

HAIR LOSS PREVENTION



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The best start to preventing hair loss is understanding the basics of hair: what it is, how it grows, what system malfunctions can cause it to stop growing. And this ebook will cover the bases for you. Note that the contents here are not presented from a medical practitioner, and that any and all dietary and medical planning should be made under the guidance of your own medical and health practitioners. This content only presents overviews of hair loss prevention research for educational purposes and does not replace medical advice from a professional physician.

Introduction

Hair is the fastest growing tissue of the body, made up of proteins called keratins. Every strand of hair is made up of three layers: the inner layer or medulla (only present in thick hairs); the middle layer or cortex, which determines the strength, texture, and color of hair; and the cuticle, which protects the cortex. Hair grows from roots, which are enclosed in follicles. Below this is a layer of skin called the dermal papilla, which is fed by the bloodstream carrying nourishments vital to the growth of hair. Only the roots of hair are actually alive, while the visible part of hair is dead tissue, and therefore unable to heal itself. It is vital then to take care of the scalp and body in order to perpetuate hair growth and maintenance. Expensive treatments that claim to treat the visible hair and nourish it therefore are usually no more than bogus claims made to sell products.

Hormones called androgens, usually testosterone, can cause hair follicles to shrink, causing thinning of hair or eventual hair loss. Reportedly only bone marrow grows faster in our body than hair does. The average scalp contains 100,000-150,000 hair follicles and hairs, with 90% growing and 10% resting at any given time. Hair actually grows in three stages: anagen, catagen, and telogen. The anagen phase is the phase where

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hair is actively growing, and of course this phase is longer for follicles in the scalp than anywhere else on your body, and lasts longer for women than men. It is natural for follicles to atrophy and hair to fall out, and this is called the catagen phase. This phase is only temporary, and eventually the follicle enters the telogen phase where it is resting. These are the 10% at rest mentioned above. Normal anagen phases last approximately five years, with catagen phases lasting about three weeks, and telogen phases lasting approximately 12 weeks. As you see it is natural to lose some hair. Natural hair loss is considered to be in the range of 100 hairs per day. It is not apparent to most people that hair is actually being lost until more than 50% of a person's hair is actually lost.

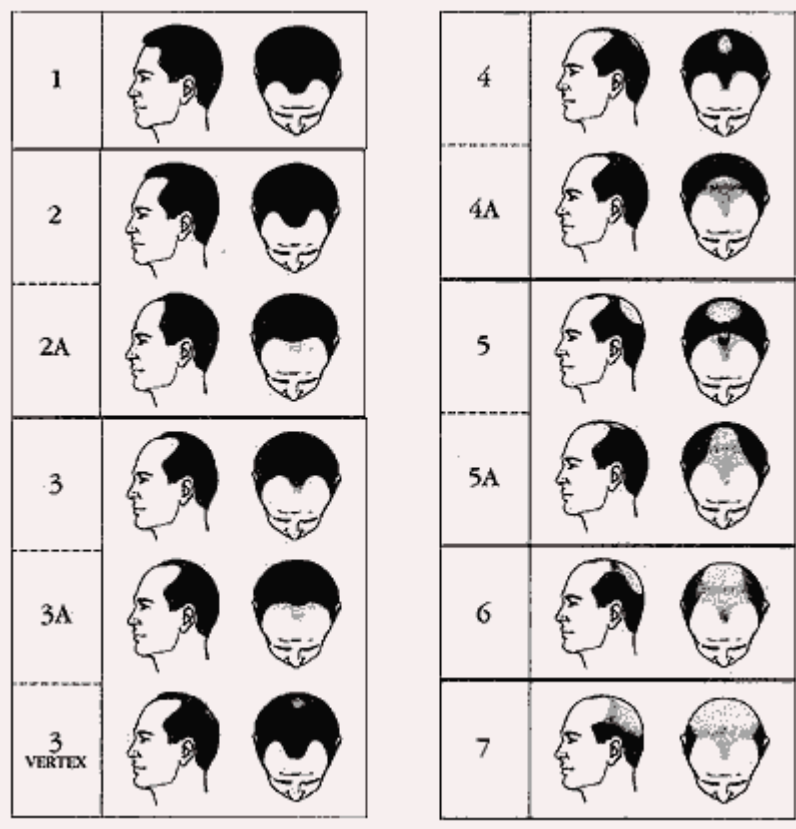
More Hair Facts and Hair Loss Basics

Although both men and women can suffer significant hair loss, over 50% of men will suffer with Male Pattern Baldness (MPB), also known as androgenetic alopecia, at some point in their lives. The reason behind hair loss is a genetically inherited sensitivity to Dihydrotestosterone (DHT) and 5-alpha-reductase. The enzyme 5-alpha-reductase converts testosterone, a male hormone, to DHT, the substance identified as the end-cause for hair loss.

