

Techniques to Achieve Naturally Healthy Hair



United States Environmental Protection Agency
Pacific Southwest/Region 9

EPA-909-R-10-003



Introduction

Healthy hair is not just a trend or fad, it simply never goes out of style. With the pollutants, chemicals, weather conditions and styling techniques that affect your hair every day, maintaining a beautiful mane can pose a challenge. The health of your hair depends on a variety of factors, both internal and external. Hereditary issues, illness, nutritional deficiencies, poor circulation, hormonal imbalance, stress and environmental factors outside their control can adversely affect the health and appearance of your hair. Once you understand the basics of hair health, you will be able to develop a routine that is healthier.

As we have entered the “green movement” era, we are considering ways to green every aspect of our lives including the use of hair care products and processes. Some of these products may contain ingredients that are harmful to the environment, or harmful to the user.

Healthy hair is something that everyone in every culture strives to achieve regardless of length and texture. Hair is as different as the people it belongs to and accepting and knowing how to care for your hair is an important part of maintaining healthy hair.

No one person has the same hair texture. Textures can range from tightly coiled hair to straight and everything else in between. Determining your hair texture helps you understand which styles work best to help you achieve that healthy head of hair. People may have more than one texture type which makes hair care and styling a challenge.

This guide shares information to achieve beautiful trendsetting styles, techniques for maintaining and caring for your natural tresses, and information on chemical ingredients and their potential effects on your hair and body. The guide also shares tips on selecting safe, less toxic ingredients.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Know What's in Your Hair Products	2
What is the Texture of Your Hair?	3
Ingredients Table	4-5
Styles for Everyone	6-14
Natural Ingredients for Your Hair Care	15
Recipes to Try	16
Top Tips for Natural Hair Care	17
Frequently Asked Questions	18
How Green is Your Salon?	19
References and Resources	20

Know What's in Your Hair Products

What's in your products?

Every day many of us use personal care products that contain potentially harmful ingredients. Think about how many personal care products you use in a single day, a year and over your lifetime. Small amounts of toxic chemicals add up and can accumulate in our bodies.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not approve the safety of personal care products before they are sold. Of the 10,500 chemical ingredients used in the personal care products, just 11% have been assessed for health and safety. Hundreds of chemicals – some safe and some known to be hazardous – are present in our personal care products. Because countless new compounds are developed each year, it's hard for even the most savvy consumers to know about them all. The good news is that there are some easy and affordable alternatives available to every consumer.



Many companies are now making less toxic products and are striving to introduce non-toxic products. Nonprofit organizations such as the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics encourage the cosmetics industry to pay attention to consumer demands for safer products.

This guide aims to give you some general information on natural hair care techniques, to help point you in the right direction when selecting products and to inspire you to make a few small changes in your hair care and styling routine that will be healthier for your body.

Natural/Organic Products

The word “natural” on a product label doesn’t always mean it’s safe or natural. Many products are being marketed as natural and/or organic but have chemical ingredients that raise health concerns. Reviewing the ingredients on the label is one way to be sure the product is true to its claims. Be aware that potentially problematic chemical ingredients can hide behind the word “Fragrances.” Fragrances are considered trade secrets and the ingredients within fragrances are not required by law to be revealed and may represent many ingredients, sometimes hundreds. “Unscented” and “fragrance free” have no legal definition, these words can be used in a variety of ways. “Unscented” or “fragrance free” labels does not guarantee that the product doesn’t contain potentially toxic chemicals. Before purchasing products you may want to visit the Environmental Working Group’s Skin Deep Safety Database* or Goodguide** to research products to find the safest alternatives.



*www.safe.cosmetics.org

**<http://www.goodguide.com>

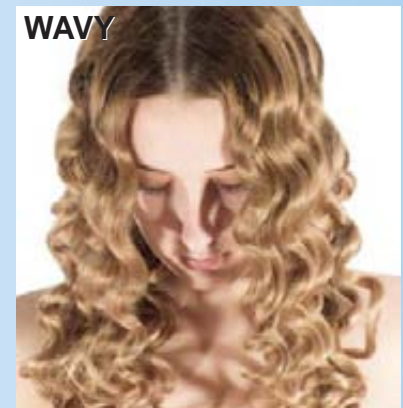
What is the Texture of Your Hair?

Webster's dictionary defines "texture" as: the surface look or feel of something; the basic makeup of a surface; distinctive or identifying characteristics.

