

**DOES YOUR HAIR NEED A LITTLE TLC?
HAIR CARE PRODUCTS CAN DELIVER THE GOODS FOR
THINNING AND TEXTURED HAIR**

CHICAGO (August 5, 2010) – [Hair](#) is considered a woman’s “crowning glory,” but women with thinning hair and those with curly, textured hair may face considerable challenges in keeping their hair looking its best. Fortunately, there are many different hair care products, or hair cosmetics, that can help conceal [thinning hair](#) and also keep textured hair in check.

At the American Academy of Dermatology’s Summer Academy Meeting 2010 in Chicago, [dermatologist](#) Victoria Barbosa, MD, FAAD, assistant professor of dermatology at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, discussed how certain hair cosmetics can improve the appearance of thinning and textured hair.

“Today, hair cosmetics are tailored for use with a variety of hair types, making it easy for consumers to select the most appropriate products,” said Dr. Barbosa. “So whether your hair is thinning or thick and curly, there are many products that can address your individual hair care needs.”

The Skinny on Making Thinning Hair Look Fuller

For women with [thinning hair](#) who do not want to resort to medical or surgical treatments, Dr. Barbosa offered several tips for selecting products that can make thinning hair look thicker.

A hair cosmetic designed primarily to conceal the scalp in women with hair loss is a pressed powder available in small plastic pots that are applied with a device similar to an eye shadow applicator. The pressed powder is rubbed on the applicator and then applied directly to the scalp to conceal areas of thinning hair. These pressed powders are available in several different shades to closely match the surrounding hair.

Dr. Barbosa noted that these pressed powders can be used in conjunction with keratin fiber hair cosmetics for women with more moderate hair loss. These fiber hair cosmetics use statically charged fibers that can be sprinkled over the hair to thicken its appearance. Most of these types of hair cosmetics come in five to 10 different shades to match hair color and will stay on the hair until it is shampooed.

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“For women with mild to moderate hair loss, fiber hair cosmetics are a safe and effective quick fix for adding volume to areas of thinning hair,” said Dr. Barbosa. “Even though the results are temporary, these products can help women feel less self-conscious about their hair loss.”

When choosing products to clean the hair, Dr. Barbosa recommended that women with thinning hair should avoid shampoos labeled as conditioning shampoo, as they contain heavier conditioners that can weigh down the hair and make it look limper. Instead, volumizing shampoos are good choices because they tend to contain ingredients like protein that coat the hair and make it appear fuller.

Since hair is most prone to breakage when it is wet, conditioners play an important role in prepping hair for combing and styling with heat products. Dr. Barbosa noted that most people can benefit from some type of conditioner, but the key is finding the right one for each hair type. For example, some conditioners are marketed for “fine hair,” which contain lighter formulas for thin hair. Women with thin hair also should apply conditioner primarily to the ends of the hair rather than the scalp and avoid conditioners labeled “intensive conditioners,” as they also will be too heavy for thin hair.

“Finding the best shampoo and conditioner for thin hair is really a matter of trial and error, as there is not one single ingredient to look for and many different formulas are available,” said Dr. Barbosa. “But shampoos and conditioners are important in keeping hair clean and manageable, so it is worth the investment to find ones that work best on your hair.”

Highly Textured Hair Can Benefit from Niche Products

According to Dr. Barbosa, women with [highly textured, curly hair](#), fall into two groups – one group of women opt to make their hair more manageable by using relaxers for straight hair styles; the other group prefers more natural hairstyles. For each group, Dr. Barbosa offered tips on selecting the right hair cosmetics to keep textured hair healthy and looking its best.

Hair relaxers work by rearranging the structure of curly hair to make hair straight and give women with textured hair more styling options. Since by its nature textured hair is more fragile than naturally straight hair, it is more prone to damage from styling products and heat.

“Women who want straight hairstyles can use relaxers, but they have to be careful and recognize that relaxers make curly hair more fragile,” said Dr. Barbosa. “In this instance, the key is conditioning the hair with conditioning shampoos along with intensive conditioners.”

Another important tip for women who use relaxers is to minimize the application of direct heat to the hair. Dr. Barbosa recommended drying hair under a cap or hood dryer rather than with a hand-held hairdryer and to use rollers rather than curling irons or flat irons to avoid subjecting the hair to direct heat. In addition, she cautioned that flat irons should never be used on damp hair, as this could cause hair to “bubble” and eventually break from heat damage.

In addition, there also are an increased number of products geared toward natural hairstyles for women with curly hair. Since the hair is kept naturally curly, hair care products need to address the manageability issues of this hair type. For example, Dr. Barbosa recommended that women who opt for naturally curly hairstyles use heavier styling products that decrease frizz while maintaining curls.

“Over the years, natural hairstyles for women of different ethnicities have become more culturally and socially accepted, giving way to a new group of silicone- and glycerin-based products that help define and refine hair texture, add moisture to the hair and reduce frizz,” said Dr. Barbosa. “In a sense, we want to organize the curls with these styling products, which also will make hair more manageable and less prone to breakage.”

Regardless of how they style their hair, women with textured hair should only wash their hair once a week on average, since this type of hair is more fragile and more prone to damage when it is wet. Conditioning is an integral part of maintaining healthy, textured hair, and Dr. Barbosa added that “leave-in” conditioners or lighter conditioners that can be sprayed on the hair are good choices to use on the hair every day.

“Today, women with all different hair types have more styling options than ever thanks to the introduction of new hair cosmetics formulated for specific hair types and concerns,” said Dr. Barbosa. “Dermatologists can help consumers select the best products for their individual hair care needs and minimize hair damage along the way.”

Headquartered in Schaumburg, Ill., the American Academy of Dermatology (Academy), founded in 1938, is the largest, most influential, and most representative of all dermatologic associations. With a membership of more than 16,000 physicians worldwide, the Academy is committed to: advancing the diagnosis and medical, surgical and cosmetic treatment of the skin, hair and nails; advocating high standards in clinical practice, education, and research in dermatology; and supporting and enhancing patient care for a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. For more information, contact the Academy at 1-888-462-DERM (3376) or www.aad.org.

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