



THE
**PEOPLE'S
PHARMACY**

Graedons' Guide to

Hair and Nail Care

King Features

Shampoos

Mane 'n Tail

Straight Arrow Products
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Is there anyone who likes her hair? Everyone, it seems, would prefer something different. Those with straight hair envy people with curls. Those with wavy hair wish it were straight. We hear constant complaints about hair that's too dry...or too oily, too thin...or too thick. And almost everybody (except a man with a crew cut) grumbles that his hair is unmanageable. As a result, most folks keep searching for the ideal shampoo and conditioner.

When looking for shampoos do you ever get the feeling that you're in the produce section? Fruits and vegetables are popular items on hair-care labels. You'll find "Australian Hair Salad—an Endoplasmatic Hair Remoisturizer" with extracts of carrot, corn, cucumber, garlic, lettuce, tomato and pineapple. Then there is "Faberge Organics" with pure wheat germ oil and honey. Some shampoos are enriched with beer or milk and many formulas come with added vitamins and protein. You'd almost think such products should be served up on the kitchen table instead of the bathroom counter.

Fruits and vegetables, herbs and vitamins can't actually "energize" or "nourish" hair. Despite the claims, all shampoo can really do is wash away dirt and oil. No matter how many exotic ingredients are added, the workhorses of shampoos are surfactants. Chemicals like ammonium or sodium lauryl sulfate attract oil and dirt from hair shafts and scalp and carry the grime down the drain with the suds. Nearly all shampoos contain a surfactant, which may explain why testers at Consumers Union found that all 59 brands they tested in 1990 got hair clean, just as Ivory Dishwashing Liquid did.

Consumer Reports suggests that there's not much reason to search for the "right" formulation; people couldn't

tell the difference between dry hair and oily hair shampoos. **Faberge Organics Normal** works well for both normal and fine hair, striking a balance between body and ease of combing at a good price. For fine hair, **White Rain Extra Body** and **Suave Full Body** are economical choices.

Conditioners

One of the advantages of a combination shampoo/conditioner like **Pert Plus** is that it doesn't require a separate after-lather product. Shampoos, like soaps, may pull natural oils from the scalp and hair. In some cases, this may lead to static electricity, tangles, and hard-to-manage hair. Putting some of those oils back with a conditioner sidesteps such difficulties.

Picking a conditioner is especially important for colored or treated hair. *Consumer Reports* found that **Alberto VO5 for Permed/Color-Treated Hair** is a cost-effective choice of conditioner. Other options include Pantene Normal and Nexxus Ensure for normal hair, although they aren't cheap. For fine hair, **White Rain Extra Body** and **Suave Full Body** conditioners were rated Best Buys. Not everyone needs maximal conditioning, though, and some people may find conditioners make their hair appear oily or limp.

Humans are not the only ones plagued with fly-away post-shampoo hair. Show horses often need to look their best right after a sudsing, and unmanageable tail hair is occasionally a problem. At least one veterinary product, **Mane 'n Tail**, has been developed to overcome tangles. As a stable conditioner and shampoo, it's available in large quantities and is quite economical. Humans are now taking it into their own shower stalls under the brand name **Equenne**.

GETTING THE MOST FROM ANTI-DANDRUFF SHAMPOOS

- **Getting started**

First, lather up with an ordinary shampoo to get out the grime and loose flakes. This shampoo can be cheap--nothing fancy needed.

After rinsing out the suds, work up a lather with a medicated shampoo.

- **Use your timer**

Do not rinse the dandruff shampoo out immediately. Whether you are using an OTC product like **Head & Shoulders** or the prescription **Nizoral**, leave it on for at least three to five minutes.

- **Be sparing**

Don't overdo on dandruff shampoo. Use it only as frequently as necessary to control flaking and itching.

- **Dry naturally**

Avoid a blow-dryer as it may dry out the scalp and make flaking worse.

Dealing with Dandruff

Homemade Dandruff Remedy

Dr. Robert Gilgor, dermatologist, suggests this homemade alternative to costly dandruff shampoos:

Mix 1 part

100% propylene glycol with **4 parts** baby shampoo.

This mixture should be gentle and effective.

You'll have to ask your pharmacist for propylene glycol, a common ingredient in skin care products.

Television commercials make it seem that dastardly dandruff is a serious social disease. No one will want to get close to you if your shoulders have a few flakes. You will be passed over for promotions and your love life will suffer serious consequences. Nonsense! Although snowy shoulders are not particularly appealing, dandruff is not a disease.