Texture is simply what you see and feel. It's the actual straightness, curliness, softness, roughness and/or coarseness of the hair's surface. There are four basic hair textures: tightly coiled, wavy, straight and very curly. For this guide's purposes grey hair has been included as a texture because of its different growth pattern and difficulty to manage. Below are examples and descriptions of the different hair textures. We all have similar hair textures but no one texture is alike. Your hair texture is uniquely yours.



Tightly coiled hair is series of spirals or curls wound tightly together one on top of the other, which gathers or retracts.



Wavy hair has a wave patterned outline and does not lay straight but rather has side to side or up and down curves.



Very curly hair has the same pattern as wavy hair with a shorter distance between the curve-like bends which results in a tighter look.



Straight hair is perfectly vertical or horizontal without a curve or a bend.



Grey hair has a texture all its own: it may be very coarse and/or wiry. Due to possible lack in Vitamin B-12 and declining melanin production it can also be very dry.

Ingredients Table

POTENTIAL HEALTH IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH OVEREXPOSURES TO INGREDIENTS USED IN HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

INGREDIENT	PRODUCT	POTENTIAL HEALTH EFFECTS
¹ Lead**	Hair Dye ¹	Lead has been associated with harmful impacts to virtually every organ system in the body. Elevated exposures are associated with severe central nervous system impacts and potentially irreversible neurodevelopment delays and behavioral changes in children. Elevated exposure levels have also been associated with increased rates of mis-carriage and reproductive toxicity.
² Paraphenylenediamine** Other names: Para-Phenylenediamine; PPD; P-Phenylenediamine; 1, 4 diaminobenzene; 1, 4 phenylenediamine; P-Aminoaniline	Hair Dye	Exposure could cause mild dermatitis in contact location including redness, pain, and swelling, and when in contact with the eyes could possibly cause swelling of the eyelids, blurred vision and possible permanent loss of vision. Inhalation of this chemical may be associated with cough, headache, dizziness and labored breathing. Possible severe reactions to PPD are urticaria and, rarely, anaphylaxis.
³ Sodium Hydroxide** Looks like this on a label: Lye; Caustic Soda; Sodium Hydrate	Relaxer, Permanent, Hair Wave	Overexposure is corrosive to all tissues and mucous membranes such as in the eyes, nose, and throat. Concentrated exposures frequently result in extreme and severe irritation, edema (swelling) and acute dermal reactions. Direct contact with sodium hydroxide can result in constrictive scarring, and inhalation results in acute damage to the pulmonary system.
¹ Formaldehyde*** Looks like this on a label: Formalin; formic aldehyde; oxomethane; oxomethylene	Shampoo and Bleach	Elevated exposures have been associated with irritation and edema to the pulmonary system and mucous membranes. Overexposure also irritates the eyes, nose and skin, and repeated exposures have been associated with a hypersensitivity (allergic) responses in some individuals. The compound demonstrates carcinogenic activity.
¹ Dibutyl Phthalates* Looks like this on a label: DBP; Di-n-butyl phthalate; dibutyl 1,2-benzene dicarboxylate	Fragrance for shampoo and moisturizers	Overexposure has resulted in gastrointestinal distress in humans. The compound has caused birth, reproductive and developmental impacts in animals. Some phthalate compounds have carcinogenic activity in animals.
⁴ Hydantoin DMDM*** Looks like this on a label: 1-3-Bis (Hydroxymethyl)-5,5-imethylimidazolidine-2,4-Dione; 1,3-Dimethylol-5,5-Dimethyl Hydantoin; Dantogard; Glydant; Gidol; Glycolylurea	Children's conditioner and detangler	Overexposure has resulted in irritation and edema in sensitized individuals. Irreversible damage to the eye has been reported due to its caustic nature. Considered harmful to human health because of toxic impact on developmental and reproductive systems. This compound is an antimicrobial formaldehyde releasing agent.
Colorants/Synthetic Colors*** Looks like this on a label: D&C; FD&C; azo grenadine; disodium 5-amino-4-hydroxy-3-(phenylazo)-naphthalene-2,7-disulfonate; Acid Red 33; Red 33; Naphthalene Red	Makeup and hair products to create color; some are derived from coal tar.	Some specific dyes and color compounds have been associated with carcinogenic activity at extremely elevated concentrations. Some of these compounds have also been associated with edema and irritation in hypersensitive individuals.

