

# A Comparative Study of a New Food Supplement, Viviscal, with Fish Extract for the Treatment of Hereditary Androgenic Alopecia in Young Males

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## Introduction

Several reports have demonstrated that certain proteins derived from marine fish promote effect on hair growth in women (1,2). The following 6-month, double-blind study was conducted to compare the effects of an extract of marine origin with the same extract containing a silica compound (Viviscal) in men with androgenic alopecia (3).

## Methods

Healthy men 20-30 years old with androgenic alopecia classified as III-V on the Hamilton scale were enrolled. The duration of hair loss varied from 2-9 years and most of them had received prior treatments including 2% minoxidil solution (N=33; 82.5%). Subjects were randomized to receive two tablets containing Viviscal (N=20) or fish extract (N=20) daily for 6 months. Patients were seen every 2 months and non-vellus scalp hair counts were performed using a 2.5 cm<sup>2</sup> template. A punch biopsy was obtained within this area at baseline and after 6 months.

## Results

At 6 months, there were 37 evaluable subjects. Three subjects in the fish extract group withdrew due to lack of efficacy or increased hair loss. There was significantly more regrowth of nonvellus hair throughout the treatment period among Viviscal-treated patients compared to subjects treated with fish extract (Table 1). There was a mean increase of 472 new non-vellus hairs increased in the Viviscal group (38.1%) vs. 26 in the fish extract group (2.1%;  $p < 0.00011$ ). Hair loss continued during the entire treatment period in the fish extract group. Subjective estimates of new hair growth by were similar to objective measures. At baseline, histological examination showed typical alopecia in all 40 subjects with mild to moderate perifollicular inflammation. After 6 months, alopecia could no longer be diagnosed in 19 of the 20 patients in the Viviscal group. No adverse reactions were observed in either treatment group.

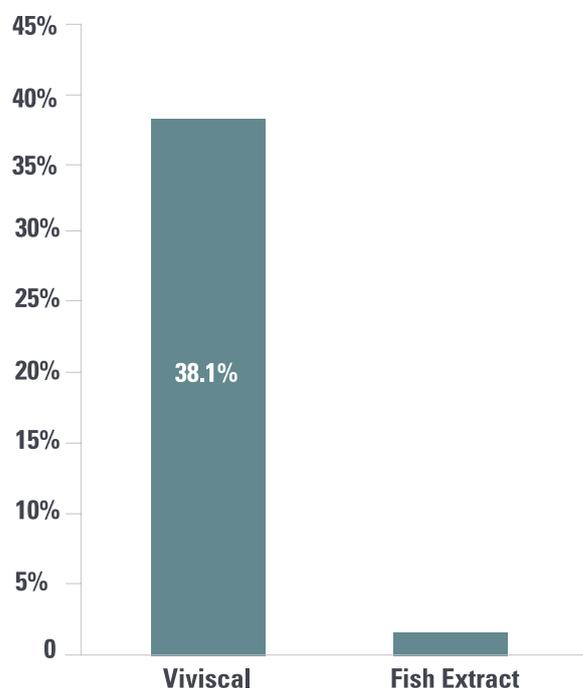
## Conclusion

The combination of fish extract and silica compound significantly increased the regrowth of non-vellus hair in men with androgenic alopecia. Although the mechanism by which Viviscal increases hair growth has not been elucidated, the silica component may also be important. It is probable that several nutritional factors have a synergistic effect and improve the efficacy of the product.

**Table 1.**  
Changes in Non-Vellus Hair Counts After 6 Months

Time (Months)	N	VIVISCAL		FISH EXTRACT	
		Non-vellus Hairs (SD)	N	Non-vellus Hairs (SD)	N
0	20	1238 (73.8)	20	1233 (74.6)	
2	20	1318 (42.2)	20	1230 (45.2)	
4	20	1419 (95.2)	17	1257 (75.4)	
6	20	17101 (18.9)	17	1259 (80.6)	
Total Increase, N (%)		472 (38.1%)		26 (2.1%)	

**Figure 1.**  
Mean Increase in New Non-Vellus Hairs (%)



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