We are all shedding skin cells every day. If you actually see flakes on your shoulders, it is a sign that cells on the scalp are growing faster and clumping together as they slough off. Dandruff is a natural condition that often gets worse in the winter or when skin is dry.

Garden-variety dandruff is not a big deal. Over-the-counter products can help control dandruff. One ingredient that has been useful is zinc pyrithione, found in a number of popular brands including **Breck One**, **Head & Shoulders**, **Sebulon**, and **Zincon**.

Another effective ingredient is selenium sulfide, found in **Selsun Blue**. It works by reducing cell turnover and for many people is an excellent choice. Then there are the chemical scruffers. They loosen the flakes and help them break into smaller, less visible ones. Generally these shampoos contain sulfur or salicylic acid. Look for brands such as **Cuticura Anti-Dandruff Shampoo**, **Ionil**, **Meted** and **Sebulex**.

Another category of dandruff shampoo uses an old-fashioned ingredient, coal tar. It has been gussied up to be

cosmetically acceptable and is quite helpful against flaking and itching. Brands include **Ionil T Plus**, **Neutrogena T/Sal**, **Polytar**, **Sebutone** and **Zetar**.

Regular use of any one type of dandruff shampoo often leads to lowered effectiveness. If that happens, try alternating with other kinds of dandruff shampoos. An effective strategy might start with **Selsun Blue** for a few weeks, followed by **Neutrogena T/Sal** for a week, then on to **Head & Shoulders** for a month or so.

If that sounds a little complicated, we offer another option. Researchers now believe that dandruff (and seborrheic dermatitis) may be caused in large part by a yeast called *Pityrosporum ovale*. This suggests that dandruff may be more treatable if you kill the infection. Dermatologists have found that they achieve extraordinary success with a relatively new prescription shampoo called **Nizoral**. It contains a fungus fighter, ketoconazole, that works well against a range of fungus infections. This medicine is also available orally and in a topical cream formula. It appears quite safe as a shampoo, and its effectiveness is unparalleled by any over-the-counter products.

Although more expensive, **Nizoral** appears to produce lasting benefits. At first, you may need to use it once or twice a week. Afterwards, occasional use (perhaps every month or six weeks) may be adequate to keep the scalp clear.

SOME DRUGS THAT MAY CAUSE HAIR LOSS

Accutane (isotretinoin)	Folex (methotrexate)	Rheumatrex (methotrexate)
Adapin (doxepin)	Furadantin (nitrofurantoin)	Ridaura (auranofin)*
Adriamycin (doxorubicin)	Garamycin (gentamicin)	Roferon (interferon)
Advil (ibuprofen)*	Haldol (haloperidol)	Rufen (ibuprofen)*
Anaprox (naproxen)*	Heparin	Sectral (acebutolol)
Ansaid (flurbiprofen)*	Inderal (propranolol)*	Seldane (terfenadine)
Atromid-S (clofibrate)	Indocin (indomethacin)*	Sinequan (doxepin)
Atrovent (ipratropium)*	Intron A (interferon)	Slo-bid (theophylline)
Azulfidine (sulfasalazine)	Ismelin (guanethidine)	Slo-Phyllin (theophylline)
Benemid (probenecid)	Isoptin (verapamil)*	Synthroid (levothyroxine)
Betagan (levobunolol)*	Levothroid (levothyroxine)	Tagamet (cimetidine)*
Betoptic (betaxolol)*	Lopid (gemfibrozil)	Tapazole (methimazole)
Blocadren (timolol)*	Lopressor (metoprolol)*	Tegison (etretinate)
Calan (verapamil)*	Macrochantin (nitrofurantoin)	Tegretol (carbamazepine)
Capoten (captopril)	Meclomen (meclofenamate)*	Tenormin (atenolol)
Capozide (captopril/HCTZ)	Medipren (ibuprofen)*	Theo-24 (theophylline)
Cardizem (diltiazem)*	Mesantoin (mephenytoin)	Theobid (theophylline)
Cartrol (carteolol)	Mevacor (lovastatin)	Theo-Dur (theophylline)
Catapres (clonidine)	Mexate (methotrexate)	Timoptic (timolol)*
Cerubidine (daunorubicin)	Minipress (prazosin)	Tofranil (imipramine)
Clinoril (sulindac)*	Moduretic (amiloride/HCTZ)	Trandate (labetalol)
ColBenemid (colchicine/probenecid)	Motrin (ibuprofen)*	Tridione (trimethadione)
Corgard (nadolol)*	Nalfon (fenoprofen)*	Vaseretic (enalapril/HCTZ)
Coumadin (warfarin)	Naprosyn (naproxen)*	Vasotec (enalapril)
Cuprimine (penicillamine)*	Niacin	Velban (vinblastine)
Cytotec (misoprostol)*	Normodyne (labetalol)	VePesid (etoposide)
Cytosan (cyclophosphamide)	Norpramin (desipramine)	Verelan (verapamil)*
Depakene (valproic acid)	Orudis (ketoprofen)*	Visken (pindolol)
Depen (penicillamine)*	Pepcid (famotidine)*	Voltaren (diclofenac)*
Dicumarol (4-bishydroxycoumarin)	Pertofrane (desipramine)	Wellbutrin (bupropion)*
Elavil (amitriptyline)	Propylthiouracil	Zantac (ranitidine)
Esimil (guanethidine)	Prozac (fluoxetine)*	Zyloprim (allopurinol)*
Feldene (piroxicam)*	Quibron T (theophylline)	

