HAIR HABITS YOU DIDN'T KNOW WERE DAMAGING YOUR HAIR AND HOW TO FIX THEM

NEGLECTING SCALP AND HAIR CARE CAN DISRUPT HAIR GROWTH AND STRENGTH, WHEREAS MAINTAINING A CLEAN AND BALANCED SCALP HELPS PREVENT DAMAGE AND SUPPORTS HEALTHIER, MORE RESILIENT HAIR.

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Whether you're a young mom or not, our hair is our crown. It is an essential part of our personal style and everyday confidence.

From styling tools and hair products, to constant exposure to the sun and pollution, our hair goes through a lot on a daily basis, often without us realizing the long-term impact.

Just as we carefully create skincare routines for our face and body, our scalp deserves the same level of attention. Daily habits, environmental stressors, product buildup and even medical procedures can weaken the scalp and hair over time, making hair strands more prone to breakage and hair fall.

The American Academy of Dermatology Association (AADA) identified some of the habits we do daily that we unknowingly cause damage to our own hair.

Washing hair too much

Every day, we are exposed to various dirt and pollution in the streets. Whether we're going out for a meal or on our way back home, we might be concerned about the dirt and dust we accumulate. While we pay attention to the cleanliness of our hair, washing it too often can strip away the natural oils it produces, leaving it dry. Additionally, some shampoos contain chemicals that may be harmful to our hair, and shampooing more frequently only doubles the damage.

Brushing while the hair is wet

We might think that combing hair while it's wet is easier than when it's dry. Nevertheless, wet hair strands are more vulnerable because they are saturated with water. When hair is wet, its protective outer layer — the cuticle, which acts as its armor — lifts and exposes the inner core, known as the cortex. This makes the hair more elastic and stretchy, but also more fragile, increasing the risk of breakage and hair fall when combed or brushed. In contrast, brushing hair when it is dry allows the cuticles to lie flatter and closer together, resulting in less damage.

Drying hair by rubbing with a towel

When rushing to get to work or school, many of us dry our hair quickly by rubbing it with a towel. But this common habit can cause serious damage that often goes unnoticed. Rubbing a towel against wet hair creates friction, lifting the cuticles and leading to frizz, breakage and weakened strands. Over time, this rough drying method can compromise overall hair health.

Blow drying, curling, straightening

When we have special events, one of the things we focus on is styling our hair. We straighten or curl it to tame and shape it, using the heat from these tools. But frequent exposure to heat strips the hair of its natural moisture, leaving it dry, brittle and more susceptible to damage. Despite how shiny and beautiful the results may be, using heat often is not healthy for our hair.

Coloring and dyeing

To further express oneself or boost confidence through appearance, many people change their hair color. Sometimes it's done to follow trends or to complement one's skin tone or fashion sense. But hair dyes contain chemicals that can harm hair, especially if bleach is used. This can lead to dryness, frizziness, breakage and for those who do not follow proper procedures — or whose DIY (do-it-yourself) attempts go wrong — intense hair fall.

Neglecting scalp and hair care can disrupt hair growth and strength, whereas maintaining a clean and balanced scalp helps prevent damage and supports healthier, more resilient hair.

Here are some tips on how you can take care of your hair:

Study your hair type

We all have different types of hair, such as curly, straight or coarse, and knowing your hair type can help you identify which hair care products will work best for you. This knowledge can save you time spent wandering the supermarket or scrolling online through countless hair products.

Shampoo the scalp, condition the hair

Many people might think that after shampooing, their hair is already clean. But there is a proper way to shampoo. The shampoo should be lathered and applied directly to the scalp to remove excess dirt and oil. While rinsing, let the product flow through the strands rather than rubbing it on them, as rubbing can cause tangling and damage without addressing the main buildup.

It is also recommended not to use your nails on the scalp, as this can scratch or damage it. Instead, gently but thoroughly massage the scalp to ensure all areas are cleaned. Additionally, some hair products contain chemicals that can damage hair, which is why it is recommended to follow up with a conditioner. The conditioner moisturizes the hair and helps detangle it, making it easier to manage after a shower.

Brush when dry, use appropriate combs

We all dream of having hair as long and shiny as Rapunzel. To get closer to that goal, it is better to brush or comb hair once it is air-dried to avoid additional damage. Using a wide-tooth comb helps reduce frizz and prevents scratching the scalp. It is also best to start detangling from the ends before moving to the roots, so the hair won't get pulled or stretched, helping to avoid breakage and hair fall.

Use safe paraben- and-sulfate-free products

Parabens are commonly used to preserve cosmetic products and extend their shelf life. They help prevent bacteria, mold and yeast from growing in your products.

Meanwhile, sulfates are what make products foamy and lather, which can give the impression that hair is thoroughly clean. These ingredients, however, are not always harmless. According to a study by Chatterjee et al. (2024), parabens can disturb hormonal balance, potentially causing weight gain and skin irritation. They are also linked to other health concerns, including endocrine disruption, obesity and fertility issues. Sulfates, on the other hand, can strip the natural oils from hair, leaving it weak, dull and more prone to damage. That is why it is recommended to look for products that contain mostly organic and safe ingredients to avoid future hair problems.

For those seeking safer options, Skin Care for Hope's Mild Shampoo is free of both the harmful chemicals, parabens and sulfates. Created by board-certified dermatologist Dr. Claire Marie Reyes-Habito, this shampoo was designed to bring hope and healing to individuals with sensitive or compromised skin due to medications such as chemotherapy and radiation.

The Mild Shampoo has a soft, light scent and is gentle on the scalp. It is safe for those undergoing chemotherapy, which often causes brittle nails, dry skin and thinning hair. Made primarily from natural ingredients, including sunflower seed oil, purified water and lime and grapefruit for its fragrance, it provides a gentle yet effective hair care solution. If it is safe for individuals undergoing medical procedures, it is certainly safe for everyone else as well.

If you're used to supermarket shampoos that produce extreme lather, you might be surprised that Skin Care for Hope's Mild Shampoo doesn't foam as much. But it leaves hair smooth, soft and light, showing that it is free from harmful chemicals that could damage your hair or skin. It is also ideal for people who frequently dye their hair or use heat, allowing them to maintain and care for their hair and scalp without compromising their self-expression or their fashion.

To further nourish hair and scalp, the Mild Shampoo is best paired with Skin Care for Hope's Scalp, Skin and Nail Oil, which contains 100 percent virgin coconut oil to deeply hydrate and protect the skin.

Healthy hair starts with understanding your hair, adopting the correct habits and using safe and nourishing products like Skin Care for Hope's Mild Shampoo and Scalp, Skin and Nail Oil, that care for both your scalp and strands, keeping your hair strong, shiny
and full of life.