Ingredients Table

POTENTIAL HEALTH IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH OVEREXPOSURES TO INGREDIENTS USED IN HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

	PRODUCT	POTENTIAL HEALTH EFFECTS
DEA/MEA/TEA*** Looks like this on a label: Diethanolamine; monoethanolamine; ethanolamine; triethanolamine; Lauramide DEA	Shampoos and products that foam	Elevated exposures have been associated with irritation to the eyes, skin, nose and throat. These compounds have been associated with limited edema and irritation to the pulmonary system in some individuals.
¹ Hydroquinone* Looks like this on a label: 4-Dihydroxybenzene; P-Dioxybenzene; 4-Hydroxyphenol; P-Hydroxyphenol; 1,4 Benzendiol	Hair bleaches and skin lighteners	Elevated exposures are associated with tinnitus (ringing in the ears), nausea, shortness of breath, cyanosis and convulsions. Edema and irritation to skin, eyes, nose, mucous membranes and intestinal tract have also been reported.
^{1,3} Propylene Glycol*** Looks like this on a label: Propylene Glycol; 1-2-Propanediol	Styling gels/lotions, conditioners, shampoos, hair dyes ³	Elevated or frequent exposure to propylene glycol is associated with dermal irritation and limited edema of the mucous membranes. Under repeated exposure conditions it is irritating to the eyes, nose and mouth. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has classified propylene glycol as an additive that is generally recognized as safe for use in food.

FOOTNOTES

*Animal studies reported.

**Human studies reported.

***Human and animal studies reported.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS); U.S. EPA.
2. U.S. EPA Toxic Substance control Act (TSCA), <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/tsca8e/>.
3. EPA Technology transfer network, <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/hlthef/phenylen.html>.
4. National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH); Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS).
5. Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR) Toxicological Profiles; Center for Disease Control & Prevention. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS).
6. The Merck Index; an Encyclopedia of Chemicals, Drugs & Biologicals. Merck & Co., Inc.
7. FDA's List of Ingredients That People Often Ask About, <http://www.fda.gov/Cosmetics/ProductandIngredientSafety/SelectedCosmeticIngredients/default.htm>.
8. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, International Chemical Safety Cards, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcsneng/neng0805.html>.
9. Phthalates and Cosmetic Products, <http://www.fda.gov/Cosmetics/ProductandIngredientSafety/SelectedCosmeticIngredients/ucm128250.htm>.

Natural Styles for Everyone



Braided Pony Tail:

*This is a very easy,
yet very fashionable
hairstyle.*

Supplies: comb, flexi rod hair rollers, natural pomade/oil

Both curly and tightly coiled hair needs moisture, moisture, and more moisture. Always condition your hair after washing and choose conditioners thick in texture or use a leave in. When convenient let hair air dry. When applying heat to the hair to style use the lowest setting possible to achieve desired result. Remember while selecting your hair products to read the labels and try to avoid products containing hormones and harmful chemicals (see pages 4 and 5).



- Simply part the hair into small sections.
- Take each section and divide into three strands.
- Coat the hair with a pomade, and/or oil.
- Coil the strands around each other working from the roots to the nape of the neck.



FACT

*The average person
sheds up to 100
hairs a day!!!*

- Repeat over the entire head.
- Grab sections a few braids at a time and roll from ends up with hair rolling rods.
- Allow to air dry or use a dryer on lowest possible setting.
- Remove rods, finger separate and apply oil.



Rod Set:

This style is easily achieved: it is a great look for business or fun.

Supplies: hair clips, comb, flexi rods, setting lotion, natural oil

The texture of your hair will determine if you should set your hair immediately after shampoo and conditioning. If your hair is more coarse or more fine, it should be set immediately after rinsing the conditioner. If you are using a leave-in it should not be rinsed.



- Start to section your hair and roll from tip to root with rods in the size of your choice. If your hair is thicker and straighter you should allow hair to air dry or use a warm blow dryer until it's just damp to cut down on your dry time once the hair is set.
- Dry with the lowest possible setting; once completely dry unroll the rods and finger separate, adding oil as needed.
- Remember to choose the products based on *your* hair texture and style desired.



FACT

The number of hairs on the average head is 100,000.

