

Preface

There have been several recent reviews published of the primary cicatricial alopecias, so why was this monograph produced? We felt there was a need for a richly-illustrated and practical text that would be a teaching vehicle primarily for dermatology residents and interested dermatology colleagues. We realize that hair loss in general is not a topic on the curriculum of all dermatology departments, and cicatricial alopecia (scarring alopecia) in particular is frequently not covered.

At the University of California, San Francisco, we have held grand rounds dedicated entirely to the scarring alopecias. Introductory lectures are given highlighting clinical and histologic aspects, current treatments, and a summary of new research. In the patient viewing session, patients with characteristic features of each of the predominantly lymphocytic and neutrophilic cicatricial alopecias are presented. By “immersing” residents and colleagues in the topic of cicatricial alopecias, they have been able to envision a more global and systematic view of these disorders. The feedback has been tremendous: “I finally got it!”

In writing this monograph, we sought to replicate such a teaching session, and the information is presented as though the reader was “shadowing” us in the clinic. Each disease chapter is introduced with a clinical scenario of a patient, along with relevant clues for making the diagnosis. The discussion section follows and includes multiple photographs and take-away pearls to provide practical information needed to diagnose, manage, and counsel the patient. The suggested reading is not meant to be an exhaustive literature review, but rather a list of a few salient references. The voices of the patients can be heard in the chapter written by patients who tell of their frustrations in being undiagnosed by doctor after doctor, and untreated or mistreated for years. Our goal is to put the cicatricial alopecias on the center stage for dermatology residents and colleagues, because dermatologists may be the only physicians who can diagnose and treat these patients.

San Francisco, CA, USA
Vallejo, CA, USA

Vera Price
Paradi Mirmirani

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Price, V.; Mirmirani, P. (Eds.)

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