*rare side effect

Physicians may think of drug-induced hair loss as a "minor" side effect, but it can affect a person's self-esteem.

say, this is not an area of research drug companies are anxious to pursue. As a result, the list of drugs that may cause hair loss is incomplete. Physicians rarely mention this side effect, which can come on so gradually that it's difficult to make the association between the medicine you started taking months ago and the hair accumulating at the bottom of the tub now. And because hair loss isn't life-threatening, a doctor may not take the time out of her busy schedule to write it up and warn others even if you do figure out the drug is to blame.

If you suspect that a medication you are taking is making your hair thin, you may want to discuss the benefits and risks of the treatment with the doctor. Something as simple as an allergy medicine like **Seldane** could be to blame. A different antihistamine

may eliminate the thinning.

In other cases, there may be no other options. Anticancer drugs often cause hair loss but they are usually used in life-threatening situations where baldness is a secondary consideration. But if a beta-blocker blood pressure medicine such as **Inderal**, **Sectral** or **Tenormin** is responsible, there may be a number of alternatives that don't present this problem.

There are dozens of drugs that might contribute to hair loss. Even if you are taking one of these medicines, however, that doesn't necessarily mean that it is responsible for your hair problems. A dermatologist is best able to assess whether premature balding is being brought on by medicines or is strictly genetic. Remember, *NEVER* discontinue any medications without your physician's supervision!

Hope for Baldness?

Dermatologists know surprisingly little about hair. Ask why some people have hairy heads into their 90s while others are bald before they're 30 and you get a shrug of the shoulders and some medical mumbo-jumbo about "male-pattern baldness" and genetics. What this means is that hair loss runs in families, but no one knows quite why. Nor do they understand why men grow more hair on their ear lobes as their scalps thin. Try and get a physician to tell you why hair loses its color and turns gray or white with age and you get the same blank stare.

Until a few years ago scientists thought there was no way to reverse male pattern baldness. The conventional wisdom had it that once hair follicles stopped producing, the ball game was over. Then along came the blood pressure pill minoxidil. At first people complained bitterly that this oral medicine produced unwanted hair growth. Women discovered hair on their cheeks, between their eyebrows, and on their arms and legs. They weren't pleased. But then some enterprising dermatologists thought up the idea of applying a lotion directly to the scalp. To their amazement, they were actually able to see some hair growth. This defied dermatological dogma. Perhaps those lazy hair follicles were just sleeping so all that was needed was a kiss from some Prince Charming and they would wake up and start growing again.

The Rogaine Reality

The manufacturer of minoxidil thought it might just have discovered Prince Charming in the form of **Rogaine Topical Solution**. But despite an extraordinary ad campaign and tremendous initial interest from the media, **Rogaine** has fizzled. For one thing, it takes up to four months to see any actual hair growth. For another, those with the most to gain see the least improvement. The truly hairless get little if any benefit. Those with a receding hairline may in fact see real hair return, but it requires twice daily applications of the expensive lotion to maintain that growth.

And if **Rogaine** is discontinued the hair tends to fall out.

One unexpected group that does seem to do reasonably well with **Rogaine** is women. Few people know that females often suffer from male pattern baldness. That's not to say they actually become bald; rather, they experience overall hair thinning. The FDA has approved **Rogaine Topical Solution** for women. About half of those tested notice minimal to moderate hair growth, even better than their male counterparts.