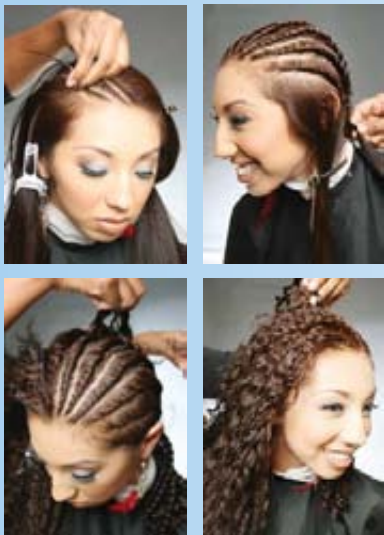
- The less harmful beauty products you use, the more you control your daily chemical exposure.



Crimped/Crinkled:

This can be easily done without using too much heat or chemicals such as perms or texturizers.

Supplies: hair clips, comb, setting lotion



- Apply a moisturizer you have carefully selected by reading the ingredients, then part hair into sections beginning at the front of the hair line, ending at the nape of the neck. Each section should be approximately 1 to 2 inches in diameter depending on preference.
- Divide into two's and twist from hairline to the end, picking up pieces of hair as you twist back.
- Once your hair is twisted, you can add rods or use a clip or rubber band to keep from unraveling.
- Dry on the lowest possible setting. When completely dry unravel twists and style as desired.



FACT

90% of scalp hairs are growing and 10% are resting.



Flat Iron:

This is a classic easily maintained style, great for women on the go.

Supplies: hair clips, ceramic flat iron with temperature setting dial, small toothed comb, natural oil, hard bristled brush, and satin scarf



- Make sure your hair is washed and completely dry before applying any heat.
- Start at the nape of the neck and part your hair into small to medium sections from ear to ear.
- Grab a small section preferably toward the back of your hair approximately 2 inches in diameter and gently rub iron on the root of your hair.
- If the hair sizzles or smoke appears remove iron immediately and allow your hair to cool and lower the setting on the flat iron.
- Clamp iron at the root of the section and pull to the end, curve the iron up or down to achieve a bend at the tip of hair.



FACT

The fastest growing tissue in the human body is hair.

- Repeat this process over entire head from back to front.
- Once hair is straightened to preference add oil and style as desired. To maintain sleekness wrap hair around the crown of your head and sleep in a satin bonnet or scarf.



Natural Curls

Great for Jet-setters as this style will hold in almost any climate.

Supplies: wide tooth de-tangling comb, natural oil, leave in conditioner, blow dryer with diffuser

Many multi-ethnic people have natural curls when their hair is wet and would like to keep that look once the hair dries. Remember to thoroughly moisturize the hair and use proper products for your hair type. As always don't forget to read those labels.

For naturally curly hair with more definition here's a great technique:



- Wash hair at least one time per week (the other days just rinse).
- Detangle hair each day by using a leave-in conditioner and combing through using a wide tooth comb.
- Saturate hair and apply a hair oil.



FACT
Female hair grows more slowly than male hair.

- Hair can be braided while damp and let air dry if possible.
- Once hair is dry, unbraid, add a little oil and finger style.
- In the winter use a diffuser on the lowest temperature, gently stretching the hair as you dry it.



Children

This style is low maintenance, great for kids and their parents with hectic schedules.

Supplies: wide tooth comb for detangling, small toothed comb for parting, brush, and natural oil

The majority of children have what is called "virgin hair." The term virgin hair simply means the hair has had no chemical processing at all. Most children of color or multi-ethnic children often wear pony tails, braids, and twists.



- When styling your child's hair remember not to pull too tightly, especially around the hair-line.
- Make sure to maintain your child's hair by washing and conditioning 2-4 times monthly.
- Conditioning is a very important step and should never be skipped.
- Keep the ends trimmed as needed to prevent breakage.



FACT

The lifespan of the human hair is three to seven years.

- Never perm, relax, or dye your child's hair.
- Be sure to pay attention to the ingredients in your shampoos, conditioners, oils and any other products used. This will help to ensure you are not exposing your child to unnecessary chemicals.



Locs/Dreadlocs

A natural style that can be worn by males and females. It's versatile, and fairly easy to manage.

Supplies: Small toothed comb, natural pomade and/or oil, small metal hair clips, and hair dryer

Locs are sometimes referred to as dreads or dreadlocs. Anyone can loc their hair using one of the many techniques available. Some techniques include hand twisting, comb twisting, and palm rolling. Latch locs and sister locs both use a type of metal hook needle for tightening. There are many reasons various individuals wear locs; some as an expression of deep spiritual convictions, or simply as a fashion preference.

