



your look

Healthy Hair for Life!

Whatever you're experiencing—pregnancy, menopause, or even a strict diet—this expert advice will keep locks vibrant

STRESS

How it's affecting your hair "Stress wreaks havoc on our hormones by spiking cortisol levels and increasing inflammation in the body—both of which can trigger some fall out," says holistic-health guru Dr. Andrew Weil, founder of Arizona Center for Interactive Medicine. In acute cases, such as a reaction to, say, surgery, locks may come out in clumps. But effects of chronic, low-grade anxiety are gradual and can result in the departure of multiple strands throughout the head. "You can lose up to 15 percent before you realize it," says trichologist Elizabeth Cunnane Phillips. Dandruff, while genetic, is also exacerbated by stress, says N.Y.C. dermatologist Debra Jaliman, author of *Skin Rules*.

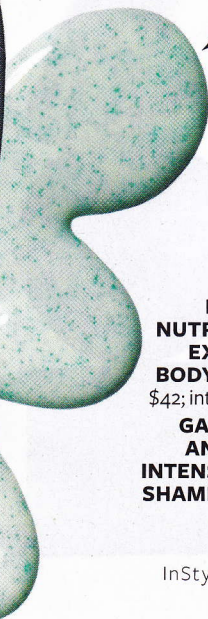
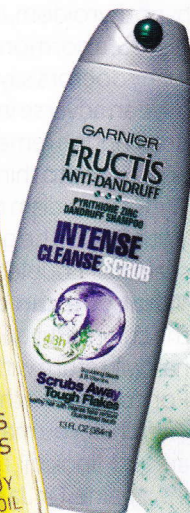
What you can do Visit a doctor to rule out any underlying medical issue. If all is well, massage your scalp with essential oils to help stimulate the blood supply to follicles, and practice stress management (see box). Notice snowflakes on your shoulders? Use dandruff shampoo with zinc or salicylic acid; leave in for five minutes, then rinse, says Dr. Jaliman.

Three Ways to Chill

1 Sleep To properly refresh mind and body, getting six to eight hours of shut-eye is key. Integrative and functional doctor Frank Lipman recommends a consistent sleep schedule—even on weekends. So set a bedtime and stick to it.

2 Breathe Dr. Weil swears by this calming exercise: Sit or lie down and place the tip of your tongue behind your upper teeth. Exhale through your open mouth, then close your mouth and inhale through your nose for four beats. Hold your breath for a count of seven, then exhale completely through your mouth for a count of eight. Repeat sequence three times.

3 Listen Mellow out with meditation tracks that target theta brainwaves, which induce deep relaxation. "They basically 'meditate' you," says Dr. Lipman. Try *Meditative Ocean & Rainforest*, by Dr. Jeffrey Thompson (\$20; amazon.com).



Scrubbing beads dislodge flakes.

INTELLIGENT NUTRIENTS DESTRESS EXPRESS HAIR & BODY TREATMENT OIL
\$42; intelligentnutrients.com.

GARNIER FRUCTIS ANTI-DANDRUFF INTENSE CLEANSE SCRUB SHAMPOO \$5; at drugstores.



The wand slicks back short strands.



A Note About Nursing

As beneficial as nursing can be for your tot, the idea that it can prevent après-baby hair loss is a myth. "There's nothing in the ob-gyn literature to support that," says Dr. Ashton. And continuing to take prenatal supplements (typically full of B-complex and D vitamins), though unlikely to harm, won't completely stop the shedding either, she says.

PREGNANCY

How it's affecting your hair Many women experience the lushest locks of their lives during this nine-month period. And while theories abound, "it's not clear whether it's because of increased blood flow, hormones, or prenatal vitamins," says Englewood, N.J., ob-gyn Jennifer Ashton. After the baby arrives, you may experience shedding. "Temporal hair loss is the most common," says Louisville, Ky., ob-gyn Rebecca Booth. That means you'll find sparse areas along the hairline. Though we don't know why this occurs, "it takes about a year to recover," says Dr. Booth.

What you can do If you've ever considered bangs, now's the time to get them, says N.Y.C. stylist Rebekah Forecast. Sweep fringe to one side to cover regrowth. You can also slick back tiny strands with gel, or use a mini flatiron to smooth them out.

JOHN FRIEDA FULL REPAIR TOUCH-UP FLYAWAY TAMER
\$10; at drugstores.
CONAIR 1/2" MINIPRO CERAMIC ROOT LIFT STRAIGHTENER
\$23; conair.com.



