

2025 AHRS LECTURE In Honor of Vera Price, MD

Paradi Mirmirani, MD

The Permanente Medical Group, Vallejo, CA

Interim Medical Director, Regional Clinical Trials Program

Regional Director, Hair Disorders and Dermatology Research

paradi.mirmirani@kp.org



In her own words: *Turns in the Road*

“I am frequently asked how I became involved in hair. It was not by design. It was serendipity.”

Women's
Dermatology
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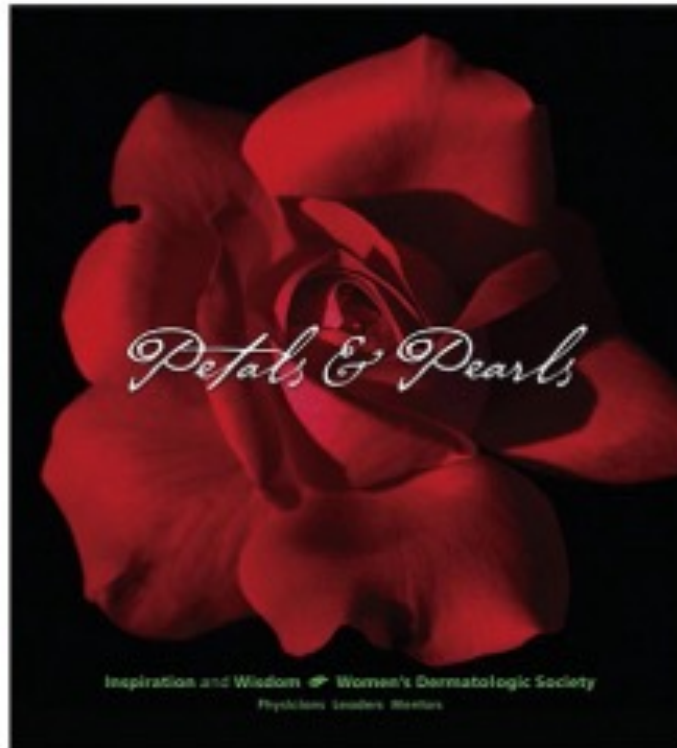
35 years Celebration

Book Vignettes

Creative design
Sigrid Bergfeld

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Becki Tung
Co advisors
Wilma Bergfeld
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www.womensderm.org
wds@womensderm.org



With Emory Menefee, the creative physical chemist with whom I was assigned to work at the wool lab. We continue to collaborate. Photo in front of the USDA lab, 2009.

Turns in the Road

I am frequently asked how I became involved in hair. It was not by design. It was serendipity. After completing my training at NYU, I joined Ricky Schachter in her dermatology practice in my hometown of Toronto and soon was settled and happy as a lark. My husband, however, wanted to spend one year at Donner Laboratory in Berkeley, California, to further his training in nuclear medicine. I was reluctant, but he assured me it was just for one year. So we left our furniture and possessions, and with just a couple of suitcases moved to the Bay Area for one year funded by a Canadian research scholarship of \$500 per month. The year was 1965.

To supplement our income, I contacted the dermatology department at UCSF to see if there was some research I could do during my one year in California. To my surprise, I was asked if I liked math and physics, and, needing a job, I enthusiastically exclaimed, “Of course!” (Isn’t that the reason we all chose dermatology?) It turned out that—because human hair and wool are similar in structure and chemistry—the department wanted to send a dermatologist to study human hair with wool chemists at the Wool and Mohair Laboratory in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s research lab in Berkeley. This was the only wool research laboratory in the U.S., akin to labs in Australia and England.

So I found myself in the midst of famous wool researchers, assigned to work with a creative scientist, Emory Menefee, from M.I.T. He was as skeptical about working with a clinical

“To my surprise, I was asked if I liked math and physics, and, needing a job, I enthusiastically exclaimed, ‘Of course!’ (Isn’t that the reason we all chose dermatology?)”