Keeping your hair clean and well maintained is beneficial for optimum healthy hair. Wearing locs doesn't mean not grooming or taking care of your hair and scalp,



so remember to use products best suited for your hair texture, always read the label and try to select eco friendly products safer for the environment and human health.

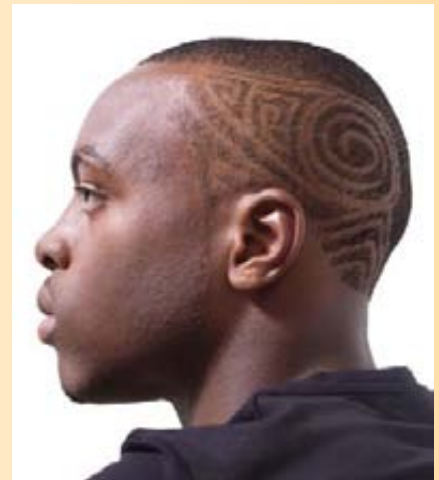
- Wash and condition hair, while still damp section off hair to start your locs.
- The size you would like your locs determines how large or small the hair is sectioned off.
- Starting at the nape of the neck take the parted section and using the small toothed comb pull through the hair applying your pomade/oil and twist all the way to the end.
- After the initial twisting with the comb use both hands, placing a loc between each flattened palm, to do a rolling motion.
- After the loc is twisted to your liking, place a metal clip to hold it in a flattened position in the direction you want it to hang.
- Repeat this technique over your entire head, then sit under the dryer at the lowest possible setting until your locs are completely dry.
- When hair is completely dry remove metal clips, apply oil and style as desired.

Men's Styles

Men follow trends too. They don't just wash and cut their hair. Pomades, mousse and gels are used daily to achieve desired styles. Lots of men dye their hair to cover grey or just for style; whatever the occasion any dyes used should be carefully scrutinized, especially the darker hues. Dyes that are darker in color may contain significantly more damaging chemicals than the lighter shades.

Although dyes are a quick and easy solution for grey hair, using it too often and using it on facial hair may be a potential health hazard. When possible, look for less toxic alternatives, such as natural coloring agents or vegetable based colors.

Hair loss affects an estimated 40 million men and 20 million women in the United States. A hereditary condition called androgenetic alopecia is responsible for about ninety-five percent of hair loss. Because men suffer from hair loss at double the rate of women they are more likely to try products advertised on the market that boast hair restoration. Although genetic hereditary issues are the main culprit for alopecia, there are other factors such as diet, medications, and illness. There are several hair styles that may address thinning areas; however men who are less comfortable with some of these styles, have the option of shaving their head. Men who want additional information for their hair loss should seek medical attention first to determine its root cause. Then, they can make a more well-informed decision regarding treatment options.



FACT

Did you know...male hair is more dense than female hair?

Natural Ingredients for Your Hair Care

Shea Butter:

Comes from a tree native to Africa which has soothing, moisturizing and protecting effects, also known as *Butyrospermum Parkii*. It displays a protective role against UV rays because of its cinnamic acid content. Shea Butter returns luster to skin and hair, and also protects the skin and scalp, especially in over-processed and/or heat treated hair.



Shea Butter

Chamomile:

Is a member of the daisy family and is an herb that purifies, calms and soothes with virtually no adverse effects so it can be used for long periods of time. The active ingredients in chamomile are called essential oils and flavonoids which are good for healing skin and scalp irritations.



Chamomile

Sunflower Oil:

Has high amounts of Vitamins A, B, D and E, minerals, lecithin, insulin, and unsaturated fatty acids and is an excellent moisturizer because of its emollients. Emollients are known to soften skin and hair without leaving an oily residue.



Sunflower Oil

Avocado Oil:

Is a rich heavy oil, more penetrating than most oils. It is therefore good for dry hair and skin. It is obtained from the pulp of the avocado pear and has a deep green color. It is stable, natural oil, rich in vitamin E. Avocado also contains Vitamins A, B1, B2, D, and Beta carotene. It is classified as monosaturated oil and is best suited for dry hair and skin.



Avocado Oil

Witch Hazel:

Is extracted from the bark and leaves of the *Hamamelis* tree and is an astringent and gentle cleanser which removes build-up on the hair as well as the scalp; it also helps to fight dandruff.



Witch Hazel

Olive Oil:

Is obtained directly from the olive after it has been harvested. It is made into a paste from which the oil is collected. Olive oil conditions and improves the strength and elasticity of the hair, helping to prevent breakage. It's also very good for "frizzy" and/or damaged hair.