Most hair loss follows a pattern that has been codified in a table called the Norwood Scale (see figure 1). There are seven patterns of hair identified in the Norwood Scale, Norwood I being a normal head of hair with no visible hair loss, Norwood II showing the hair receding in a wedge-shaped pattern. Norwood III shows the same receding pattern as Norwood II, except the hairline has receded deeper into the frontal area and the temporal area. Type IV on the Norwood Scale indicates a hairline that has

receded more dramatically in the frontal region and temporal area. Additionally there is a balding area at the very top center of the head, but there is a bridge of hair remaining between that region and the front. Type V on the Norwood Scale shows that very same bridge between the frontal region and the top center, also called the vertex, beginning to thin. Type VI on the Norwood Scale indicates that the bridge between the frontal region and the vertex has disappeared. Finally, Type VII on the Norwood Scale shows hair receding all the way back to the base of the head and the sides just above the ears. Norwood patterns are determined genetically.

Figure 1. Norwood Scale



Hair loss has been noticed and studied throughout the ages, and some interesting

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discoveries were made in ancient times. For one it was noticed that eunuchs: those males without genitals-never went bald. Men who were castrated as a result of accidents in battle also never went bald. This was the first indication that testosterone had something to do with hair loss. It has also been found that the more recessive the hair gene, the more propensity toward baldness one has. Blond-haired persons have a greater propensity toward hair loss than darker-haired people, and therefore Caucasian persons have a greater propensity toward hair loss than non-Caucasian people. Beyond the genetic propensity of certain people toward hair loss, there seems to be various dietary triggers that activate the process, a notion that is promising since this can be controlled.

What exactly are androgens? Androgens are sex hormones mainly produced by males, the main one of which is testosterone. Androgens are produced by the adrenal glands, which protect the body in stressful situations by also producing adrenaline so that the body may respond to situations it deems to be threatening. The stress of daily life in Western civilization has caused a state of alarm in people that has made the body unable to distinguish between everyday stressors and threatening situations. Therefore the adrenal glands in most people in Western civilizations are overactive, constantly producing adrenaline and naturally producing testosterone along with it. Additionally, the over-consumption of red meat and high fat foods in Western society cause an overactive adrenal gland, perpetuating this situation.

There is a definite connection between the syndrome of Male Pattern Baldness (MPB) and the prostate gland. The prostate gland is actually a cluster of small glands in males surrounding the urethra, located just below the bladder. There is not a lot known about all the functions of the prostate, except that it serves to squeeze seminal fluid into

and through the urethra during ejaculation. Prostate problems can cause serious problems with urination it becomes enlarged, and sometimes the prostate becomes cancerous. The syndrome of non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate is known as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). DHT is responsible for the division of cells in the prostate, and is normally expelled by the prostate. However, when the prostate fails to expel the DHT, it builds up and causes enlargement. It has been confirmed that typical North American and northern European diets lend to the perpetuation of BPH and prostate cancer, whereas these are uncommon phenomena in other lands and was even uncommon here in the past. This is significant because the overproduction of DHT is responsible for BPH and prostate cancer, and is also responsible for MPB or androgenetic alopecia. The findings in research for BPH cures have usually simultaneously produced benefits in hair growth. We shall cover some of these discoveries in various sections of this book. Additionally, changes in diet are necessary to avoid all of these conditions and improve overall health.

Some common myths have arisen concerning hair loss. Because of medical advancements many of these myths are being addressed and corrected. For starters, although androgenetic alopecia or pattern baldness is genetic and therefore can be hereditary, it is not passed down through only your mother's side of the family. Either side of the family can pass down the genetic disposition toward baldness. Also, contrary to old family tales, wearing hats does not cause baldness either.

