), and this author gave individual presentations. Prof. Tsuboi presented the outcome of a phase III equivalent clinical trial of autologous dermal sheath cup cell transplantation for the treatment of male/female pattern hair loss, which looked promising. Prof. Nishimura updated the progress of their research on hair follicle stem cells and aging. This author spoke on the current situation of JAK inhibitor treatment for severe alopecia areata (AA). In Japan, baricitinib was officially approved for the use for severe AA, and the data with regards to its efficacy and safety in real-world setting has been accumulated. In this talk, this author's goal was to present an update on the current situation of JAK inhibitor treatment for severe AA, and this seemed to be received with great interest by the audience.

KHRS-SHSR EXCHANGE PROGRAM

As a part of regular KHRS-SHSR exchange program, Prof. Taisuke Ito and Dr. Reiko Kageyama were invited to participate in the 19th KHRS, held on 28 May 2023 in Seoul, representing the SHSR (Figure 1). Under the presidency of Prof. Moon Bum Kin (Pusun Univ.), the conference was well organized, offered substantial content, and proved to be a resounding success. The SHSR would like to express sincere gratitude to our Korean colleagues for their warm hospitality.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL SOCIETIES FOR INVESTIGATIVE DERMATOLOGY MEETING (ISID 2023)

As of May 8, 2023, the Japanese government downgraded COVID-19 to flu level and ended its tight border control measures, resulting in a large increase in inbound tourists. Because of this mitigation policy, the first International Societies for Investigative Dermatology meeting (ISID 2023), which was hosted by the Japanese Society for Investigative Dermatology and Korean Society for Investigative Dermatology and held at Keio Plaza Hotel 10-13 May 2023, attracted nearly 2,500 attendees from all over the world (Figure 2). The meeting was quite successful. This author (Manabu Ohyama) served as the committee chair and other SHSR members individually contributed to ISID 2023 via their active participation and gripping presentations. Of note,
SHSR board members Dr. Hironobu Fujiwara (RIKEN) and Prof. Emi Nishimura (Univ. of Tokyo) together with Prof. Aiko Sada (Kumamoto Univ.) organized a high-quality satellite meeting entitled “International Symposium on Skin Stem Cell Dynamics” at Hongo Campus of the University of Tokyo 14-15 May 2023 (Figure 3), which excellently illustrated the contribution of the SHSR in the field of hair follicle stem cell research.

**JAPANESE DERMATOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (JDA) ANNUAL MEETING**

The Japanese Dermatological Association (JDA) annual meeting is the pinnacle event for dermatologists and dermatological researchers here. After the mitigation in COVID-19 infection control policy, the JDA annual meeting was well attended. For this year, the 122nd JDA annual meeting was held 1-4 June 2023 under the presidency of Prof. Shinichi Sato (Univ. of Tokyo) at the PACIFICO YOKOHAMA convention center (Figures 4 and 5). SHSR members chaired and gave talks in the concurrent session focusing on hair diseases. SHSR members also gave educational lectures: Dr. Misaki Kinoshita-Ise (Kyorin Univ.) explained the recent advances in diagnostic methodologies for hair loss diseases, Prof. Taisuke Ito (Hamamatsu Univ.) presented clinical data with regards to the use of JAK inhibitors in his institute, Dr. Rie Ueki (Juntendo Univ.) talked about the current situation of the management of female pattern hair loss, and Dr. Koya Obara (Kitasato Univ.) nicely summarized the current advances in regenerative medicine featuring recent discoveries in hair follicle/stem cell basic research. These educational lectures were informative and well attended.

In addition, during the JDA annual meeting, two important committee meetings—the Safety Committee Meeting for Hair Disease Treatment and the Committee for the Management Guideline for Alopecia Areata—were held. Both committees were made up of JDA/SHSR members. The SHSR will endeavor to further optimize therapeutic approaches for hair diseases for the sake of patients and their families.
Dear colleagues,

Today we are living at an important historical moment when we all must unite and do everything we can in order to protect the values of civilization. Many of the members of the Ukrainian Hair Research Society (UHRS) have joined the front line of our defense as military doctors, showing many examples of extraordinary heroism, performing operations while being shelled, surviving occupation and captivity, and saving lives while entrenched in such conditions. In Ukrainian hospitals, our colleagues manage to quickly master military dermatology, continuing to care for patients in a crisis situation, and maintaining remote communication with those who were forced to leave their homes.

**UHRS EDUCATION—INNOVATIVE NEW EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM TO LAUNCH**

The experience of the war has taught us to understand that professional communication is a strategic resource. Our team had the idea of creating a project that would become a modern educational tool and allow a specialist to stay updated on the latest innovations, to improve the level of their own competence and professionalism, and to receive timely collegial assistance. In 2023, we will be pleased to present our new initiative—UHRS Education—which is a global hybrid educational platform of continuing medical education in trichology created jointly by experts, researchers, dermatologists and trichologists, and leading laboratories and universities on the basis of advanced scientific research, and the personal experience and data from world professional congresses (Figure 1).