ILLNESS & MEDICATIONS

How they're affecting your hair As if it weren't enough of a bummer to have acne, depression, hypothyroidism, or polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS, a hormone imbalance that can affect fertility), many doctors say that each of these conditions can have an adverse impact on your strands. Some common prescription remedies for acne and depression have been linked to thinning hair and hair loss, says Dr. Jaliman. Hypothyroidism may also cause locks to get sparse. With PCOS, the problem can be twofold: reduced scalp hair coupled with excess body hair.

What you can do Ask a doctor if your meds could be the culprit. But take note: With short-term prescriptions, hair will return within a few months of drug end date. For conditions that demand medication for longer stretches, you may wish to consult with your doctor about Minoxidil, an FDA-approved ingredient found in Rogaine; Dr. Jaliman has found it to be safe and compatible with most acne and depression Rx remedies.

This can help regrow your hair!



WOMEN'S ROGAINE TOPICAL SOLUTION
\$30 for one-month supply; rogaaine.com.

AGING

How it's affecting your hair Most women can expect changes to their hair beginning around their mid-40s. Follicles can shrink, which means strands will be smaller in diameter and appear thinner. As women move toward menopause around age 50 and estrogen levels drop, the scalp becomes drier; melanin takes a nosedive (hence the grays); and strands can become lackluster, coarse, and wiry.

What you can do N.Y.C. colorist Sharon Dorram swears by shine-enhancing vitamin E oil treatments once a month (apply to wet strands, rinse, and shampoo after 20 minutes). Also helpful: a shower water filter to weed out dulling metals. And use a strengthening deep conditioner once a week to moisturize.

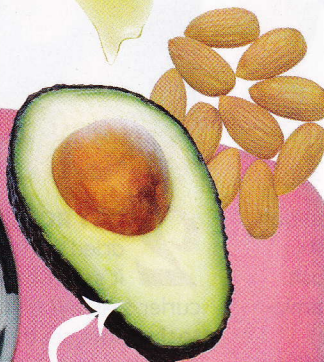
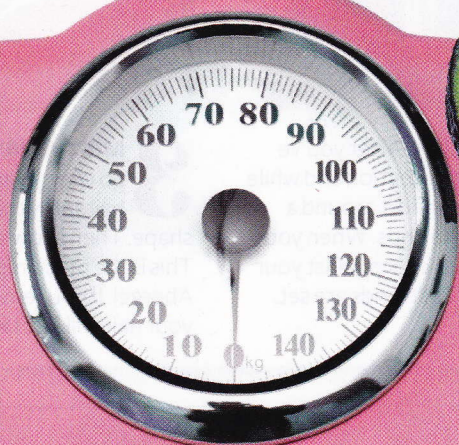


JASON PURE NATURAL VITAMIN E OIL 5,000 IU
\$9; jason-natural.com.

KÉRASTASE AGE PREMIUM MASQUE SUBSTANTIF CONDITIONER
\$60; kerastase-usa.com.



Add lots of moisture so silver strands shine.



Avocado and almonds are loaded with hair-healthy fats.

EXTREME DIETING

How it's affecting your hair You might jump for joy when the number on your scale heads south, but your hair can pay the price in the form of thin, weak strands. "Many women, in an effort to lose weight, are on a low-fat regimen," says N.Y.C. nutritionist and author Ann Louise Gittleman. Consequently, "many of them lack sulfur, which is an underlying cause of hair loss."

Other common deficiencies in pound-conscious folks that can manifest in thinning locks: protein, iodine, and essential fatty acids.

What you can do Pile your plate with foods rich in "healthy fats" (think avocado, almonds, and olive oil) and add in proteins; Gittleman prefers lean beef, omega-3 eggs, and beans. Consider taking a multi-mineral supplement that includes sulfur, iodine, and zinc. Pros also suggest a 5 mg daily dose of Biotin to help strengthen strands.

What's Up, Doc?

The 411 on pros who can help your hair

Dermatologist

A doctor who specializes in conditions affecting the skin, hair, and nails. He or she can address hair loss, scalp dryness, and flaking.

Internist/Endocrinologist

Internists are physicians who specialize in adult diseases. Endocrinology, the study of hormones, is a subspecialty of internal medicine. Either specialist can diagnose and treat hormone-related thinning and loss.

Trichologist This certified specialist focuses on chemistry, biology, nutrition, and hormones—but isn't a doctor. See one to address hair or scalp issues.