

*How can I meet other kids  
with "trich"?*

One of the worst aspects of trich is feeling like you're the only one who has this problem. It helps to know other people dealing with trich.

The Trichotillomania Learning Center, Inc. (TLC) will provide your family with information about support groups, treatment providers and other resources in your area.

TLC publishes a quarterly newsletter, *In Touch*, filled with letters and articles by members of the growing "trich community."

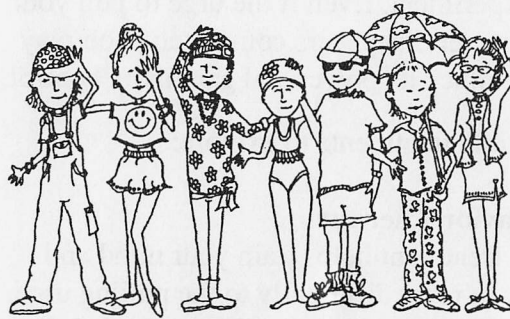
Every year, TLC holds a four-day retreat which brings together kids and adults from all over the country. This is a great opportunity to meet people with trich and talk with doctors and therapists working on treatment.

You can also start searching the Internet for bulletin boards, chat sessions and websites about trichotillomania. TLC's site is at: [www.trich.org](http://www.trich.org)

For more information about resources and events, contact:

Trichotillomania Learning Center, Inc. (TLC)  
1215 Mission Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(931) 457-1004

Whether by phone, mail or computer, there are now lots of ways to find information and support. So get in touch!



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**You pull out your hair**

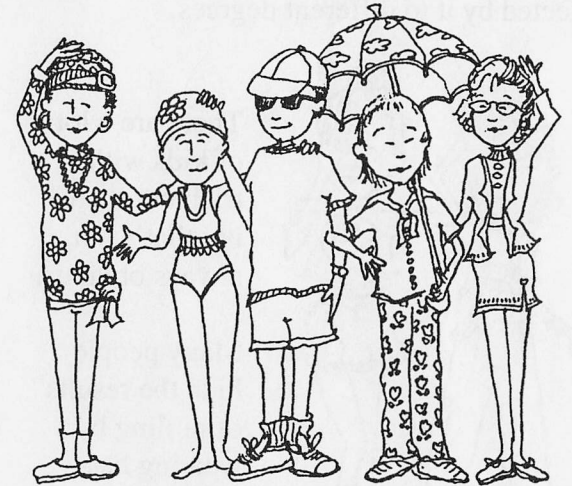
or eyelashes or eyebrows...

You've tried to stop,  
and you just can't.

But you are not alone.

Millions of kids share this  
problem.

It's called...



**TRICHOTILLOMANIA**

## **Pulling out your hair doesn't mean you're crazy or strange.**

You and **MILLIONS** of other people have a condition called compulsive hair pulling or trichotillomania (trick-o-til-o-may-nee-ah).

If you have "trich", you feel an uncontrollable urge to pull out hairs – from your head, eyebrows, eyelashes, or any other places you have hair.

You may also play with, count or bite the hairs you pull.

People of all ages have this problem and are affected by it to different degrees.



There are a lot of kids with trich out there, but that's not always obvious.

Many people hide the results of pulling by wearing hats, make-up, or hair clips.

There may be more people with trich than we know about.

## ***Why Me? What causes it?***

Tough questions. There is no simple answer, though doctors are investigating many ideas. Some think that there may be a physical cause for hair pulling - like certain brain chemicals out of balance, for example.

Others think that pulling hair is one of many possible nervous habits - like nail biting - that can become powerful and irresistible through sheer repetition.

Right now we have more questions than answers about what causes trich. We do know it isn't your fault, or your parents' fault.

## ***Will it go away?***

Not usually by itself, but getting help from professionals who know about this problem can make a big difference. No single treatment works for everyone – so you need to experiment. Even if the urge to pull your hair never disappears completely, you may still reduce its power and gain more control.

Possible treatments to explore:

### **Behavior Therapy**

This treatment helps train your mind and body to react differently to the pulling urge, so you can break the pulling habit, and find substitutes for the things that are satisfying about pulling out hair.

### **Medication**

Medications can sometimes reduce the urge to pull, but may also cause side effects. The best use of medication for kids may be to treat problems such as anxiety or depression which often accompany trich. When these problems are relieved, you'll likely have more energy to devote to behavior therapy and other means of reducing hair pulling in the long term.

### **Support Groups/Therapy**

Trichotillomania can trick you into feeling bad about yourself or losing hope. Talking with a therapist or attending a support group can help you feel happier and better able to tackle trich.

### **Alternative Treatments**

Don't give up. Each person is different and it can take a while to discover what works best for you. Some people find that exercise, a change of diet, or hypnosis helps.

## ***How can my parents help?***

Your parents can gather information about trich through research and talking to doctors and other parents. But the most important way they can help is to learn from you.

For example, what would you like them to do when they notice you are pulling? Remind you about it nicely? Bring you a koosh ball to keep your hands busy? Or something else?

Talk with your parents about how you feel, so that you can decide how to handle trich together.