

# STYLE & FASHION



**COOL HEAD**  
Actress Romy Schneider primped at the Paris salon Alexander in 1958.

## Scalp Is On the Way

It's generally seen as the ugly stepsister to the skin and hair. But thanks to an alluring new array of products, the oft-ignored scalp—on which so much depends—is finally getting its due

BY DANA WOOD

**AS A TEENAGER** growing up in Pontiac, Ill., Carrie Lindsey would pop in to her mother's "very Steel Magnolias" beauty parlor for

bracing DIY scalp treatments crafted from tea tree oil and Sea Breeze, the drugstore astringent known to acne-plagued teenagers. "That was the 80s," she said. "It was a very different time. But they felt amazing."

Now a Brooklyn-based aesthetician who eschews harsh chemicals in favor of organic skin care, Ms. Lindsey says she's long since kicked the Sea Breeze to the curb. Tingle-inducing tea tree extract is, however, a staple in her scalp-treatment

repertoire. She swears by its ability, when mixed with a little olive oil, to dislodge the dead, flaky skin that blocks oily scalp sebum from doing its thing, which is to work its way down the hair shaft.

Hold on...we want oily hair?

Yes, but just enough to keep our locks lubricated. Excessive sebum production, often a byproduct of genetics, hormones or a vitamin- and mineral-deficient diet, is a sign of inflammation and can trigger hair loss, said New York dermatologist Ellen Marmur. And counter-intuitively, an overly oily scalp can generate even more noticeable flakes than those spun off by a moisture-deprived noggin. So how do we help our scalps strike just the right balance between too much and too little oil?

A raft of luxe, over-the-counter scalp treatments has arrived, determined to clear up the general uncertainty around caring for our crowns. Unless you suffer from dandruff, you probably file scalps under: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." But if you want healthier, better-behaved hair, say the marketers who hope to add another step to our beauty routines, get to the root(s) of the matter. The new wave of serums, scrubs and sprays are laced with lab-engineered and pricey botanical ingredients typically reserved for skin care.

Although she's frequently skeptical about the lavish promises attached to modern skin care, Dr. Marmur is surprisingly bullish on this burgeoning category. "My greatest cynicism about skin-care marketing claims has been about 'penetration' and 'absorption,'" she said. "It's everything that's counter-intuitive to Chapter One in skin anatomy textbooks, which is that the skin is like Gore-Tex, and it's meant to protect us from things absorbing into it." The exception to all that are the microscopic holes in our skin called follicles. "The follicles all over the scalp are extra porous," Dr. Marmur noted. "That's the one area of our body where we...probably can absorb, at least superficially, the benefits of these ingredients."

Enter vitamin- and mineral-spiked Sisley-Paris Revitalizing For-

tifying Serum, the "hero product" of its new Hair Rituel range. An instant hit since its February debut, the clear elixir is infused with a fairly addictive, citrusy, woodsy scent and was designed to be used every two days for a month before tapering off to twice a week for "maintenance." Another botanical-based serum, Klorane SOS Serum with Peony, claims to relieve "sensitive and irritated" scalps and, like Philip Kingsley's witch hazel and menthol "stimulating" Scalp Toner, needn't be rinsed out before you style your hair. Vernon François Scalp Nourishment Braids and Locs Spray targets kinky, coily and curly hair, and still another innovative offering—the rather luscious Christophe Robin Cleansing Purifying Scrub with Sea Salt—helps hair-color addicts bounce back from the harsh effects of all that chemical processing.

If you want healthier, better-behaved hair, say hopeful beauty marketers, get to the root(s) of the matter.

Clearly there's no shortage of new brews for a body part we've only recently discovered we need to worry about. The tricky part is deciding if you really need one and, if so, which to choose. Before spending on a serum or spray to add moisture, consider consulting a dermatologist first for a comprehensive scalp checkup. (You'll want this as part of your head-to-toe skin cancer screening anyway.) Scrubs and toners designed to "detox," or rid the scalp of product buildup, can be used by virtually anyone.

Having launched his Philip B Rejuvenating Oil, a much-loved potion steeped in French lavender, way back in 1992, Los Angeles hairdresser-to-the stars Philip Berkovitz has been itching to talk scalps for decades. "Great hair comes from great scalps," he said. "I've been saying that my entire career."

