

Healthy Hair Tips

Vitamins and minerals play a vital role in the function of the body. Eating a balanced diet which includes certain vitamins and minerals can most certainly play a major part in helping to maintain a healthy head of hair.

Introduction

The human body is an amazingly complex and wonderful machine, but it cannot function without a supply of food. The nutrients in food are needed for energy, movement, heat, growth, repair, hair growth and sometimes reproduction.

The body needs to be able to digest the foods it takes in so that it can be used in various ways.

There are six basic types of nutrients and two basic non-nutrients found in food. The six nutrients are carbohydrate, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals, trace elements; the two non-nutrients are fibre and water.

Generally speaking most foods contain several nutrients, in varying amounts. Carrots, for instance, contain a little protein, a trace of fat, some carbohydrate, a good deal of water, a little sugar, fibre, and a selection of vitamins and minerals such as potassium, sodium, calcium, iron, zinc, vitamins B6, C and E, folic acid, biotin and pantothenic acid, etc.

We need a combination of all the above nutrients to maintain a normal and healthy body.

Para-Aminobenzoic Acid

(PABA) as this vitamin is commonly known is one of the lesser known members of the B complex family, has been shown to be an anti-grey hair vitamin.

In tests in black animals that were feed with a diet deficient of PABA, they developed grey hair, when the animals were reintroduced to the vitamin, normal hair colour was restored

Research on humans with grey hair being given 200mg of PABA after each meal produced results that showed that a study of the hair afterwards resulted in a seventy per cent result of the hair returning to its original colour.

Other research claims that PABA combined with folic acid also helps restore hair to its original colour.

Deficiency of PABA, Biotin, Folic Acid and Pantothenic Acid appears to affect hair colour.

Hair colour can normally be restored with a diet rich in the B vitamins and in the few cases where colour is not restored the hair will improve in quality and strength of growth.

PABA and the B vitamins are found in foods such as liver, kidney, whole grain and yeast. The richest source being liver.

Inositol

Inositol is also a member of the B vitamin group. It is a compound occurring in the brain, muscles, liver, kidney and eyes.

In laboratory animals, a diet lacking Inositol produced baldness, but when the vitamin was added to the food of these animals, the hair grew back again.

It was also observed that male animals lost hair twice as fast as female animals.

The result of this experiment would suggest that males require a higher Inositol intake than females. An Inositol deficient diet can also cause eczema, a form of skin irritation.

One doctor in a series of experiments prescribed Inositol together with other sources of B vitamins to all his balding patients. In almost all case's hair loss was arrested, in some case's hair growth was noticeable in as little as one month.

In one case hair recovery was total and not one bald spot remained.

Inositol, also appears to reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood.

Biotin

Biotin often called vitamin H, is yet another B complex component. Biotin is a proven hair growth vitamin and a preventative to excessive hair loss.

It appears to metabolise fatty acids. Fatty acids are a valuable growth factor in numerous processes in the body including the hair. Biotin is also seen as an aid in preventing hair turning grey.

Biotin is found in egg yolks. Raw egg whites actually hinder effectiveness, but when the albumen (egg white) is cooked, the culprit - a substance called avidin is destroyed by heat. Biotin is also present in liver, milk, yeast and kidney.

Balding men might find that a Biotin supplement may keep their hair longer.

Zinc

In laboratory tests animals fed with a zinc supplement showed signs of more hair growth, as opposed to loss of hair in animals that were deprived of zinc in their feed.

It was discovered that there was a change in the hair protein structure when zinc was deficient in the diet.

Severe zinc deficiency in humans has been shown to produce baldness and scalp problems that were reversed when zinc was returned to the diet.

Zinc has also been shown to stop hair turning grey. One doctor taking zinc for a year reversed the grey hairs which returned to their original colour.

Zinc can be depleted by high stress levels. For a good source of zinc, wheat germ is the best, other sources are brewer's yeast, pumpkin seeds, oysters and mussels, shrimps and egg yolks.

One delightful effect of zinc is that it has long been regarded as an aphrodisiac, and as such it can be very beneficial for your sex life, which is not a bad side effect to have.

Protein

Protein is a basic ingredient in many hair shampoos and conditioners and is also the major ingredient of hair itself, which is at least ninety per cent protein.

Whilst this should not necessarily be the main ingredient in your diet, its importance should not be ignored.

In controlled tests volunteers, supplementing their diets with protein in the form of 14g of gelatine daily, found it increased the thickness of individual hair strands by as much as 45 per cent in only two months.

Diet can influence both hair growth and quality and gelatine has exhibited one of the highest specific dynamic effects of any food or supplement.

Given that a strong hair is a healthy hair, the study noted that the gelatine induced increases in the diet constituted an improvement in the mechanical properties of the hair, including strength.

When the volunteers stopped eating the gelatine, their hair returned to its original diameter within six months.

Vitamin E

A Canadian physician who started going grey was able to reverse the process by taking 800iu of Vitamin E in capsule form daily.

At the age of 68 after some 15 years of taking vitamin E he still has a healthy head of thick black hair, and is the envy of men half his age.

