

Phenotype of Normal Hairline Maturation

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KEYWORDS

• Phenotype • Hairline • Maturation • Facial morphology

KEY POINTS

- Hairlines have characteristic shapes in boys and girls and change predictably as children develop into adulthood.
- The hairline in male and female children is traditionally concave in shape in all races.
- The upward movement of the female hairline leaves a widow's peak in 81% of women.
- The concave shape of the male frontal hairline transitions to a convex shape between 18-29 years of age.
- The maturing recession of the temple mounds leaves a temple peak behind in boys and girls.
- Recession of the temple mound upwards and laterally in men leaves a balding corner.
- The leading edge of hair direction in the juvenile hairline is different than the hair direction in the mature hairline in adult men and some women.

INTRODUCTION

This article applies observational science to the process of how the hairline develops from childhood to adulthood in men and women. It also includes a summary of 1051 children from school yearbooks, aged 5 to 10 years and 15 to 18 years in boys and girls whose hairlines were not hidden by styling. It adds a missing link to the insights by Norwood and Shiell¹ and Hamilton² in their respective seminal articles on balding in men and women; however, this article's main focus is not about balding, but about the visual changes in the hairlines that are seen as humans age. What is seen in hairline changes results from environmental events (eg, traction alopecia), age, and hormones as they influence the genetics that code the various parts of the anatomic hairline. These genetics are evident in the phenotype of the hairline's evolution at each point in time. The available medical information on hairline evolution approaches hairline change as if it reflects a disease process or a genetic abnormality.

This article:

1. Provides physicians with a better understanding of how to educate the patient to better understand the changes seen in their hairlines
2. Will help decide whether the hairline changes are typical or not
3. Provides the physician with a more precise understanding of the genetic influences of the phenotype of hairline evolution from childhood to adulthood
4. Provides the hair restoration surgeon a foundation on which to design a hairline appropriate to meet each individual's needs, specific to their age and sex

People often ask or comment about their hairlines:

Is my hairline receding or getting thin? Am I seeing my hairline rise? Do changes in my hairline mean that I am balding like my father or mother? I don't like the shape or position of my hairline. Is there something I can do about it?

Disclosures: None.

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