Don’t Just Chill: Winterize Your Hair Care Routine

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Black hair is more fragile than other ethnic groups’ tresses and prone to more breakage and dryness, especially during the winter season. These tips from Revolution Health Group can help you maintain black hair health when temperatures dip below freezing.

Just say no to heavy-duty oily products. While heavy body creams and lotions soothe dry skin during the winter, heavy products don’t work for the hair, said Andrew Alexis, MD, MPH, dermatologists and director of the Skin of Color center at St. Luke’s–Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York City. That’s because heavy products can clog hair follicles and create other hair issues, such as scalp folliculitis (inflammation of the hair follicles), in addition to forehead and temple acne.

Opt for silicone-based products as daily hair moisturizing. And double-check labels. Product labels may not say silicone, so look for the ingredient dimethicone.

Daily shampooing isn’t for everybody. How often you should cleanse your hair depends on its type and texture. Black hair in its natural state (not chemically processed) can be rinsed every day as long as you use a light conditioner, said Tyama Arawole, a natural hair care consultant. “Natural hair loves water, but it’s still important to keep it protected.”

But black hair’s extra curly hair cuticle—or outer layer—makes it more difficult for the oil secreted from the scalp to reach the ends of strands, Arawole cautioned. That means don’t forget to moisturize your hair.

If you have relaxed hair, then shampoo your tresses once a week, recommend the experts. (Washing more often can dry out relaxed hair.) Also, use light moisturizers for daily styling; avoid excess heat styling; and deep condition after washing.

Greasing the scalp won’t prevent hair dryness. An excessively dry scalp can be the result of a skin condition called seborrheic dermatitis, caused by a yeast overgrowth on the skin. In this case, applying oil to the scalp will not help dryness. So if you experience persistent dry scalp, it’s best to see a dermatologist.

Hats off, please. Always wearing head coverings during the winter can damage your hair,

especially true for men. It’s best to keep hair moisturized with light oil; if you do wear a hat, choose one made of natural fibers.

Braid it, but don’t forget it. When considering plaits, it’s important to start off with a healthy head of hair. Don’t wear braids if you hair is damaged.

To avoid sure disaster, before getting your hair braided, have a protein treatment followed by a good conditioner. These pre-braiding strategies ensure hair stays damage-free. Maintain your braided style by washing hair once a week to get rid of dirt and oil build-up. In addition, experts suggest you can wear braids from between two weeks to three months, depending on the style.

Click here to learn how to keep black hair hydrated.

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