Most common hair loss comes under what has been commonly known as Male Pattern Baldness (MPB). Although referred to as MPB, females suffer a similar syndrome, so it is more properly called androgenetic alopecia. Although hair loss is not life or health threatening, it can cause serious problems with a person's psyche and self-

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confidence. There has been no absolute cure found for hair loss, and many factors of hair loss are hereditary, however there are several preventative measures one can take to maintain healthy hair and scalp.

Diet, Nutrition and Hair Loss

One key factor in maintaining a growing protein on a part of one's biological body is obvious: one must maintain a healthy diet. Although certain factors have been definitely identified as contributors to hair loss, we must keep in mind that hair is part of the complete biological system of the human body. Being a system, dysfunctions in one part of the system can contribute to dysfunctions in other parts; chain reactions occur when one part of the body malfunctions, causing other parts within the system to falter. To maintain optimum health, it is best to maintain a healthy diet and regular exercise regimen.

Defining exactly what a healthy diet is when it comes to preventing hair loss can be a little more complex. Principally, the main vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that one must ingest in some form to maintain healthy hair are vitamin A, all B vitamins- particularly vitamins B-6 and B-12, folic acid, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin E, copper, iron, zinc, iodine, protein of course, silica, essential fatty acids (EFA's, formerly known as vitamin F) and last but not least one must consume water. There are also certain foods that may cause dysfunctions that will contribute to hair loss.

The best way to maintain a healthy vitamin and mineral intake is a good diet. It is not necessary or advisable to go out and buy a bunch of over-the-counter vitamin

supplements in order to achieve your suggested nutritional levels. Many over-the-counter vitamins are chemically processed and are not completely absorbed into the system. It is also easy to overdose oneself with over the counter vitamins particularly when taking supplements of fat-soluble vitamins and minerals, causing toxicity and adverse reactions. The likelihood of doing this is far less with food; therefore it is always best to obtain the bulk of your vitamin and mineral requirements from whole foods.

Vitamin A is a key component to developing healthy cells and tissues in the body, including hair. Additionally it works with silica and zinc to prevent drying and clogging of the sebaceous glands, the glands vital to producing sebum, which is an important lubricant for the hair follicle. Vitamin A deficiencies commonly cause thickening of the scalp, dry hair, and dandruff. Air pollution, smoking, extremely bright light, certain cholesterol-lowering drugs, laxatives, and aspirin are some known vitamin A inhibitors. Liver, fish oil, eggs, fortified milk, and red, yellow, and orange vegetables are good sources for vitamin A, as are some dark green leafy vegetables like spinach. Be particularly careful if you take vitamin A supplements, as vitamin A is fat-soluble, allowing the body to store it and making it easy for the body to overdose on vitamin A. Vitamin A overdoses can cause excessively dry skin and inflamed hair follicles, and in some cases ironically can cause hair loss. If you choose to take supplements of this vitamin, consult with a specialist first. As mentioned above, the likelihood of overdosing by achieving your vitamin A intake by food sources is almost nil, so it is best to attempt to achieve this at all costs.

B-vitamins work interdependently and therefore all levels of B vitamins need to be sufficient in order to maintain proper health. Vitamins B-6, folic acid, biotin, and

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vitamin B-12 are all key components in maintaining healthy hemoglobin levels in the blood, which is the iron-containing portion of red-blood cells. Hemoglobin's primary function is to carry oxygen from the lungs to the tissues of the body, so if these vitamins were deficient in one's body, then hair and skin would indeed suffer. Fortunately some of the tastiest foods contain these vitamins. Vitamin B-6 is found in protein rich foods, which is excellent because the body needs a sufficient amount of protein to maintain hair growth as well. Liver, chicken, fish, pork, kidney, and soybeans are good sources of B-6 and are relatively low in fat when they are not fried. Folic acid is found in whole grains, cereals, nuts, green leafy vegetables, orange juice, brewer's yeast, wheat germ, and liver again. Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, and other dairy products meanwhile provide healthy amounts of B-12. Biotin deficiencies are rare unless there is a severe case of malnutrition or a serious intestinal disorder, since a healthy gut produces biotin through good bacteria found there.

Note: if you have a known intestinal disorder and are plagued by hair loss, ask your doctor about biotin deficiencies and possible solutions.