Olive Oil

Honey:

Naturally attracts and holds moisture. It is also a natural antiseptic and contains antioxidants. Honey is packed with vitamins and minerals such as magnesium, potassium, calcium, sulphur, iron, zinc and vitamins B1, B2, B3, which aid in hair growth. It can be added to conditioners, rinses and pomades.



Honey

Aloe Vera:

Known as the true or medicinal aloe, aloe vera is a species of succulent plants now widely used as a moisturizer and can also be used as a gel to re-twist locked hair. Aloe Vera is also used for soothing the skin, and keeping the skin moist while eliminating the risk of flaky scalp in harsh and dry weather.



Aloe Vera



Recipes to Try

Avocado Conditioner: *Helps hair to shine*

- Mix 1 small jar of real mayonnaise with avocado in a medium sized bowl.
- Squish the mixture with your hands until it turns a light green, minty color.
- Apply the mixture directly onto your hair, making sure you cover every strand from the scalp to the tip.
- Cover your head with a shower cap, and leave on for 30 minutes. Rinse thoroughly.
- If you have naturally oily hair, you may want to wash your hair with a gentle shampoo afterward as well.

Olive Oil Conditioner: *Helps fight flyaways*

- Pour a generous amount of your regular eco-friendly conditioner into your hand – enough so that it covers your entire palm.
- Mix in 1-2 tablespoons of Extra Virgin Olive Oil into the conditioner. Use a mixing bowl if easier.
- Apply the mixture onto the bottom half of your hair, focusing on the ends.
- Gather your hair together so that it sits at the top of your head and cover with a warm wet towel.
- Leave on for 20 minutes, and then rinse out in the shower.
- If you have naturally oily hair, you may want to wash your hair with a gentle shampoo afterward as well.

Apple Cider Vinegar Rinse: *Helps get rid of residue build-up*

- Mix 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar with 1 quart water (adjust ratio of vinegar to water according to amount needed or frequency of use).
- Pour vinegar rinse through hair (scent will quickly dissipate).
- Re-rinse with cool water.

Homemade Hair Gel: *Helps Define Curls*

- Mix 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of unflavored gelatin with 1 cup hot water.
- Lets set at room temperature until firm.
- Add a drop of essential oils or extracts for scent.
- Apply to wet or dry hair and style as desired.

Top Tips for Natural Hair Care

Even with a nutritional diet and healthy hair-care regimen, underlying medical conditions can undermine your hair's health. Stress and anxiety can contribute to dry, brittle hair and ultimately hair loss. If you suspect a health problem is contributing to your lackluster hair, seek a health professional for treatment. Addressing any medical conditions will improve the health and radiance of your hair and the rest of your body, too.

Wash

Shampooing every day can be drying to your hair and scalp. Aim for two to three times a week – and on off days. Excessively using hot water will rob the scalp of its natural oils which help to keep your hair lubricated. Instead, use lukewarm water and a gentle shampoo containing natural ingredients whenever possible.

Deep Condition

You should condition your hair after every wash. Rinse out conditioner with cooler water to lock in its hydrating benefits close the cuticles.

Essential Oils/Massage

Essential oils are also considered good for hair because of their moisturizing and hydrating characteristics. You can also oil your hair and gently massage your scalp for maximum penetration. If your hair needs more attention, apply a hot-oil treatment.

Styling Tools

Excessive use of flat irons, curling irons, blow dryers and other heat styling tools can damage your hair. Use a heat protective serum to prevent your hair from breakage and damage. Whenever possible, use lower heat settings when styling; it will cut down on the amount of heat your hair has to endure. Style your hair with a wide-tooth comb to prevent breakage. A wide-tooth comb with rounded teeth allows you to comb your hair comfortably without scratching your scalp. Brush before shampooing. A few gentle strokes on dry hair will help remove product build up and scalp flakes, as well as stimulate the scalp and promote blood flow (which delivers nutrients like oxygen) to hair follicles.

Accessories

Hair accessories can accentuate hair styles by dressing it up or down. Take care in selecting hair accessories that will not work against your hair goals. Cotton ponytail holders can soak moisture from your hair that you need. Highly textured ponytail holders can tear the hair. Opt for silk or satin ponytail holders and avoid metal clasps.

