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Frontal Fibrosing Alopecia - an epidemic in Dermatology in the West

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BIO: Prof. Bianca Maria Piraccini is a distinguished dermatologist specializing in hair and nail disorders, trichoscopy, onychoscopy, and medical mycology. She currently serves as a Full Professor of Dermatology and Venereology (MED/35) at the University of Bologna, Italy. Prof. Piraccini earned her PhD in Dermatological Science (1992–1995) from the University of Bologna. Her academic career began in 1999 as a Researcher in Dermatology, leading to her appointment as Associate Professor in 2015 and Full Professor in 2021. Prof. Piraccini has made significant contributions to trichoscopy and onychoscopy, advancing diagnostic techniques in dermatology. Her research and clinical work continue to shape the field, making her a key figure in dermatological science both in Italy and internationally.

Abstract: Frontal Fibrosing Alopecia (FFA) is a primary lymphocytic cicatricial alopecia predominantly affecting postmenopausal Caucasian women. It is characterized by a progressive frontotemporal hairline recession that presents as a scarring hairless band and is often accompanied by eyebrow and body hair loss. Facial micropapules, mainly detected in the temporal areas, as a sign of the involvement of facial vellus hair, are commonly found. Although initially described in postmenopausal women, FFA has been observed in a broader demographic, including premenopausal women and occasionally men. The etiology remains elusive, with potential factors including genetic predisposition, hormonal influences, and chemical exposures playing a role. FFA exhibits a slow and distinctive progression, which sets it apart from other hair loss conditions. Apart from environmental factors, improved recognition and increased awareness have contributed to the growing number of diagnosed cases worldwide, a trend characterized by some as epidemic.