The earlier **Rogaine** is used the better it seems to work. Once baldness progresses beyond a certain point there is less likelihood of success. Despite its relatively lackluster performance, **Rogaine** has done dermatology a great favor. It has demonstrated that even when hair stops growing, the follicles are not beyond help. And now researchers are trying to unlock the secrets of hair growth. If they are able to discover how hair follicles are turned on and off, not only will they be better able to treat baldness, but they may even develop some new tactics in the war against cancer.

The most promising new medications on the horizon include the topical cyoctol that blocks male hormones in the scalp and **Proscar** (finasteride), a new oral medicine for treating prostate enlargement. Any dermatological use of **Proscar** is experimental, at this point, but perhaps one day baldness will be a thing of the past.

Drugs & Hair Loss

Hair loss isn't always hereditary, nor is it purely an issue of looks. Sudden hair loss may signal an illness, and calls for the doctor to check out the underlying cause. Some possibilities include crash dieting, prolonged fever or the birth of a child. (Women lose very little hair during pregnancy, so all the follicles may "let go" at once afterwards.) Hormonal imbalance, such as a thyroid problem, may also be at fault.

Another possible cause of balding is medication. Scientists don't understand why some drugs are more likely than others to cause hair loss. Needless to

Is Rogaine a cure for baldness or an overpriced and overpromoted disappointment?

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to write:

**The People's Pharmacy
P.O. Box 52027**

Durham, NC 27717-2027

You may also wish to order one of our many publications or audio cassette tapes. Toll-free order number:

(800) 732-2334.

Does Your Hairdresser Know for Sure?

Although the issue of hair dye safety has been simmering since the 70s, there are still many unanswered questions about the advisability of coloring your hair. Back when Dr. Bruce Ames first developed a way to test chemicals by seeing if they made bacteria mutate, or change genetically, most scientists agreed that chemicals capable of changing bacteria might also be able to turn normal cells into cancerous ones. Needless to say, when Dr. Ames's students discovered that many ingredients in hair dyes failed the Ames test, their finding provoked surprise and alarm at the Food and Drug Administration as well as in the cosmetic industry.

Scientists reacted to this news by designing experiments to see if these chemicals would prove to be carcinogenic when tested in animals. A large study at the National Cancer Institute confirmed that many of the dye ingredients, especially those derived from coal tar, caused cancer when fed to critters--and that they were readily absorbed through the skin of the scalp.

Now, the animal tests didn't prove that hair dyes are a problem for people. But once the results were in, the red flag was up. It was time to see if women exposed to hair dye were at higher risk

of cancer, so epidemiologists, the scientists who study the distribution of disease in the population, pulled out their clipboards and computers and went to town. Early studies showed that beauticians were more likely to come down with lung cancer than other women.

Are hair dyes dangerous to use? The cosmetics manufacturers have reformulated these products a number of times, using slightly different chemicals. As a consequence, the studies relate to the risk in general and don't pertain to specific products or ingredients.

Population studies must take many different factors into account and are rarely conclusive. Research in Minnesota and Iowa suggests that men who die their hair almost double their risk of leukemia or another blood cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. An investigation in Georgia has found a link between women's hair dye use and connective tissue diseases such as scleroderma or lupus. A recent study (*AJPH*, July 1992, vol. 82, pp. 990-1010) showed that women who began coloring their hair early and continued a long time were at greater risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and two other blood-based cancers, multiple myeloma and Hodgkin's disease. Some other studies have failed to show any association, but with the evidence mounting, we recommend erring on the side of caution.

The Male Market

Men are less likely than women to dye their hair, but products that cover gray hair gradually are usually marketed to men. Most of these contain lead acetate as an active ingredient.

Excess lead is a hazard, but the FDA believes the small amount of lead absorbed from these hair colors is insignificant. To avoid lead poisoning, follow the instructions carefully and don't get these solutions on skin that is scraped, irritated or cut.

PRUDENT HAIR COLORING PRECAUTIONS

Nobody knows for sure how much of a risk hair coloring may pose. The diseases associated with permanent dyes are rare. But if you want to hedge your bets, here are a few tips:

- Nonpermanent or semipermanent products are probably less dangerous than permanent dyes.
- Dark colors seem to have more potentially problematic chemicals. If black, brown or red is your choice, stick with the lightest shade your vanity can stand.
- If you have a family history of connective tissue disorder, such as systemic sclerosis, lupus, scleroderma or polymyositis, be extra cautious. Your risk of developing such a serious problem is already higher.
- If you take verapamil (**Calan** or **Isoptin**), steer clear of hair dye. This drug may increase the danger.
- Wait as long as you can stand before beginning to color your hair and in between applications. Chances are that risk increases with exposure.
- Don't leave chemicals on your scalp any longer than you must.
- Go natural during pregnancy. No one knows whether or how these chemicals might affect developing infants.