Cut/Trim

The ends of our hair are the oldest part and is more susceptible to damage created by styling manipulation. As much as it hurts some to part with length, split ends are not beneficial to the progress towards healthy hair. Split ends cannot be mended. The only solution is to cut hair above the split. Make sure to use stainless steel shears when trimming as to avoid damage or visit a trusted stylist for a nice shape up of your hairstyle. To cut down on split-ends, have it trimmed on a regular basis and hydrate your hair with conditioner to keep it in tip-top shape.

Protective Styles

Protective styles are styles worn to protect your hair from environmental elements and rubbing against rough material such as clothing. Many people choose to wear wigs and weaves as a way to protect their natural hair and give hair a rest. Pin-ups, ponytails and up-dos are also forms of protective styling.

Products

Try to avoid weighing down your hair with numerous styling products. They can dry out your hair and take away the shine. Stick to one or two products, and use them sparingly. Over time, your hair will adjust and it will take less effort to pull off your desired results.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I control very curly and frizzy hair?

Make sure that you are conditioning the hair properly to ensure adequate moisture. A conditioner free from harsh chemicals should be used after every shampoo. You may also want to use a leave-in conditioner if your hair is extremely dry. Olive oil helps with frizz; this will also help to keep the hair manageable and soft.

How can I make brittle and dull hair look shiny and healthy?

Look for a shampoo and conditioner that are both gentle and offer deep moisturizing formulas. Avocados and olive oil are great for penetrating dry dull hair.

How can I keep my hair more manageable?

Conditioning your hair regularly and keeping it well nourished and moisturized is the best way to attain manageable hair. You may use a light oil spray to keep the cuticle layers smooth and tamed. In addition, a good deep conditioning treatment twice a month would help to keep the hair manageable. Remember to always detangle your hair thoroughly.

Is it safe to flat iron my healthy hair?

Flat ironing is a heat process that will straighten the hair by making a physical reshaping of the hair shaft. As the hair is subjected to moisture or humidity, your natural texture will return. While it's true that the hair can be damaged by using too much heat, this technique is less caustic than applying a relaxer to your natural hair. Select flat irons with a temperature gauge and select the lowest setting possible to achieve your desired style.

How do I get my dull, wiry grey hair to shine?

Before washing rub a lemon over your entire head from root to end. This process will help remove stains from grey hair. Select a gentle shampoo and conditioner that contains Vitamin E. If hair is still dull try the avocado recipe in this guide.

Can I remove a relaxer or perm from my hair?

Some chemical bonds in the hair are destroyed when the hair is "relaxed" or permed. The part of the hair that has been relaxed will never be "natural" again. The only way to get rid of relaxed/permed hair is to cut off the relaxed part or grow it out which may cause some breakage. There's lots of information online that explains ways to transition from relaxed hair to natural hair, such as:

<http://hubpages.com/hub/Going-Natural-Transitioning-from-Relaxed-Hair>

<http://www.curlynikki.com/>

Does diet affect the condition of my hair?

Absolutely! Your hair can directly represent the overall health condition of the body. A diet with severe deficiencies consequently can result in malnourished hair. To promote good health for your hair, eating a healthy diet consisting of fruits and vegetables and staying hydrated will help to maintain your naturally healthy hair. Healthy eating equates to a healthy body, including your hair.

Are hair dyes safe?

Some studies have linked hair dyes containing coal tar with a higher risk of certain cancers, while other studies have not found this link. You can reduce your risk by using less dye over time. If you still consider dyeing your hair there are safer alternatives to using chemicals. Check the safe cosmetic database to find less hazardous dyes and always follow directions. Always conduct a patch test to minimize damage and allergic reactions.

How Green is Your Salon?

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle REJOICE!

Salons are going green and it makes good sense. The average salon uses a range of chemicals and consumes important resources such as water and energy. There are a number of things to look for when selecting a salon that is environmentally conscious. If your salon is new to “green” practices you can encourage them to adopt healthier practices that can reduce costs and their environmental footprint. Enjoy the added benefits of knowing that your choices will not harm your body or the environment. These practices can make your salon experience a healthier, safer, happier one.

Does your salon do any of the following?

