



HOLY FAMILY
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10 Best Foods for Your Hair

Move that shampoo and conditioner aside. The pursuit of luscious, shiny locks starts with fish, beans, bananas, and lentils. Indeed, a healthy diet is as good for the 150,000 hair follicles on your head as it is for your body. Having a balanced diet, while putting a little extra emphasis on things like protein and iron, gives your hair a boost.

Protein, for example, is the building block of hair. If you don't get enough, your mane will grow more slowly, and strands will be weaker. Include a small dose at each meal and with each snack, and you'll keep your hair follicles strong. Safe bets include poultry, lean beef, fish, beans, and nuts.

If you start a hair-healthy diet today, you'll likely see improvements within six months to a year, depending on how fast your hair grows.

Try these 10 foods for your tresses:

Lean red meat. Too little iron can cause baldness, according to research conducted at the Cleveland Clinic. Treating iron deficiency may help regrow hair. "People who have problems with hair loss or hair growth tend to be iron deficient—especially women. Other iron-rich options include turkey, egg yolks, whole grains, dried fruit, and dried beans (soaked and cooked, of course).

Eggs. They're full of biotin, a B vitamin that promotes hair growth and overall scalp health. A deficiency can cause brittle hair. Other high-biotin foods include peanuts, almonds, wheat bran, salmon, low-fat cheese, and avocados.

Bananas, beer, oats, and raisins. These contain the mineral silica, which is thought to improve hair thickness. Emphasizing foods rich in this mineral helps make hair stronger and more durable. (Though beer contains a good dose of silica, it's wise to stick to a moderate amount—one drink a day for women and two for men.)

Dark green veggies. Load up on spinach, broccoli, and Swiss chard. They're packed with vitamins A and C, which help produce sebum—a scalp oil that works as a natural hair conditioner.

Oysters. Opt for these to get plenty of zinc, a mineral that helps regulate the production of androgens. These are hormones that, in low levels, are associated with hair loss. People with low levels of androgens can also suffer from slow hair growth and dandruff. Adjusting your diet—and emphasizing zinc-rich choices like oysters, along with crab, clams, liver, lean beef, and wheat germ—will help stave off hair loss and keep your mane shiny and healthy.

Sweet potatoes. These are packed with beta-carotene, which your body converts to vitamin A, a nourishing agent for your hair and skin. Vitamin A protects against dull hair and dry skin, a leading cause of dandruff. Other smart choices to get glowing hair and skin include carrots, kale, butternut squash, asparagus, and pumpkin.

Beans. Legumes like kidney beans and lentils are great sources of iron-rich protein. Lentils, in particular, play a role in hair maintenance and support.

Fruits and veggies. They're full of vitamin C, which helps your body absorb iron. Getting too little C makes hair dry and weak. The best sources? Broccoli, leafy greens, green peppers, citrus fruit, and strawberries.

Omega-3 fatty acids. They support scalp health; a deficiency can lead to dry scalp and dull hair. Good sources include salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, flaxseeds, and walnuts. Vegetable oil. No one wants dry, lackluster hair. But if your diet is too low in fat, that's what could happen. Healthy oils like olive, peanut, safflower, and sunflower can restore the shine. About a teaspoon a day will do the trick.

Reference for this article was from research found at www.healthyhair.com

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