

Gone Today, Hair Tomorrow: Natural Ways to Detox the Scalp

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A full, healthy head of hair has everything to do with the health of the body, especially the scalp. Hair loss does not discriminate against gender or race. Thinning hair and baldness occur in both men and women all over the world for a number of reasons. These include toxic exposures, products, hereditary factors, stress, and hormonal changes.

While it is an experience most would prefer to avoid, the good news is that, in many cases, hair loss is reversible.

HAIR AND SCALP DETOXIFICATION

Regardless of the cause of hair loss, it is important to start with the elimination of hair products like harsh hair dyes, especially hair bleaching products. Sulfate-based shampoos and silicone enriched conditioners also need to be replaced. Synthetic fragrances, colorants, thickeners, and preservatives, along with other unnecessary chemicals which make hair products so pleasant to use, can really add up and affect the health of hair.

Conventional hair dyes and sulfate-based solvents and surfactants can over dry hair and intoxicate and burn the scalp. They also have the ability to trigger severe allergic reactions and disturb its microbiome. Silicone and wax-based ingredients in conditioners, de-tanglers, and heat protectant

products can clog hair follicles and scalp pores. This slows hair growth by reducing the ability of the skin to release toxins and absorb oxygen.

Wax-based conditioners can be replaced with a water-based rinse. Add two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar or lemon juice to one pint of warm water. If hair is especially dry, add two tablespoons of vegetable glycerin. After using this rinse, a few drops of hair oil can also be used to add shine.

BOTANICAL HAIR DYES

Lately, more and more women are deciding to go gray to avoid hair damage and loss. Many women who are pregnant, nursing, or dealing with serious health challenges are trying to reduce their toxic load by staying away from conventional hair dyes. Spa professionals can offer them healthier alternatives.

Medicinal herbs like henna, indigo, and cassia have the unique ability to deliver natural pigments into hair to color it permanently. When mixed with coffee, beet juice, and herbal tea, like chamomile, they can create an array of different hair colors and cover gray roots. These healthy alternatives to artificial colorants also nourish the scalp and strengthen hair.

These botanical colorants have only one limitation: they cannot lighten hair. But, even if a client does not want to change the color of their hair, they can still use colorless cassia as a hair mask. Simply mix it with hot water and a few drops of castor or burdock root oil.

For many years, I colored my hair blonde. I went to visit the hair stylist every four or five weeks to keep up with my roots. Yet, year after year, it became increasingly difficult to style my hair because it was thinning, breaking, and virtually leaving my head. Then, in 2015, I looked in the mirror and asked myself the question: what is more important, the color or the health of my hair? Because, if I do not have any, what is the point of worrying about what color it is?

I started to use only henna on my hair to save it from being overly processed and burned at the hair salon. Henna is a flowering plant traditionally used to dye hair in many cultures. It hails from subtropical regions in Africa and southern Asia.

Since then, I have restored my hair to the way it looked in my 20s – full and healthy. Yes, many people were surprised by my drastic color change, but they are over it. Today, I frequently get compliments on my hair from strangers. They ask me who does my color and why is it so vibrant? I tell them I use only herbs as women have done it for hundreds of years.

Happily, we can have vibrant, natural hair color which completely covers gray with the help of herbs like henna, cassia, and indigo. Unfortunately, beauty schools do not educate future cosmetologists about this 100 percent botanical option. Yet, these herbs not only help color hair, they also:

- are good for the overall health of the scalp; they can be quite cooling and help reduce dandruff
- balance oil production and pH levels



- boost hair growth
- repair and strengthen hair

Moreover, botanical hair color barely fades at all, eliminating the need to constantly make salon appointments for touch-ups.

BOTANICAL HAIR NOURISHMENT

Numerous studies have been published about the benefits of birch extract, ginkgo biloba, and other hair restoring botanicals.

Sweet Birch: Anyone who has ever been to Russia knows that Russians use the bark and leaves of the birch tree for a variety of spa treatments in traditional Russian bath houses. It is a very valuable hair remedy. Tea or water infusions made from birch leaves help to strengthen the hair, detoxify the scalp, and improve blood circulation. Sweet birch contains hair restoring phytonutrients that include vitamin C, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, manganese, magnesium, sodium, zinc, and iron.

Burdock: Burdock is a common weed in many backyards. Its roots contain tannins, essential fatty acids, and vitamins that promote hair growth.

Stinging Nettle: This prickly weed can be very annoying when stepped on, but it is an incredible remedy for unhealthy hair. It can boost growth, stimulate cell metabolism, and is a fabulous source of hair nourishing vitamins A, C, D, K, and B. It is also a great source of magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and iron and is naturally enriched with a variety of amino acids. The leaves are also good sources of minerals like silica and sulfur.

Ginkgo Biloba: The extract from leaves of the ginkgo biloba tree help to increase blood flow into the scalp, providing hair follicles with essential nutrients.

HAIR REJUVENATING TREATMENTS AND PROTOCOL

Spas can consider offering botanical scalp treatments with the purifying, hair growth-stimulating herbs mentioned above. Here are a few ways to incorporate these herbs into the spa.

Burdock oil can be used for scalp massage. Rub birch juice, or birch essential oil mixed with water, over split ends. Birch essential oil can be added to any haircare product to nourish the hair and improve blood supply to hair follicles. Birch tar is an incredible hair rejuvenator. It has a strong smell but can be added in very small quantities to natural shampoos, hair masks, and serums.

Botanical Hair Restoring Scalp Treatment Protocol

1. Put hair under an aromatherapy steamer with a few drops of essential oils of sage and lavender.
2. Gently cleanse the hair and scalp with herbal compresses made from nettle and burdock root tea.
3. Mist the scalp with hair growth serum containing extracts of birch, reishi mushrooms, horsetail, and fulvic acid.
4. Gently massage the scalp with circular motions; penetrate the serum into the scalp with a high frequency wand attachment or use an LED photo device or cold laser.
5. Apply hair oil made of one ounce of burdock oil, one ounce of castor oil, 30 drops of lavender essential oils, and 20 drops of rosemary oil. Massage this mixture into the scalp with circular

motions under the steamer.

6. If the treatment room includes a shower or a shampooing bowl, add a hair restoring herbal mask made with a blend of two tablespoons of cassia obovata and half a teaspoon of lemon juice mixed with hot water into a creamy consistency. Apply this mask on the scalp and keep under the steamer or infrared lamp for five to 15 minutes.



Elina Fedotova is the formulator and CEO of Elina Organics, an award-winning cosmetic chemist, and an aesthetician. She hand makes her professional skin care line in her laboratory using holistic principles and organic ingredients from around the world. In 2007, she founded the Association of Holistic Skin Care Practitioners (AHSCP), a nonprofit organization that provides ongoing training and education for professionals. Elina Organics knows that beauty is more than skin deep and that a person is much more than a physical body. Well-being requires mental clarity, positive emotions, whole food, and a clean environment. By taking a “whole-listic” approach to health and personal care, individuals can continuously feel and look their best, care more about the earth’s resources, and help create a harmonious life for all.

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