Nail Care

Epilyt Lotion

Stiefel Laboratories
2801 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Coral Gables, FL 33134
(305) 443-3807

The Hoofmaker

Straight Arrow Products
P. O. Box 20350
Lehigh Valley, PA 18002
(800) 827-9815

Easy Removal

Once, doctors removed fungus-infected nails surgically. Not only was this painful, but there was an added risk of bleeding and infection. Then Dr. Eugene Farber, Chairman of Dermatology at Stanford, discovered an old Russian technique. Urea paste applied to the nail dissolves the diseased portion in about a week, leaving normal nail intact. Urea is available over the counter in a 10 percent cream as **Aquacare** and **Nutraplus**, in a 20 percent formulation called **Carmol 20**, at 30 percent as **Rea-Lo** and 40 percent cream is available by prescription as **Ureacin-40**. This treatment requires a dermatologist's supervision and can be followed by an antifungal topical cream.

For years, Americans have sought stronger nails by gulping gelatin or applying expensive nail hardeners. But the scientific evidence that gelatin will help is thin, and some nail hardeners may actually make nails more brittle.

Like skin, nails need moisture to stay healthy and strong. Detergents and nail products like polish remover can be extremely drying and should be minimized as much as possible. Rubber gloves should always be used when washing dishes or doing other tasks with household cleaners. Skin creams applied to fingernails after a bath or shower can help seal in moisture. To soften nails that are overly brittle, you could apply a nonprescription moisturizer such as **Epilyt** at bedtime, protecting your sheets with plain cotton gloves. These can be purchased cheaply from photographic supply houses where they are sold to handle negatives.

The stable is an unexpected source for a nail moisturizer, but groomers have told us about their success with a product called "Hoofmaker." People who care for horses' hooves have noticed that their own nails seemed stronger and healthier after they applied this dressing by hand. The **Hoofmaker** is a bargain compared to cosmetic products.

Nailing Down Problems

People often wonder if nail problems might be a sign of a more serious condition, such as a nutritional deficiency. Medical problems, such as psoriasis, sometimes show up in fingernails and a dermatologist will often check the nails if other symptoms are suggestive. Thyroid imbalances may also have an impact on the nails. The most common nail problems, especially chipping or splitting, are more annoying than sinister, and they are generally not specific enough to be easily diagnosed.

It's also difficult to diagnose most nutritional shortcomings on the basis of fingernails. Spoon-shaped nails that curve inward instead of outward may be a sign of iron-deficiency anemia. They could also signal a lack of chromium in the diet. Most experts doubt that calcium makes much difference in nail strength, but many readers claim that supplements make a difference. One woman insisted that the "Geriatric Formula" multivitamin supplement from Bronson Pharmaceuticals [(800) 521-3322; in CA (800) 521-3323] restored her nails so they no longer split or chipped.

FOILING FUNGUS

Another nail problem that plagues many people is fungal infection. In diabetics and others with poor circulation, this can threaten health, but for most people the nail only becomes brownish and unsightly. Doctors usually treat infected nails with griseofulvin, a pill that must be taken for at least six months to resolve finger- or toenail fungus. This medication may cause side effects and can be quite expensive.

Many readers of our column have reported good results with home remedies. Some insist that the oil from vitamin E capsules can be squirted on and around the affected nail and the surrounding skin to help clear up the fungus. Others recommend soaks in Pau d'Arco tea, available in many health food stores. Soaking the affected nail for five or ten minutes a day in white vinegar or white iodine has also been reported helpful. One reader even claims that swabbing the affected area daily with a 50 percent solution of **Clorox** in water chased her nail fungus away. A physician wrote that he soaked his toes in rubbing alcohol daily.

None of these fungus remedies has been scientifically tested, but they may be worth a try to clear up unappealing nails. Although antifungal creams don't do very well against nail infections, probably because they can't get into the nail bed, a reader testifies that twice-a-day **Oxistat** (oxiconazole), a prescription cream, cleared her nails up within a few months. All of these treatments appear to require assiduous attention, patience and persistence.