I survived the first week, then a month, and began to receive envelopes with funny-looking hair to examine. Soon, I had a large collection of different hair anomalies, and my mentors included the best in wool chemistry, light and electron microscopy and crystallography. They introduced me to the scientific method.

In the meantime, the situation my husband had left in Toronto became less promising, and it became clear we were not returning home. So after three years at the wool lab, I told the dermatology department at UCSF that I wanted to return to full-time clinical dermatology and start my family as well. After supporting my study of hair for three years, the department then assigned all the hair lectures to me! And so began my gratifying path as a hair expert.

My advice from this experience is to take advantage of every detour and opportunity that comes your way. Turns in the road always broaden your horizons, are invariably enriching, and sometimes change your entire direction. You might even become an expert in an unexpected field.

VERA H. PRICE, MD
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Pacific West Area
Western Regional Res
Plant Gene Expression
Exit to Buchanan St.

> Arch Dermatol. 1968 Dec;98(6):640-7. doi: 10.1001/archderm.98.6.640.

Pili annulati. Optical and electron microscopic studies



V H Price, R S Thomas, F T Jones

PMID: 5697235 DOI: 10.1001/archderm.98.6.640

 Access Options

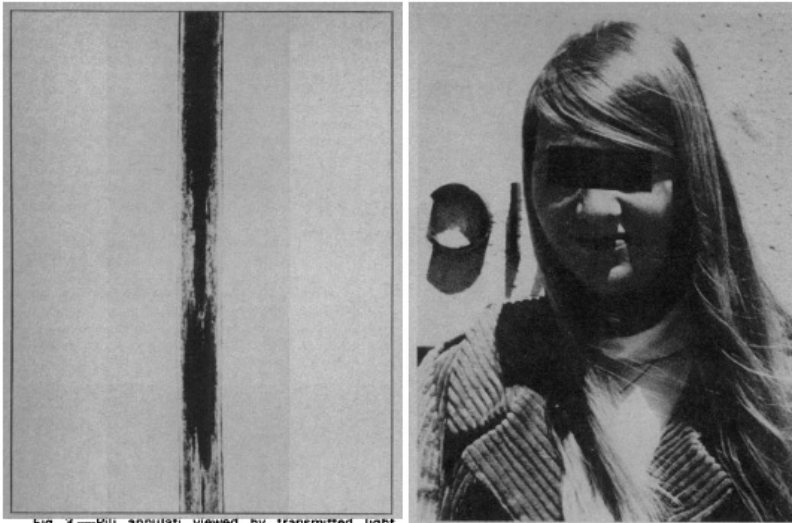


Fig 1.—Pili annulati viewed by transmitted light.


> Arch Dermatol. 1970 Oct;102(4):354-8. doi: 10.1001/archderm.102.4.354.

Pseudopili annulati; an unusual variant of normal hair



V H Price, R S Thomas, F T Jones

PMID: 5470945 DOI: 10.1001/archderm.102.4.354

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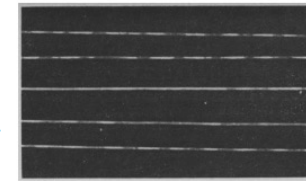


Fig 1.—Pili annulati viewed by reflected light showing characteristic bright and dark bands. Incident light beam parallel to long axis of fibers.

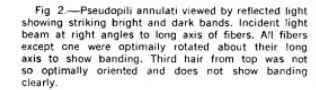


Fig 2.—Pseudopili annulati viewed by reflected light showing striking bright and dark bands. Incident light beam at right angles to long axis of fibers. All fibers except one were optimally rotated about their long axis to show banding. Third hair from top was not so optimally oriented and does not show banding clearly.

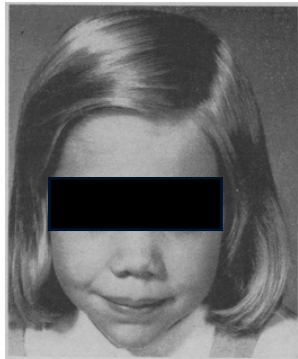


Fig 3.—Patient with pseudopili annulati. Note long, sound hair and absence of any clinical problem with hair growth.

