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NEWS FROM THE CICATRICIAL ALOPECIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

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**BREAKTHROUGH DISCOVERY IN HAIR BIOLOGY PAVES WAY FOR TREATING  
SCARRING HAIR LOSS**

***Collaborative scientific research reveals link between rare group of hair disorders and a defect in lipid processing***

San Francisco, March 12, 2009 — A breakthrough discovery in understanding hair biology paves the way for developing better treatments for cicatricial alopecia (scarring hair loss), an inflammatory permanent hair loss. The unprecedented findings link a defect in lipid processing to these rare and painful hair loss disorders.

In collaborative scientific research, Principal Investigator Pratima Karnik, PhD (Case Western Reserve University), Paradi Mirmirani, MD (Case Western Reserve University and University of California, San Francisco) and Vera Price, MD (University of California, San Francisco), found that unprocessed lipids set the stage for developing scarring hair loss. The work suggests that either processed lipids are necessary for hair growth or unprocessed lipids are toxic. These clinical studies corroborate similar studies performed in mutant mice. In preliminary studies, the researchers found that treating patients with drugs that enhance lipid processing relieved the clinical symptoms and signs of the disorder.

(<http://www.nature.com/jid/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/jid2008369a.html>. Karnik P et al. Hair Follicle Stem Cell-Specific PPAR *gamma* Deletion Causes Scarring Alopecia. *J Invest Dermatol* advance online publication, 4 December, 2008)

According to George Cotsarelis, MD, the Director of the University of Pennsylvania Hair and Scalp Clinic, who has been treating this group of hair diseases for more than fifteen years, “This research represents a great leap forward in the field of scarring hair loss. The study may lead to more effective treatments and, one day, possibly prevention of scarring hair loss, now an extremely difficult problem for both patient and physician. This work may also provide insights into other skin diseases.”

This groundbreaking work was supported in part by the Cicatricial Alopecia Research Foundation (CARF). Visit: [www.carfintl.org](http://www.carfintl.org).

*Contact Sheila Belkin (310-475-2419) for more information or to arrange an interview with  
Drs. Karnik, Mirmirani and Price.*