



Editorial Comment

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Gray hairs seem to be my fancy like the soft light of the moon, silvering over the evening of life.
- *Jean Paul Richter (German romantic novelist, 1763-1825)*

You are only as good as your last haircut.
- *(Australian Olympic rowing coxswain, 1966-present)*

Throughout history, hair has held great importance for people, both individually and as a society. We are constantly obsessing over hair-too much, too little, wrong color, wrong style, wrong location, etc. In the past, and today, healthy hair suggested good health and youthfulness.¹ Within certain groups, such as the military or buddhist monks, short or absent hair creates a feeling of solidarity and eliminates individuality.

Practically and medically speaking, hair helps to protect the body from sun damage and loss of heat through the skin. Hair in certain areas may act as a sense organ (ears) or a filter (nose).

The color and consistency of hair can suggest age (gray or white implying older adults), ethnicity (red for Irish, thin white blond in Northern Europeans) or systemic diseases such as hypothyroidism, Wilson's disease, or Systemic Lupus.

Hair causes drag when wet, so a shaved head and body may actually shave seconds off a swimming time.

In many cultures, hair is covered in public or during religious ceremonies as a sign of purity and a spiritual state of centeredness or out of a reverence for a deity.²

A movie produced by HBO films is entitled, "Good Hair." The movie chronicles, both comically and seriously, the complex relationship that African Americans have with their hair.³

Women are often the ones spending exorbitant amounts of time and money trying to remove hair from their body while men probably spend just as much time trying to put it back where it once was.

Whatever your relationship is with your hair, or lack thereof, please read the interesting articles we have in this month's issue, including two with topics on the subject of hair.

Additionally, we have an article on HCV presence in El Paso and

current options for treatment, plus a statement from the Health Department on infectious diseases. Enjoy!

1. *Wikipedia.org*
2. *17 Reasons Why Women Wear Headscarves; www.religiondispatches.org/archive/sexandgender March 27, 2008 and www.judaism.about.com/od/judaismbasics/a/what-is-a-kippah-yarmulke.htm*
3. *Good Hair. HBO Films, October, 2009.*

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