

NONTOXIC HAIR CARE STRATEGIES

Permanent waves, hair straighteners, and hair dyes and some colorants have *that smell* - which can be ammonia, formaldehyde, synthetic perfumes, or a whole host of harmful synthetic chemicals. Whether you are chemically sensitive to these products or simply choose not to use them, more natural hair color enhancers, waves and relaxers are becoming available - ask your stylist for a recommendation. Some natural hair dyes are extremely less damaging to the cuticle of the hair shaft and are not damaging if absorbed through the scalp. Common herbs used for natural dyes include henna and chamomile.

Reduce your hair's chemical requirements by getting a great cut! Work with your hairdresser to select a style that is both pleasing to you and needs minimal product to maintain. Whatever your personal style and choice -- good hair care habits ensure stronger, healthier hair:

- Massage your scalp for at least a minute while shampooing. Massaging encourages hair growth by stimulating the scalp's rich blood supply which helps to flush away metabolic waste.
- Towel Drying: "Scrubbing" excess water out leaves torn and tattered hair. Gently squeeze out the moisture in the folds of a thick towel.
- Air dry your hair whenever possible. Heat drying can rob hair of its natural moisture which can lead to split ends.
- Never brush your hair when its wet; it stretches the strands and is a sure-fire path to breakage and split ends.
- The scalp's natural oils are the best conditioners. Washing your hair every **other** day helps to keep it soft and silky while reducing the need for expensive conditioners.

HERBAL HAIR HELPERS

Parsley Hair Tonic

1 large handful parsley sprigs
2 Tbs. water

Puree the parsley and water in a food processor. Apply the puree to a wet scalp. Wrap your head in a warm (old) towel, and leave on for an hour. Shampoo as usual. Parsley stimulates the scalp and gets the circulation going -- aiding in hair growth and shine.

Chamomile Conditioning Rinse

1/2 c. fresh or dried chamomile flowers
2 1/2 c. water

Place the chamomile flowers and water in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer for approximately 15 minutes. Strain off the liquid and apply to hair after shampooing. Chamomile flowers help to keep blonde hair bright, and do not lift color in hair which is medium to dark. As an added bonus, your hair will be left with a pleasant fragrance.

Resources/References

Clevely, Andi and Katherine Richmond. 1994. *The Complete Book of Herbs*. Anness Publishing Limited. New York.
Dadd, Debra Lynn. 1990. *Nontoxic, Natural and Earthwise*. G. P. Putnam's Sons. New York.
Erickson, Kim. January 1997. "Hair Care Au Naturelle." *Veggie Life*. p. 92-96
Mabey, Richard. 1988. *The New Age Herbalist*. Simon & Schuster. New York.
Schlender, Shelley. May 1996. "No Chemicals." *Delicious!* p. 49

Revised 09/03