Vitamin C is responsible for the development of healthy collagen, which is necessary to hold body tissues together. A vitamin C deficiency can cause split ends and hair breakage, yet this is easily reversible with an increase to normal vitamin C levels. Vitamin C can be found in foods such as fresh peppers, citrus fruits, melons berries, potatoes, tomatoes, and dark green leafy vegetables.

Vitamin E is necessary to provide good blood circulation to the scalp by increasing the uptake of oxygen. Vitamin E is derived from foods such as green leafy vegetables, nuts, grains, vegetable oils, and most ready-to-eat cereals, which are fortified

with vitamin E. Vitamin E deficiencies are rare in people in North America and Europe. In the rare cases of vitamin E deficiency, usually caused by the inability to absorb oils and fats, dietary supplements are available.

Copper is a trace mineral that is also necessary in the production of hemoglobin. Hemoglobin as mentioned earlier is vital to the process of carrying oxygen to tissues such as the hair, and obviously hair is alive cannot grow without proper oxygen, yet it does not breathe as other components of our body do, because the oxygen must get to the shaft of the hair. Good sources of copper are liver again, seafood, nuts, and seeds.

Another key mineral vital in the production of hemoglobin is iron. Iron is found in two forms, heme and non-heme; heme iron is much easier to absorb into the system. This is where the problem lies. Of course most people know that red meat is a good source of iron, however red meat is non-heme iron and is difficult for the body to absorb, as are many iron supplements. Good heme iron sources are green leafy vegetables, kidney beans, and bran. Additionally, one can increase the absorption of non-heme iron into the body by consuming non-heme food sources and vitamin C sources in the same meal.

Zinc is another vital component to healthy hair, being that it is responsible for cell production, tissue growth and repair, and the maintenance of the oil-secreting glands of the scalp. It also plays a large role in protein synthesis and collagen formation. For this reason, zinc is important for both hair maintenance and dandruff prevention. Most Americans are deficient in zinc. Most foods of animal origin, particularly seafood, contain good amounts of zinc; oysters are particularly rich in zinc. Zinc is also found in eggs and milk, although in much smaller amounts. Zinc from sources such as nuts, legumes, and natural grains is of a different type than those found in animal sources and

is not easily used by the body, although oats are a good source of zinc that is readily used by the body.

Protein is found in most of the aforementioned animal source foods, particularly meats, fish, milk, cheese, eggs and yogurt. There is no need for a person eating the average Western diet to eat additional protein. Too much protein, even though hair is made of protein, will not improve hair growth and may cause other health problems.

A challenge for vegans is to maintain healthy levels of protein, being that complete proteins containing all nine essential amino acids necessary are found mostly in animal sources. Legumes, seeds, nuts, grains and vegetables do not contain the same form of protein necessary for a healthy body. There is only one common non-meat source for complete protein, and that is the soybean. Fortunately, soybeans have been made into tofu and texturized vegetable protein (TVP) so that they can be made into various dishes. Additionally, one may eat from a wide variety of vegetable sources in order to obtain all the essential amino acids.

Iodine is vital to the growth of hair. Sheep farmers long ago discovered that vegetation void of iodine due to iodine-depleted soil will adversely affect the growth of wool in sheep. Likewise, our hair needs iodine to grow. Iodine is synthetically added to table salt, however in this form it is not assimilated well into the body and can therefore cause iodine overload. An excess of iodine in the body can adversely affect the thyroid. It is best to use non-iodized salt and retrieve your iodine from natural food sources. These include seaweed, salmon, seafood, lima beans, molasses, eggs, potatoes with the skin on, watercress and garlic.

One of the most difficult nutrients vital to hair growth to get in one's diet is the

trace mineral silica. Silicon is a form of silicon and is the second most abundant element in the earth's crust, second only to oxygen. The Earth provides everything we need for health, and with silicon being so abundant, it would seem that there would never be a problem with silica deficiency. Unfortunately, trace minerals are rare in Western diets because our food is processed and our soil depleted by chemical treatments so often that trace minerals are lost. Silica is vital to the strength of hair, and although it will not necessarily stop hair from falling out from the follicle, it will stop hair breakage. It works by stimulating the cell metabolism and formation, which slows the aging process. Foods that are rich in silica are rice, oats, lettuce, parsnips, asparagus, onion, strawberry, cabbage, cucumber, leek, sunflower seeds, celery, rhubarb, cauliflower, and swiss chard. Note that many of these foods, particularly rice, are a large part of Asian diets and Asians tend to have the strongest and healthiest hair. Be sure to seek out all the above foods from sources that grow food organically, as this is vital to obtaining the trace minerals that are usually not present in North American soil and therefore not in American foods. Additionally these foods should be eaten uncooked, or in the case of rice-unwashed, as trace minerals are easily cooked and washed away.