### NOGGIN NOURISHERS // FIVE PRODUCTS YOU NEVER KNEW YOU NEEDED

1. Braids and dreadlocks can do a number on scalp skin. One antidote: this spray loaded with oils including argan and castor. **Vernon François Scalp Nourishment Braids and Locs Spray, \$24, sephora.com**

2. This luxe scalp treatment doesn't come cheap, but promises sensational soothing effects. **Christophe Robin**

**Hair Rituel by Sisley-Paris** Revitalizing and Fortifying Serum for the Scalp, \$195, [Sisley-Paris](#), 212-645-1013

3. If the scalp-care category were a high school, this cleansing scrub would be voted Most Popular. It's revered on beauty sites like Into The Gloss for its exfoliating properties. **Christophe Robin**

Purifying Scrub with Sea Salt, \$53, [us.christophe-robin.com](#)

4. A relatively affordable, easy-to-use serum spray, this peony-infused product also includes menthol to refresh the scalp. **Klorane SOS Serum with Peony, \$20, klorane-usa.com**

5. You can call him

**the Seigneur du Scalp:** Not only does Philip Kingsley offer tried-and-true products, he also runs a "trichological clinic" in Midtown Manhattan that caters to the truly tress distressed. This scalp toner boasts a rabid following and provides anti-bacterial action. **Philip Kingsley Scalp Toner, \$34, philipkingsley.com**

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

### HANG TIME CLOSET STRATEGIES FROM WOMEN WITH LOTS OF CLOTHES

## AFTER WINTER COMES THE PURGE

'Tis the season for manic closet cleaning. Here, a calming three-step plan based on expert advice

### Step 1 Edit

The most important phase of the spring closet makeover can prove torturous: deciding what to let go of. Clea Shearer, co-founder of the Home Edit, a Nashville, Tenn.-based organizing service, reinforces the old refrain: "The first rule of purging a closet is to physically touch each piece and check yourself—if you have not worn it in six months, the only reason it should remain in your closet is if you feel in the next six months you definitely will wear it."

New York City filmmaker Rachel Fleit, who's started a side-business editing closets (and who's making a documentary about the process), suggests taking cues from your body: "If the clothes don't fit, they have to go. If it's something you're absolutely obsessed with, put it in your archive, but you have to have a storage area in your house that does not exist anywhere near your closet for that."

Donate unwanted items to a local charity; or consign



designer pieces on sites like the RealReal. Those truly sad old garments? Consider feeding them to your city's textile-recycling program (scout details online) rather than just throwing them out.

### Step 2 Organize

To introduce order, Ms. Shearer recommends you group clothes by type and then subdivide by color, a strategy New York City fashion designer Nili Lotan

shares. "Everyone who sees [my closet] laughs because it's all one side black, one side white, and on the top all army green," Ms. Lotan said. She prescribes matching hangers, and personally prefers the wire-style ones from the dry cleaner—paper removed—for both efficiency and unified aesthetics. Another popular option: the soft-covered "huggable hanger" by Joy Mangano. Ms. Shearer and her co-

founder Joanna Teplin advocate using labeled baskets for T-shirts, swimwear and other non-hanging items, and are also fans of the Container Store's clear shoeboxes, which can be stacked on a shelf or the floor. Ms. Lotan stashes shoes in their original boxes, each box labeled with a Polaroid of its shapelier contents.

### Step 3 Restock

"Only after you edit your closet and then organize it can you replenish," Ms. Fleit said. "Sometimes what becomes really clear is, 'I need a black turtleneck to go under all these jumpsuits,' or, 'I need a white bodysuit for this look that I want to achieve.'" Meanwhile Ms. Lotan, who also rotates in new designs post-purge, is looking forward to updating her white-shirt collection with a new cotton voile style. "I have probably 20 white shirts in my closet, but every season I bring a new one and get rid of another one," she said.

—Christine Whitney

**SPERRY Gold Cup**

Gold Cup Haven Sneaker

Available at Nordstrom and Sperry.com

SPERRY Since 1935