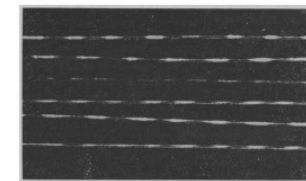


Fig 4.—Pseudopili annulati viewed by reflected light. Bright segments are due to reflection and refraction of light by flattened, twisted surfaces of hair.



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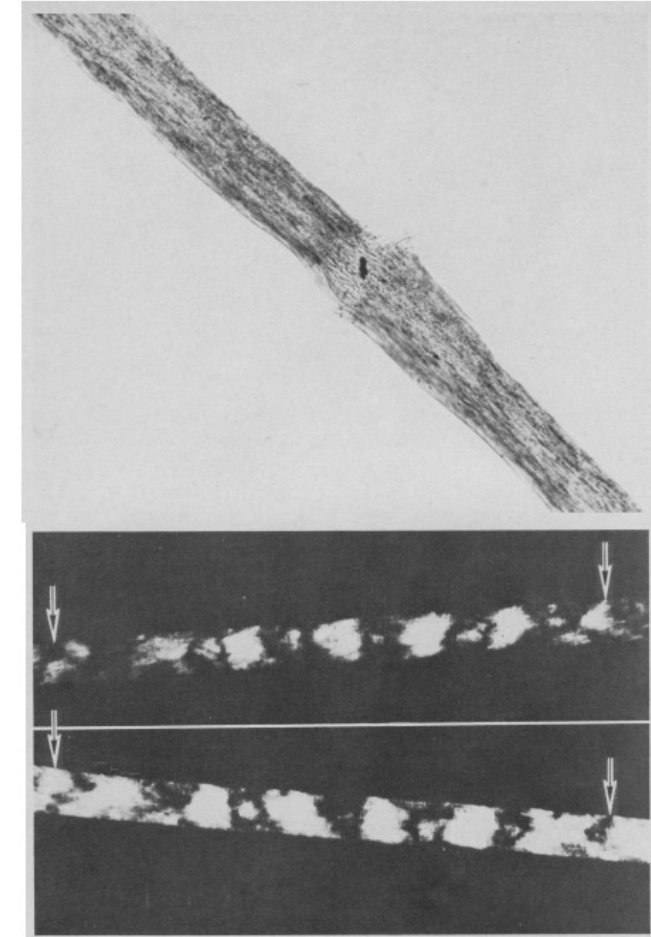
Trichothiodystrophy(TTD)- rare autosomal recessive genetic disorder

Trichothiodystrophy

Sulfur-Deficient Brittle Hair as a Marker
for a Neuroectodermal Symptom Complex

Vera H. Price, MD; Richard B. Odom, MD; Wilfred H. Ward, PhD; Francis T. Jones, PhD

Arch Dermatol—Vol 116, Dec 1980



Loose anagen syndrome:

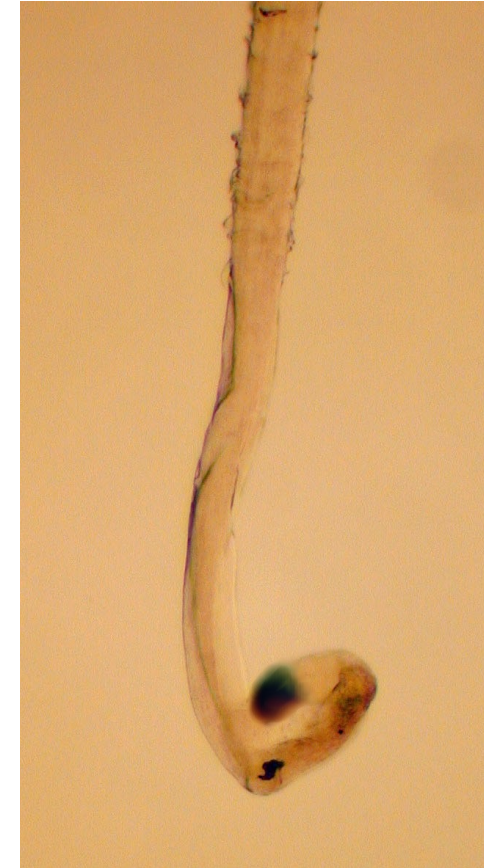


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Dermatology

Volume 20, Issue 2, Part 1, February 1989, Pages 249-256

Loose anagen syndrome †

Vera H. Price MD^a, Christopher L. Gummer DPhilP^{b *}



Sparse hair that does not grow due to poor anchoring

National Alopecia Areata Foundation 1981: Co-founder



“Androgenetic Alopecia” a Brook Lodge Symposium- 1987



First Row (left to right): M. Hordinsky, V. Price, W. Bergfeld, D. Moerman, N. Terezakis, E. Fuchs, R. Horton

Second Row (left to right): T. Johnson, A. Lorincz, K. Hashimoto, J. Headington, A. Bertolino, I. Katz, C. Ellis, R. Dover, R. Rittmaster, V. Fiedler-Weiss, R. Dawber, J. Ebling

Third Row (left to right): H. Roenigk, H. Baden, K. Neldner, A. Kligman, L. Kligman, H. DeGreef, G. Szpunar, R. Rietschel, S. Pinnell

Fourth Row (left to right): F. Malkinson, M. Duvic, E. Epstein, R. Savin, S. Panter, T. Chuang, T. Sun, P. Brigham, G. Peck

Fifth Row (left to right): T. Nigra, G. Johnson, G. Bazzano, E. Abell, K. Meisner, M. Holland, H. Samra, R. DeVillez, E. Orenberg, A. Vermorken, J. Matias, G. Patzer, G. Rogers, R. Langdon, R. Oliver, A. Messenger

Use of Minoxidil in Alopecia Areata



Topical minoxidil (3%) in extensive alopecia areata, including long-term efficacy.

Price VH.

J Am Acad Dermatol. 1987 Mar;16(3 Pt 2):737-44. doi: 10.1016/s0190-9622(87)70096-6.
PMID: 3549810 Clinical Trial.



Double-blind, placebo-controlled evaluation of topical minoxidil in extensive alopecia areata.

Price VH.

J Am Acad Dermatol. 1987 Mar;16(3 Pt 2):730-6. doi: 10.1016/s0190-9622(87)70095-4.
PMID: 3549809 Clinical Trial.



Topical minoxidil in extensive alopecia areata, including 3-year follow-up.

Price VH.

Dermatologica. 1987;175 Suppl 2:36-41. doi: 10.1159/000248901.
PMID: 3691913 Clinical Trial.

Quantification of Hair Growth Using Hair Weight



Quantitative estimation of hair growth. I. androgenetic alopecia in women: effect of minoxidil.

Price VH, Menefee E.

J Invest Dermatol. 1990 Dec;95(6):683-7. doi: 10.1111/1523-1747.ep12514348.

PMID: 2250110 **Free article.** Clinical Trial.



Changes in hair weight and hair count in men with androgenetic alopecia, after application of 5% and 2% topical minoxidil, placebo, or no treatment.

Price VH, Menefee E, Strauss PC.

J Am Acad Dermatol. 1999 Nov;41(5 Pt 1):717-21. doi: 10.1016/s0190-9622(99)70006-x.

PMID: 10534633 Clinical Trial.



Changes in hair weight and hair count in men with androgenetic alopecia after treatment with finasteride, 1 mg, daily.

Price VH, Menefee E, Sanchez M, Ruane P, Kaufman KD.

J Am Acad Dermatol. 2002 Apr;46(4):517-23. doi: 10.1067/mjd.2002.120537.