Essential Fatty Acids (EFA's) are fatty acids that are needed by the body yet not produced by the body. EFA's are a key component to healthy skin, hair and nails. Common skin diseases, such as those discussed later in this book like eczema and seborrhea, are in part caused by deficiencies in EFA's. Including deep-water fish such as salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout, or herring approximately three times a week will provide sufficient amounts of EFA's. However, if for some reason you cannot eat deep-water fish or have an extreme dislike for it, it may be necessary to take a supplement to

obtain the required amount of EFA's.

Last but not least, make sure to include the proper amount of water in your diet. Water is vital to proper hydration, which is necessary in order for all nutrients to be utilized properly by the body, not to mention the proper function of every cell in the body including hair follicles. The suggested amount of water intake daily is eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day, or 64 ounces a day.

The effects of high-fat diets and the increase of DHT (Dihydrotestosterone), a chemical produced by the body found to cause hair loss, is not conclusive at this time. However, there does seem to be a connection; as societies that consumed relatively low-fat diets such as pre-World War II Japan experienced almost no pattern baldness, whereas in post-World War II Japan there is an increase in pattern baldness as their society consumes a higher fat diet. In fact, Asian and African men in their native countries traditionally suffer very little Male Pattern Baldness (MPB). Although when the same peoples come to North America, they begin to develop MPB. Because people of all races and ethnicities tend to develop MPB or androgenetic alopecia, yet do not exhibit these tendencies before moving to America, changes in diet may be a leading contributing factor. Diets high in fat do increase testosterone, which is the main component in DHT. More research needs to be done on this topic to reach conclusive evidence, although it certainly could not hurt to lower one's fat intake.

Fiber is vital to making sure undigested food moves through the body and to the bowels properly. Failure of foods to move through the bowels in a reasonable amount of time can cause fermentation of undigested food in the bowels and blocking of nutrients being absorbed through the body. Beyond causing degrees of malnutrition, this can also

cause a level of toxicity that will overwork systems in the body such as the adrenal glands and contribute to hair loss. Healthy amounts of fresh vegetables, fruits and legumes consumed daily will ensure a proper amount of dietary fiber.

Although nutritional remedies were those that were discussed here, supplements can be used if one feels they are simply unable to eat properly due to work schedule or dislike of certain foods. Nutritional supplements containing these same vitamins and minerals can be taken, with the exception of water of course. Be sure to always take supplements that are naturally chelated, meaning that the supplements were developed in a natural base. This will ensure that the supplements you consume will be more readily absorbed in the body. There are some cautions to taking supplements of certain vitamins and minerals, particularly those that are fat-soluble because the body stores them.

Vitamin A can be highly toxic and supplements of vitamin A should be avoided unless recommended by a doctor. It is best to achieve one's vitamin A requirements either by food or through a naturally chelated multivitamin. Also remember that smoking and second hand smoke can cause blocking of vitamin A assimilation, so it is best to avoid smoking and remove one's self from areas and situations where second hand smoke is present if at all possible.

Vitamin E supplements should always be taken at 400 i.u. per day to start and work your way up to 800 i.u. Always take vitamin E in its natural form, which is d'alpha tocopherol. Avoid taking vitamin E supplements in the synthetic form dl'alpha tocopherol, which is derived from petroleum and is less available for assimilation into the body. If you have high blood pressure or other serious illnesses, consult a physician before taking vitamin E supplements.

Zinc is one fat-soluble mineral that can cause harm if an overdose is taken. Zinc can rob the body of copper, mentioned above as a key nutrient in hair growth and health, not to mention in other functions of the body. Zinc supplements should be taken in low doses, such as 5mg at a time. These can commonly be found in the form of zinc lozenges designed for sore throats. There is a “trick” to tell if you are taking too much zinc. When the zinc levels in the body have surpassed the level that they can be used, a metallic taste begins to form. If you pay attention to the metallic taste, you will know when enough zinc has been consumed, and you can then stop consuming zinc immediately.

