



Protein

An adequate supply of protein in the diet is essential for the formation of keratin - the major component of hair - and should comprise at least 15% of daily calories.

- ✓ Sources include: lean meat, poultry, fish, cheese, nuts, seeds, pulses, eggs, seaweed, almonds and yogurt

Vitamins

B vitamins play a crucial role in keeping hair healthy & moisturized. If hair is falling out more than usual, it may be due to a lack of the B vitamin biotin.

- ✓ Sources include: liver, sardines, wholemeal bread, brewer's yeast, brown rice, nuts and beans

Fats

Aim to achieve a healthy balance of dietary fats. Substitute vegetable oil such as sunflower, and olive oil for animal fats. These good fats contain 'essential fatty acids', Omega 3 and Omega 6's

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates help in the growth of body tissues including hair and are a major source of the B vitamins. About 55-60% of daily calories should comprise of non-refined carbohydrates.

- ✓ Source include: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, brown rice and potatoes.

- ✗ Avoid eating processed sugar and sugary foods as they lack vital vitamins and minerals

Zinc

Zinc also plays a role in stimulating hair growth by enhancing the body's immune function.

- ✓ Sources include: shellfish, lentils, lean meat and green vegetables

Try to eat nutrient rich meals/ snacks regularly (every 4 hours) to help to maintain adequate hair follicle energy levels - crash dieting and faddy diets, such as the Atkins Diet, starve the hair's energy supply and may lead to premature hair loss.



Nutritional Advice For Healthy Hair

By Consultant Nutritionist Helen Bond

Your hair not only relies on good haircare products that strengthen and protect it from the outside but also nutrition to feed it from the inside. So, for a crown of hair that radiates health and vitality, start by taking a hard look at diet. Here's how to get started:

New Mums

New mums are especially vulnerable to thinning hair, as many will have low iron levels due to postpartum blood loss or the renewal of the menstrual cycle following childbirth. In addition, the hair loss cycle which is suspended during pregnancy starts up again and this can also result in an increased loss of hair during the first few weeks post-birth. This is entirely natural and is part of the body's process of moving out of pregnancy.

- ✓ Try to include iron rich foods in the diet like red meat, liver, (should be avoided by pregnant women), wholegrain cereals, dark green leafy vegetables, eggs and apricots
- ✓ Vitamin C helps the absorption of iron, so try having a daily glass of orange juice

Hair Treatments

This can be caused to the hair by bleaching, relaxing, perming, excessive pulling, colouring or even straightening the hair.

- ✓ Some researchers believe that vitamin E can improve the health and growth of hair by improving the circulation to the scalp. Eat avocados, nuts and seeds on a regular basis

Mature Women

Although thinning of the hair is more common in men, it can affect women with a genetic tendency towards this problem. This is due to the natural reduction in the level of the female hormone. Women with this condition may wish to seek advice from a trichologist.

- ✓ Try eating foods rich in phytoestrogens, such as tofu, tempeh, miso and soy milk
- ✓ Whole grains, nuts and seeds will provide further minerals and vitamins and lean protein will add sufficient quantities of iron to the diet

Hormonal

One of the main hormonal causes of hair loss is a fall in the production of thyroxine leading to an under active thyroid.

- ✓ Iodine helps produce thyroid hormones that feed follicles and sebaceous glands. Enjoy natural sources of iodine predominating in sea vegetables, including wakame, nori and kombu