PMID: 11907500 Clinical Trial.

(North) American Hair Research Society
Founder and First President 1991-1993





98
Dermatology Times | June 2011

physician's profile

Vera H. Price, M.D.

Born: Czechoslovakia

Medical degree: University of Toronto

Internship: Toronto General Hospital

Residency, internal medicine: Shaughnessy Hospital, Vancouver, British Columbia

Residency, dermatology: New York University School of Medicine

Hobbies: Music of all forms; going to the symphony, concerts, ballet, travel.

Family: Two grown children — a daughter who is a child psychiatrist and a son who works with corporate GAP.

Vera Price, M.D., with four of her former hair fellows at the UCSF Hair and Nail Clinic. From left: Paradi Mirmirani, M.D.; Blanca Ochoa, M.D.; Vera Price, M.D.; Jennifer Chwalek, M.D.; Charles Chiang, M.D. (Photo: Vera H. Price, M.D.)

In Her Own Words:

What is the best professional advice you ever received?

Dr. Price: "When I was finishing high school, my uncle, an organic chemist, asked me what I wanted to do. I replied a lab technician, or perhaps do art as applied to medicine. Horrified, he said, 'Don't get a half education. If you are interested in chemistry, be a chemist, or if you are interested in medicine, be a doctor.' The thought had never occurred to me!"

For the love of hair

Dermatologist strives to stimulate interest in hair and related disorders

By Lisette Hilton
Staff Correspondent

Vera H. Price, M.D., encourages those she mentors to pursue detours and other opportunities whenever they arise — especially when those opportunities are with people who are respected in their fields.

Some turns in the road might not seem like perfect fits, but they usually can broaden your horizons. They might even change your life, she says.

Dr. Price is a renowned hair expert in dermatology because of an opportunity she did not anticipate and was not even certain that she wanted.

The road to expertise

Dr. Price and her husband moved from Toronto to California for a yearlong position that her husband planned to pursue in Berkeley. She needed a job, she says, so she asked the dermatology department at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), if there was any research she could do for the one year.

"I couldn't practice dermatology until I passed my California state exams, and that was a few months away," she says.

The department head asked her if she liked math and physics (which she did) and offered to send her to study human hair with the wool chemists in the Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional Research Laboratory in Berkeley. It was not what Dr. Price expected, but she accepted it, becoming a research dermatologist in the USDA's Wool and Mohair Laboratory.

The yearlong appointment with the wool chemists became a three-year research experience. Dr. Price says that sheep wool is an important commodity worldwide, and she notes that the study of wool is an advanced science.

"These chemists have figured how to keep wool from shrinking, from yellowing, and have studied protein structure and its relation to wool properties," Dr. Price says.

During her time at the wool lab, Dr. Price was introduced to the scientific method, and she studied the structure and biochemistry of human hair alongside top physical chemists, optical and electron microscopists and crystallographers.

She and her husband did not return to Canada. After three years at the wool lab, she told the UCSF dermatology department that she wanted to return to full-time clinical dermatology and start a family.

"After supporting my study of hair, Dr. Price is a renowned hair expert in dermatology because of an opportunity she did not anticipate and was not even certain that she wanted.

the department then asked me to give all the lectures on hair. Although not planned, this is how my expertise and subspecialty of hair and hair biology gradually evolved," says Dr. Price, who then became director of the UCSF Hair and Nail Clinic and practiced dermatology at the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, San Francisco.

After about 20 years with Kaiser, she was invited to join the UCSF faculty full-profile see page 106

Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation-2004- Co-founder



American Academy of Dermatology Gold Triangle Award



UCSF Grand Rounds Honoring Dr. Vera Price- 2019









Dr. Vera Price Inaugural AHRs Honorary Lecture Congratulations!

Thank you for your contributions and dedication to advancing the science of hair and for your friendship, advocacy, leadership, inspiration, curiosity, mentorship, sartorial advice, sparkling personality, and more!

