# Time to Tame Those Curly Hair Controversies

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The truth about natural hair stereotypes is that there are too many of them to count and that naturalistas hear and read them all the time. Gossip and rumors predate relaxers, flatirons, hair dyes and gels by thousands of years, so even if disputes over natural versus relaxed tresses are recent, hair-related smack talk is nothing new. Here, NaturallyCurly.com helps pluck out these natural-hair notions one at a time.

**Naturals want attention and are hair obsessed.** This one's common. Clearly, it doesn't make sense to group all women who don't chemically treat their hair in the same category. You and your grandma may both be natural, but you both probably care for and style your hair in different ways. What's more, since maintaining healthy natural tresses does take a lot of work, don't knock a sista for keeping up on the best regimens, styles and products.

**Naturals are vegetarians and are go-green freaks.** OK, even if by definition being natural means saying goodbye to chemical treatments, not every naturalista is about to join Green Peace or dress in all-hemp clothes. Every woman has a different relationship with the environment and food (some like veggies only, some like meat), and wearing your hair natural isn't necessarily an outward display of personal politics. Yes, being conscious of the chemicals used to treat hair may eventually lead someone to a greater awareness about nutrition and ingredients used in processed foods, but that doesn't mean it's right to categorize people.

**Naturals hate women who relax their hair.** Not true. Many women who treat their tresses are often naturalistas' loved ones. This rumor may have been spread when natural hair evangelists started trying to convert women to the curly cause in person and in online forums. Many people don't like being judged or preached to, and that can lead to strained relations. Yes, there are stereotypes on both sides—women who relax aren't self-loathers who treat their hair because they've been brainwashed by the political or social order.

**Naturals don't wash or use deodorant.** Sheesh! This stereotype stinks, and it's offensive. Even naturalistas who use all-natural products usually have excellent hygiene, and they bathe just as often as anyone else. But again, many naturals are not dogmatic about never using a non-organic product. And, yes, it's OK to use a brand name antiperspirant while refusing to chemically treat your mane.

The final message? Love your hair no matter how you choose to wear it; test products to find ones that work best for you; eat nutritious foods; and let’s put all these hair-related stereotypes to rest and snuff this hairy drama.

Are you a mom with a young daughter? Click here to read about how to shower her with praise to give her natural-hair insecurities the big chop.

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