Iron supplements are not recommended unless a doctor has diagnosed you with a severe iron deficiency. If you do take an iron supplement, avoid ferrous sulfate, which you will find as the most common over-the-counter iron supplement in drug stores. Ferrous sulfate is hard for the body to assimilate, and because iron is not water-soluble it will sit in the body and can cause severe liver problems over time. Further, ferrous sulfate causes constipation, which can trigger a great deal more problems besides being extremely unpleasant. One iron supplement that does not contain ferrous sulfate is called *Floradix* and is available in both liquid and pill form.

Since there are so few foods to mention that are grown in North America and contain a good amount of silica, supplements may truly be needed. Horsetail is an herb that is a rich source of silica. It is highly important to never take horsetail directly however, or take a supplement made from unprocessed horsetail, as this herb can be toxic when ingested whole, ground, in tablets or capsules. Horsetail must be taken in an aqueous extract of the herb only. Ask someone at your health food store or someone knowledgeable about herbs to help you find this form. Silica gel is suspended in water,

although it is not an aqueous solution and should be avoided. Nettle is also a good source of silica and Nettle Root Extract is readily available at health food stores.

Supplements of Essential Fatty Acids (EFA's) are easily found in most health food stores and even many supermarkets and pharmacies. These include Evening Primrose Oil, Wheat Germ Oil, Flaxseed Oil, Cod Liver Oil, and other oils from deep-water fish. It is not recommended to rely on Cod Liver Oil as a source for EFA's because it contains high levels of vitamins A and D, and the amount of Cod Liver Oil necessary to achieve proper amounts of EFA's would cause overdosing on these vitamins. The recommended supplements are Evening Primrose Oil and Flaxseed Oil. Both these oils are available in oil form or in capsules. Keep in mind that high amounts of saturated fat blocks the effectiveness of EFA's, counteracting their effectiveness, so there needs to be adjustments to your diet if there is a high amount of saturated fat in it.

Juicing is a natural way to obtain many of the vitamins, minerals, and trace minerals mentioned above. When using organic fruits and vegetables, juicing can provide quite a boost to the system and encourage the health of hair. Juices are very readily assimilable by the body and provide the same content as the whole food. Fresh juices have a high enzyme content, which is beneficial because these enzymes are stored by the body and can be used by the body when cooked foods that have been robbed of enzymes are consumed. Storing the juice or purchasing pasteurized juices from the store diminishes this benefit, although the benefits of the minerals and vitamins are usually still available. All the above-mentioned fruits and vegetables can be juiced to obtain the maximum benefit from them. A great deal of silica, sulfur, iron, and potassium for example is extracted from organic carrot juice. In fact, carrots being roots contain most

trace minerals the body needs. The effects of carrot juice are enhanced when adding cucumber juice to it, because of its high silica and sulfur content. Organic spinach juice is highly recommended, as it is high in iron, vitamin A, and other vital vitamins and minerals; it is often combined with lettuce and carrot juice, two very good sources of silica and vitamin A. Non-organic spinach juice can be extremely high in pesticides and should therefore be avoided. Spinach juice should also be avoided if one suffers from kidney stones, as it contains a large amount of oxalic acid, which exacerbates kidney stone growth.

There are a number of foods and substances to avoid and limit the intake of. Substances such as alcohol, caffeine, sugar and nicotine can deplete the body of nutrients and raise adrenal levels, which will cause a chain reaction of producing more androgen and causing hair loss. High levels of saturated fat and cholesterol rich foods are also linked to increased DHT levels and their consumption should be limited. Additionally, common table salt has been linked to hair loss. And the average diet provides the recommended amount of sodium intake; therefore, salt should never be added to food. However, when using salt for seasoning during cooking, be sure to use salt with Iodine being that it is a nutrient that is vital to hair growth as well, unless you are a regular consumer of seafood, which contains high levels of Iodine.

Toxemia can cause a great deal of dysfunction in the body's systems, including hair-loss related illnesses such as eczema, psoriasis, seborrhea and possibly several others. It is vital for one to cleanse the body of impurities in order to maintain a healthy system and avoid such illnesses, as there are no cure for these illnesses beyond cleansing and the maintenance of a healthy diet to allow the body to heal itself. Regular cleansing

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