Vitamin E has also been shown to retard the ageing process. It has been suggested that grey hair is a symptom of body degeneration so a supplement of vitamin E can only be beneficial whether you have grey hair or not.

The best natural sources of Vitamin E are wheat germ, Soya beans, broccoli, brussel sprouts, spinach and eggs.

Choline

Choline is a B vitamin like nutrient that's useful in counter acting the effects of stress. Recently scientists in America were able to induce toxic levels of stress in baby animals by limiting the amount of choline in their diets.

Choline supplements prescribed to balding patients produced significant results to prove choline's worth in hair loss.

Lecithin is a very good source of choline, at it also supplies inositol, a B complex vitamin with a particular affinity with choline, these two vitamins work together well.

Foods rich in choline are egg yolks, yeast, liver and wheat germ.

Vitamin A

A deficiency of Vitamin A will cause dry hair and rough skin. Vitamin A is stored in the liver and if large doses (50,000 - 100,000 iu daily) are taken for a prolonged period the liver cannot store the A vitamin, and it can build up in the body to give unpleasant side effects which include nausea, headaches, hair loss, drowsiness and weight loss.

The R.D.A. for vitamin A is 2,500 iu.

Pantothenic Acid

Pantothenic Acid also known as Calcium Pantothenate is considered to be important to the health of the skin and scalp.

Pantothenic acid is necessary for the well being of every body cell and neither carbohydrate nor fat can be changed into energy without it.

This nutrient is also important for the functioning of the adrenal glands that produce much of the male sex hormones.

Volunteers who were feed on a diet deficient of pantothenic acid showed increased vulnerability to infection and adrenal levels dropped, blood pressure also dropped and constipation developed.

Animals lacking this nutrient in their diet became grey haired and the follicles started to waste away.

This supplement is most often found in B complex formulas.

This nutrient is obtained from liver, kidney, egg yolks, whole grains, milk and potatoes.

Cider Vinegar

Hair loss can sometimes be a result of poor metabolism. Many case histories show that as a result of a few teaspoonfuls of cider vinegar each day for several months, hair loss has stopped and the remaining hair has grown healthier and thicker.

One reason for thinning hair is a deficiency of minerals salts, so it is easy to understand why mineral-rich cider vinegar can help.

Cider vinegar will not work the same way for everyone. A few people may be allergic to it and others may not be affected at all. But for many people, cider vinegar opens up a wonderful new chapter in life.

Cider vinegar may be taken in a glass of water first thing in the morning or just before meals. One of the side effects can be weight loss which is an added bonus.

Seven Wonders "Hair Food" Cocktail

The following drink contains Protein, Choline, Inositol, Pantothenic Acid, Biotin, Vitamin E and Zinc: The seven ingredients' nutritionists most often recommend for growing healthy hair.

8 Fl oz Plain Yoghurt
8 Fl oz Orange Juice
3 Tablespoons Wheat Germ
3 Tablespoons Brewers Yeast
1 Tablespoon Lecithin Crystals
1 Teaspoon Vitamin C Crystals
1 Raw Egg Yolk
1 Tablespoon Unflavored Gelatine Powder
Honey to Taste (optional)

Combine all the ingredients and blend until smooth. If a blender is not available put all the ingredients into a jar with a lid and shake vigorously.

This tonic makes a quick and nutritious breakfast and will work wonders for your hair.

This cocktail should help just about everyone, and you should certainly notice a difference to your hair once you try it.

Another recommended regime for hair loss which has proved to be very effective is a supplement of the Amino Acids, Zinc and Vitamin C.

This supplement is particularly good for people who go on crash diets and find a problem with hair loss, or problems which are less obvious such as women who are losing hair as a result of birth control pills and subsequent vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

Hair loss supplement

A daily vitamin and mineral supplement

B Complex
Pantothenic Acid
Folic Acid
P.A.B.A.
Vitamin A
Zinc

A daily supplement of the above will help produce healthy hair and helps restore grey hair to its original colour.

One multi- vitamin formula 1000mg and 500mg magnesium taken daily can have a great effect on hair growth - There is no guarantee but many people have reported a definite reduction of hair loss with this regime.

Another combination that has produced excellent results with some people is a daily supplement of choline and inositol, 1000mg of each daily.

The Amino Acid L Tyrosine is also recommended for helping hair regain its natural colour.

While there are a number of supplements which can be beneficial, it is important for the diet to improve and take precedence over supplements alone.

That said there are enormous benefits to be derived from using vitamins, many food products today have been treated with chemicals during the growing process.

When anyone is embarking on a course of vitamins or minerals they should be aware that results will not happen overnight.

Vitamins are not some magic potion that is suddenly going to cure hair loss overnight.

They may not do anything for some people but for others they will achieve excellent results with noticeable differences in hair growth and in the slowing down of hair loss.

Results will usually take from about three to four months before the body actually reacts to the effects brought about by the vitamins.

Vitamins should always be taken as directed on the bottle and not more than the stated dosage.

An extra helping of a vitamin does not make it work twice as much, besides which it can be dangerous overdosing on certain vitamins.

When taking vitamins you may find that you have to take them after a meal otherwise they may cause a stomach upset.

Reference website: <http://www.stophairlossnow.com/Vitamins.htm>