

How My Wife's Alopecia Areata Inspired Us to Take Action

By Ofer Kariv, Ramat-Gan, ISRAEL

My name is Ofer Kariv, I'm married to Maya, and we have three children. We live in Israel, where I am an entrepreneur, and Maya cares for children with autism.

Four years ago, at the age of 35, without any notice, all of Maya's hair fell out (she has alopecia universalis). Only then, after speaking to Maya's parents, did we learn that at the age of 5 Maya had suffered from a single occasion of patchy alopecia areata. At the time, no one diagnosed this illness, so Maya did not know she was living with alopecia areata.

Due to this very difficult event we studied the issue and realized that, until recently, alopecia areata had not been researched enough due to a lack of sufficient funding. The conclusion was that we had to take the initiative!

We found the National Alopecia Areata Foundation, which supports and advances medical research in alopecia areata. When we found NAAF, we also found that we were not alone! Around the world there are millions of people diagnosed with this illness. Furthermore, those with patchy alopecia areata are at high risk for their status to progress to alopecia totalis or alopecia universalis.

We also began to search for a cosmetic solution. We went as far as Japan, a country characterized by a high proportion of people suffering from alopecia and known for its technological advances and attention to detail and aesthetics. There, we found Propia, a company that invented and patented a unique product specifically designed for hair loss, called Hair-Contact®. At the time Hair-Contact was only sold in Japan and in neighboring countries.

As NAAF is mainly supported by donations, we decided to take up the challenge, marketing Propia's unique solution



in other countries and providing NAAF with a portion of the proceeds. We are now selling Hair-Contact and hope that it will offer a good cosmetic solution, as it has for my wife Maya, and at the same time support the effort of finding a cure for this illness.

We might be the only business in the world that is looking forward to being out of business!

For more information about Hair-Contact (sold by Hair Patches) visit www.naaf.org/shop-for-products. ■

Editor's Note:

NAAF staff met with Ofer and his wife early last year to discuss this idea and learn more about the product and its usefulness. NAAF sent samples to people in our community with a request for feedback and what we heard was positive. Of course, you will need to assess the product for yourself, as we cannot endorse any product. However, we are grateful to have the support of Ofer's family.