

TRACTION ALOPECIA

Traction alopecia (TA) is common, particularly in African females, principally thought to be secondary to hairstyling that puts prolonged tension on the hair shafts.

A scoring system for assessing the severity of TA was proposed by Khumalo et al¹ in the Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology. They developed a severity scoring system (M-TAS score) for marginal TA, which is the commonest form of this disorder. The reliability was tested and they concluded that the photograph-based M-TAS score is a useful research tool for elucidating disease prevalence and determinants of TA as well for monitoring response to treatment.

The margins of the scalp are divided as illustrated in figure 1.

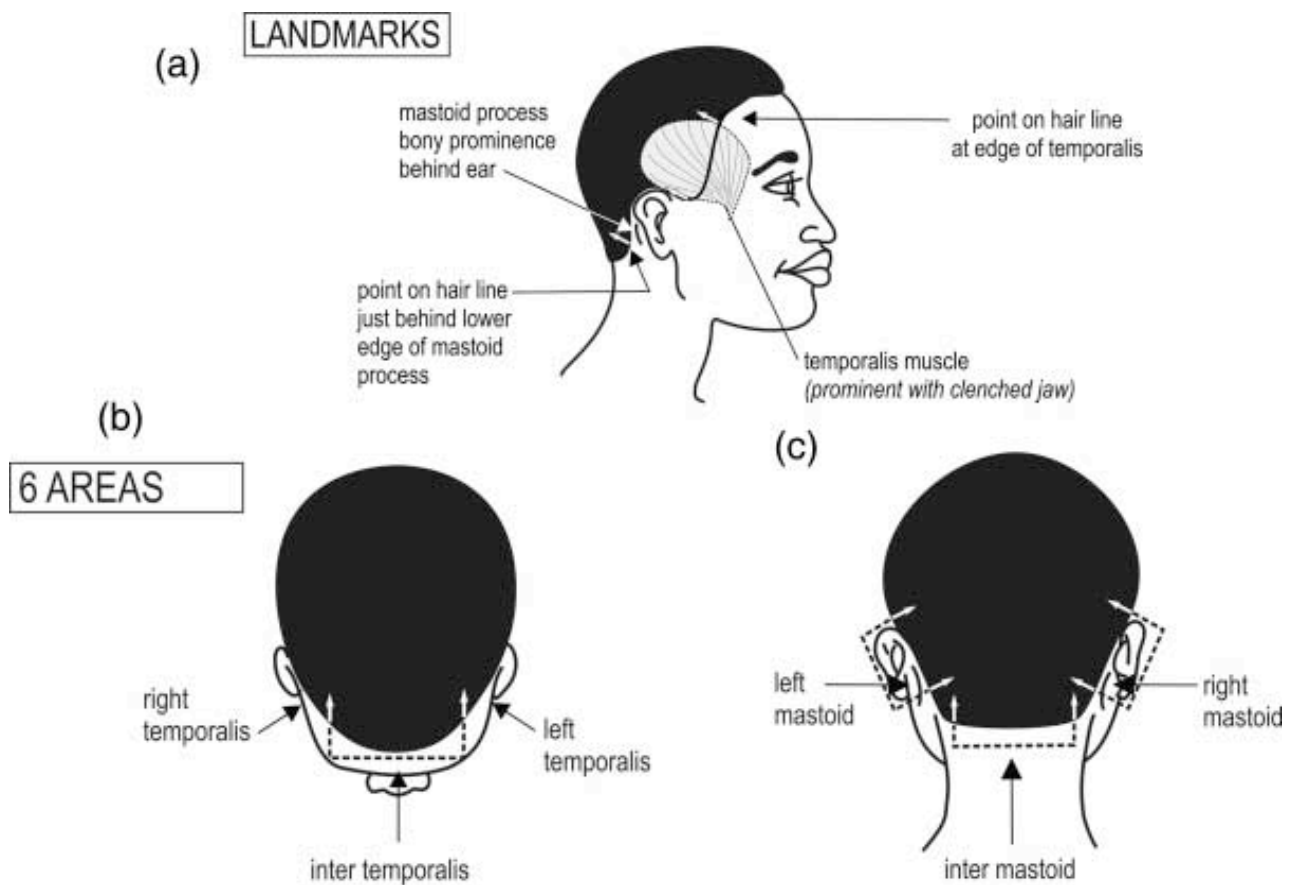


Figure 1. The anatomical landmarks for the division of scalp margins into anterior and posterior, both of which are subdivided into three

SCORING: maximum score for each area is 4

Normal looking area = 0

Short/thin hair involving < 50% of the width of the area = 1

Short/thin hair > 50% of the width of the area = 2

Bald patch(es) < 50% of the width of the area = 3

Bald patch(es) > 50% of the width of the area = 4.

¹ Khumalo NP et al, *Marginal traction alopecia severity score: development and test of reliability.* *J Cosmet Dermatol.* 2007 Dec;6(4):262-9.

