Old Wives' Tales of Hair Care Debunked

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We've heard hair health stories passed down from generation to generation, such as how giving the hair 50 brush strokes makes for shinier locks or how combing and greasing your tresses nightly moisturizes hair. But are any of these myths rooted in truth? AOL Black Voices went on a fact-finding mission. Here's what the site found out about some common myths so you can keep or eliminate them from your daily healthy hair regimen.

Hair twirling will cause faster hair loss in that particular spot.

The type of hair loss resulting from constant twirling is known as trichotillomania. Twirling weakens the hair follicles, causing patchy hair loss and broken strands. If you can stop this bad habit on your own, then hair experiences re-growth. If you can't, a mental health professional can help you get to the bottom of this unhealthy hair habit.

Wearing braids causes a receding hairline.

Continuous tension on hair caused by wearing braids for extended periods of time can lead to hair loss. This hairstyle often causes irreversible hair root damage that could lead to a receding hairline. Avoid this by alternating between braided and loose hair every few weeks.

Grease the hair and scalp nightly for healthy hair.

While grease can provide hydration for moisture-starved locks, using heavy products will do more harm than good. Avoid products that contain mineral oil and petroleum jelly. These ingredients tend to clog pores and create buildup that prevents hair growth. Use a clarifying shampoo to wash away buildup at least once each week.

Hair coloring causes loss of texture and shine, plus it accelerates graying.

Dyes strip the hair cuticle so the color will stick. This process, when done regularly, changes hair texture and dulls the shine, and it keeps tresses from getting proper moisture. But what dying won't do is speed up the graying process. What does? Genetics, lifestyle and stress are the culprits.

Wearing satin or silk scarves and sleeping on a satin pillowcase can prevent split ends and over drying.

Sure can! Wrapping hair with a satin or silk scarf and sleeping on a satin pillowcase help stop snags and friction that can lead to hair breakage from tress-damaging cotton pillowcases. Also try wearing a satin scarf under winter hats to avoid hair breakage in cold weather.

Putting mashed ripe avocado on your hair makes it more manageable.

The vitamin E in avocados naturally moisturizes and conditions the hair. You'll find avocado oil in many hair products at your local beauty supply store, but there's nothing like getting the fruit's full hair benefits this way.

Dandruff-control shampoos make relaxers grow out faster.

In a word, yes. The clarifying ingredient in dandruff shampoos keeps pores clear. This promotes growth while eliminating dandruff-causing product buildup and scalp dryness. These hair growth killers can also cause flakiness.

Shaving makes hair tougher and thicker.

Not so. This method of defuzzing doesn't change hair color or thickness. Genetics and hormones determine factors such as hair's location, color, thickness and length.

Wrapping your hair in the same direction causes one side to grow shorter.

This hair styling technique is the best way to get a straight look without using direct heat from appliances, such as flatirons. Wrapping your hair on the same side night after night can "stress out" strands, which leads to breakage. Also, be careful of handbag straps because they can break off hair strand ends. Move your hair outta the way before slinging that strap over your shoulder!

Regular trims stimulate hair growth.

Hair grows a half inch per month whether you cut it or not, so regular scissors snips won't make it grow faster. But keep those ends groomed—because it stops split ends that cause hair breakage.

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