This unique professional territory will combine an educational platform for doctors (dermatologists, trichologists, specialists in aesthetic medicine, hair transplant specialists), an expert platform for innovative knowledge and opportunities, startups for young specialists, a club-type social network, a knowledge simulator, a database of clinical cases, a library, a lecture hall, a scientific news resource, and a modern online congress hall. In the near future, we will invite our colleagues from all over the world to exchange experience on this innovative UHRS Education platform.

**RESEARCH**

**JAK Inhibitors**

Now that we are on the threshold of revising the management protocols of alopecia areata (AA), in unison with experts from around the world, we are working on the integration of JAK inhibitors into the treatment algorithms for AA. Our proposed criteria on the use of JAK inhibitors in patients with AA were reported on at the American Hair Research Society (AHRS) Summit, which took place on March 16, 2023, before AAD2023 (Figure 2).
The Index of Severity of Alopecia Areata (ISAA)

AA has a clinical heterogeneity that often extends beyond the scalp. Therefore, today the assessment of the degree of severity of AA should be more thorough than just the assessment of hair loss on the scalp. To address this, we have designed a differentiated approach to the management of patients with AA that takes into account randomization by age, severity of the disease, clinical subtype, stage of activity, prognostically important comorbid pathology, and the impact on the patient’s quality of life (QOL). Named the Index of Severity of Alopecia Areata (ISAA), it combines quantitative assessments of the degree of severity of the main manifestations of AA on the scalp (hair pull test, dermatotrichoscopy markers) with an assessment of the area of the lesion, as well as quantitative assessments of the degree of hair loss in other areas and lesions of the nail plates. The duration of the last episode of the disease and the response to previous therapy are evaluated. The degree of negative influence of AA on QOL is characterized by significant variability and may not correlate with the objective condition of patients and the severity of the disease.

In addition, there is a discrepancy in the perception of AA by the patient and the doctor. As a result, standard indicators used to assess the degree of severity, such as the percentage of hair loss, do not adequately describe the level of psychological stress in patients with AA. Therefore, the Dermatology Quality of Life Index is an additional criterion for severity in the ISAA developed by us. A value from 1 to 12 points corresponds to a mild degree of severity, from 13 to 25 points to an average/moderate degree of severity of the process, and from 26 to 44 points to a severe course of AA. According to this scale, the mild and moderate stages of AA may correspond to the severe degree according to ISAA only in terms of the area of the lesion, taking into account the following factors: forms with a prognostically unfavorable course (linear forms, loss of hair on the body, damage to the nail plates, significant signs of activity, rapid diffuse hair loss, etc.); long-term course; torpidity to therapy; and decrease in QOL. The ISAA scale allows for a more informative assessment of the severity of AA in clinical practice and will become the basis for the integration of JAK inhibitors in the next revision of protocols.

MILITARY DERMATOLOGY

According to preliminary statistical data of specialized dermatotrichological clinics of Ukraine, it is possible to note an increase in the incidence of five nosological diseases in military personnel and civilians in the war zone compared to the previous year: psoriasis, seborrheic dermatitis, telogen effluvium, alopecia areata, and pressure alopecia. Among the features of psoriasis in wartime, we observed itching to be the dominant symptom, as well as a higher prevalence of severe forms, a high incidence of psoriasis in children, and the same occurrence in the military and in civilians with an increase in incidence and debut up to 15.1%. In wartime, the prevalence of seborrheic dermatitis increased by 13.8%, with a higher prevalence of severe forms, a higher rate in men, and the same increase in both military and in civilians. The prevalence of telogen effluvium increased by 11.7%, with a female predominance and a higher frequency in civilians. Stress was recognized as a cause of the disease by 32.3% of patients. According to our data, another extreme situation nosology—pressure alopecia—showed a 2.5% increase in incidence. Pressure alopecia was discovered to occur more frequently in the military. In addition, AA is more prevalent in the military population than in civilians. Data from Ukrainian hospitals showed an increase in the prevalence of AA by 8.2%. These results were reported on at the 20EHRS Congress in Sheffield.

Thank You to Our Colleagues

The history of Ukrainian trichology continues. We thank the Ukrainian Defense Forces for protecting our right to identity, the right to freedom, the right to life. We thank colleagues from all over the world for the continued support of Ukrainian doctors. Together we will go to our Victory.
Staff and Member Societies

Chair: Wilma F. Bergfeld, MD
Executive Secretary: Victoria Ceh, MPA
Immediate Past Chair: Gillian Westgate, PhD
Managing Editor, IFHRS Newsletter: Cheryl Duckler

IFHRS MEMBER SOCIETIES
American Hair Research Society – founding member
Australasian Hair and Wool Research Society – founding member
Chinese Hair Research Society
European Hair Research Society – founding member
The Korean Hair Research Society – founding member
Russian Hair Research Society
The Society for Hair Science Research – founding member
Ukrainian Hair Research Society