REDUCE

Limit Chemical Exposure

- Use less toxic, safer, natural products
- Use pumps instead of aerosol containers
- Use products with low volatile organic compound content
- Use non-toxic products for disinfecting and cleaning

☐
☐
☐
☐

Conserve Water

- Have a low-flow plumbing system
- Reduce hot water usage, use warm or cool temperatures when possible
- Turn off water when not in use
- For more information on ways to save water visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/>

☐
☐
☐

Minimize Waste

- Use refillable containers for products
- Use a dispensing system for shampoo and conditioners
- Use products with packaging that uses less plastic and cardboard
- Offer water in reusable cups or glasses, instead of plastic water bottle
- For more information on ways to minimize waste visit <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/index.htm>

☐
☐
☐
☐

Conserve Energy

- Use energy-efficient lights throughout the salon
- Use Energy Star equipment (www.EnergyStar.gov)

☐
☐

REUSE

- Give used magazines to other organizations, friends and customers
- Make empty containers and cardboard available to other businesses
- Require suppliers to take back empty refillable containers

☐
☐
☐

RECYCLE

- Install recycling bins for office paper, cardboard, plastic, magazines
- Compost hair clippings or donate to an organization to make mats for oil spill clean-up.

☐
☐

For more information, check with your county government for a local Green Business Program and a list of certified Green Salons.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

These websites are listed for informational purposes only and do not imply any endorsement or recommendation from EPA.

Black Women for Wellness

<http://www.bwwla.com/index.php>

California Safe Cosmetics Program

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cosmetics/Pages/default.aspx>

Clean Hair, Clean Air

<http://www.thegreenguide.com/personal-care/clean-hair-clean-air>

Eco Friendly Beauty

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/green-health/eco-shopping/eco-friendly-beauty.aspx>

EWG-Safety Guide to Children's Personal Care Products

<http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/special/parentsguide/summary.php>

Good Guide-Best Hair Care Products

<http://www.goodguide.com/browse/152782-hair-care/top#>

Healthy Hair Tips

<http://www.ehow.co.uk/healthy-hair-tips/>

Locks of Love

<http://www.locksoflove.org/>

Matter of Trust-Recycling Program-Hair Oil Spill Mats

<http://www.matteroftrust.org/programs/natural.html#mats>

National Nail Salon Alliance

<http://nailsalonalliance.org/>

Natural Hair-Get Creative with Homemade Recipes

http://www.pioneerthinking.com/ep_naturalhair.html

Premature Sexual Development in Children Following the Use of Estrogen or Placenta Containing Hair Products

<http://cpj.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/37/12/733>

Recycling Made Easy-Setting up a recycling initiative in the salon

<http://www.hji.co.uk/blogs/business/2006/12/recycling-made-easy-1.html>

Skin Deep: Safe Cosmetic Database

<http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/index.php?nothanks=1>

Teens Turning Green

<http://www.teensturninggreen.org/about-us/teens-for-safe-cosmetics.html>

Top 10 Natural Body Care Products

<http://www.care2.com/greenliving/top-10-natural-body-care-products.html>

Waste Minimization for Beauty Salons and Barbers

<http://environment.gov.ab.ca/info/library/6274.pdf>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Special thanks to everyone who helped to make this guide success.
We could not have completed this project without your help and support.
All input, even the smallest suggestion is greatly appreciated.*

Contributing Partners

Bare Canvas Spa, Carolyn Law, Owner, Oakland, CA
Black Women for Wellness, Los Angeles, CA
California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, Oakland, CA
Dominican University of California, San Rafael, CA
Environmental Finance Center 9, San Rafael, CA
Environmental Working Group, Safe Cosmetic Campaign
EPA White House Initiative on Asian American & Pacific Islanders, Washington, D.C.
Knappology, Kem Simmons, Loctician, Oakland, CA
U.S. EPA Region 9, San Francisco, CA
U.S. EPA Region 9, Patick Wilson, Regional Toxicologist, San Francisco, CA

Partners

Capitol Regional District, (CRD) Environmental Services
Da Spot Hair Studio, Troy Ballard/Smooth Black, San Bernadino, CA
Elegant Palace, Eddie Gums, Hayward, CA
FaceArt Make-up, Teresa
Glamorous Life Salon, Alex "D' Looks" Matthews, Oakland, CA
Samantha Hicks, Xavier University
I Can Braid It Salon, Kamila Edwards, Oakland, CA
Keif Savage Photography, Keif Savage
Makin Faces Make-up, Keesh
Tiffany's Natural Hair Salon, Tiffany Anderson, Fairfield, CA

For more information, please contact:

Jessica Counts-Arnold
counts-arnold.jessica@epa.gov
(415) 972-3288

Clarice Jackson
jackson.clarice@epa.gov
(415) 972-3402

<http://www.epa.gov/region9/waste/p2/business.html>



Please consider the environment before printing.



Printed on 50% post consumer recycled fiber.

