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The latest in fight against shine: Laser *Hair is stimulated by treatment, some claim.*

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There he is -- looking like Quentin Tarantino in scrubs -- leafing through his picture book of successes.

Bald fellows morphing into chaps with almost enough dome hair to make you want to run your fingers through it.

Women with full heads of gray/white hair whose pates had been so light on top that they looked like newborn babes.

The "afters" are the results of several therapies, and often a mixture that Dr. Alan Bauman offers, from hair transplantation to supplements he imports from Finland to a new laser technology on the edge of approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

If you've got the bucks, you can say goodbye to baldness -- particularly in Boca Raton, the unofficial hair-fluff capital of Palm Beach County.

Bauman has his office here, as does Dr. Glenn Charles -- another hair restoration specialist who offers the newest laser treatments -- and David Michaels, a director of the company that produces the HairMax laser comb.

But Bauman isn't just selling the HairMax; he's also using it.

One of the "after" shots in his picture book is his dad, looking much like his 33-year-old son does now. Bauman transplanted his balding father and doesn't want to face the same fate.

"I hope never to find out," he laughs, referring to genetics being a strong predictor of hair loss.

The comb is low-level laser therapy, a lightweight light treatment that shoots laser beams from a handheld comb, stimulating hair follicles.

But "you have to have follicles there for the treatment to work," Bauman says. "If the scalp is shining through, you've already lost 50 percent of your hair."

HairMax has FDA approval as a cosmetic device to stimulate "thicker, fuller, healthier hair" and is awaiting U.S. approval to be marketed as a hair regrowth device. It was approved for that use in Canada this year.

Afraid of the laser? It meets U.S. product safety standards, and its promoters say the laser beam is so low that it's harmless.

The other good news is there are no known side effects to low-level lasers, unlike other hair-growth treatments such as Propecia and minoxidil. Their side effects

range from warning fertile women not even to touch the pill (Propecia) to possible hair growth on women's faces (minoxidil).

And at \$645, HairMax is comparatively affordable. Treatments like the laser hood -- same type of laser in a free-standing floor device -- can run \$3,500 for a year and you have to travel to the doctor's office to use it. Other products are cheaper to buy -- minoxidil can run about \$30 a month -- but they usually require lifetime use to retain effectiveness, if there is any success in stimulating hair growth.

So what about the comb's effectiveness?

As with other products, there is no 100 percent guarantee.

HairMax public relations statements tell it all: "Put simply, just as fresh air and exercise is 'good' for the body, laser is good for the hair. So whether it's a matter of boosting and thickening your hair, laser 'works' on virtually everyone. The only question is how much."

And that's a big question. But the manufacturer guarantees a refund within 12 weeks of purchase.

Bauman was a doubter who says he has been surprised by the laser's effectiveness. He brought a laser hood into his office with the intention of debunking it.

"I said, 'Let me borrow it and show you it doesn't work.' I put it in the office, and I had to eat my words. It started to grow a ton of hair."

His office's education director, Joan Spadafina, has used both the hood and the comb and is delighted with her results.

Both products are used 2-3 times a week for about 15 minutes each session.

"My hair was falling out in gobs," she says. She was using hormone replacement therapy after menopause and thought that might be causing the fallout.

"I thought there was something wrong with me. I didn't know the magnitude of hair loss for women."

After four months of using the comb and the hood, she has seen a difference.

"I have not had one hair in my hand," she said. "It's stopping the hair loss."