**Hair Thinning: Causes, Prevention, and Remedies**

**Introduction:**

It becomes a concern when you could see a lot of skin and comparatively less hair on your scalp. It’s natural for hair to start losing volume and thickness with age or because of other unavoidable factors like post-pregnancy hair fall. But it's alarming when your hair starts thinning because of other attendable reasons.

It is crucial to address the issue even though it does not impact one's overall health but might be affecting your mental health or is lowering your self-esteem. And the good part is that it can be managed if it started at the right time. Here, we are sharing a detailed read about the following:

* What is hair thinning?
* Most common causes of hair thinning
* Treatments of hair thinning, and
* Tips to avoid the condition of hair thinning.

**What is Hair Thinning?**

In very simple terms, moderate hair loss can be referred to as hair thinning. So while hair loss causes baldness, hair thinning on the other hand produces thinner spots of hair on your scalp. It is a gradual and visible process. Hair thinning can be identified by visible signs; you would start seeing clumps of hair strands in your comb, on your clothing, or in the shower drain. If your hair breaks even by very little pull, it is a sign that it has become weak and needs more care than usual.

This condition usually affects teenagers, around 50% of men above age 50 or women who have experienced menopause. In men, hair thinning usually occurs from the hairline to the back of the scalp whereas, in females, the crown of the scalp gets affected.

**What Causes Hair Thinning?**

It is said that losing fifty to a hundred hair strands in a day is normal. But any more than this is a reason to worry. There are a number of reasons that cause hair to become thinner. Check out if you are going through one of these :

1. **Lifestyle habits**

Is there something that you are practicing in your regular routine but aren’t aware that it is harshly impacting your hair health? These habits include :

* Over treating your hair :

Going for regular color treatments, relaxers, or perms.

* Wearing your hair too tightly :

You might love uptight hair buns or you might need to wear a tight ponytail while working out. But this pulls your hair from its follicles and causes thin spots over time.

* Using harsh hair styling products :

Applying products such as hair hold sprays, styling creams, gels, or lotions. Using harsh shampoos and conditioners or temporary colors.

* Nutrient deficiencies :

Nutrients like iron, folic acid, Vitamin B7, and Vitamin D, and other minerals help hair follicles to grow hair naturally. If your body is not getting enough of these there are chances you would experience hair thinning.

* Uncontrolled anxiety and stress :

When you are going through stressful situations and are not able to control your anxiety, the body releases a high amount of cortisol. It is our body’s stress hormone released by the adrenal glands and too much of it kills off the new hair that is trying to grow from the follicles.

1. **Genetics**

Underlying medical conditions or hereditary factors also lead to hair thinning.

* Post-pregnancy :

Women might observe hair growth during pregnancy due to hormonal shifts, however, the rise in estrogen level goes back to normal postpartum and one might experience hair loss that lasts for up to six months to a year

* Consuming or stopping to take birth control pills :

Consuming birth control pills with a high androgen index causes the hair to move to the resting phase from the growing phase which in turn results in hair loss.

Going off these pills might also trigger telogen effluvium which is a temporary condition that causes hair loss.

* Weight loss :

If one loses more than 10 kilograms in a very short span of time, they might experience visible hair loss.

* Going through some treatments

Undergoing various treatments like chemotherapy (to treat cancer) causes hair thinning or hair loss

1. **Certain Disorders**
* Trichotillomania :

It is a mental disorder that causes an irresistible and recurring desire to pull out hair from the scalp, eyebrows, beard, or other areas of the body. Even if the person tries to stop, this condition does not let them control the pulling. Around 0.5 - 3 percent of people around the world experience *trich* in their life but it is often not discussed due embarrassment.

* Eating disorders :

Food disorders like anorexia (eating too little) or bulimia (throwing up after eating) does not let the body get vital nutrients from food. These nutrients are necessary for hair growth and their deficiency results in hair thinning and hair loss.

* Skin disorders :

Some skin conditions like psoriasis or ringworm also lead to hair thinning and ultimately hair loss.

**How to Reverse Hair Thinning?**

Thinning hair is likely to be treated and a suitable mix of some simple methods as listed below can be carried out to start the process :

1. **Scalp massage**

One of the easiest methods to get thicker hair on your scalp is to get/give a gentle scalp massage. It’s absolutely free and doesn’t have any side effects. With your fingertips, you can gently apply pressure around your scalp to promote blood flow. This can be done while washing hair or while applying oil to hair. You can also go for an inversion technique to reverse hair thinning. You are supposed to follow two simple steps for this 10-minute technique. Apply oil throughout your scalp and massage for 5 minutes. Next, hang your head upside down and massage your scalp (without oil) for another 5 minutes. Opt for a hair wash post 30 - 45 minutes of this exercise.

1. **Essential Oils**

There isn't any scientific evidence that proves that the application of essential oils can result in treating thinning hair. However, it is said that certain essential oils like lavender oil, rosemary oil, or thyme oil when mixed with a carrier oil and applied on the scalp show positive results to avoid thinning conditions. It is recommended to first test these oils by applying some amount of it on your arm. If any reaction develops in the next 24 hours, do not go use it on the scalp.

1. **Anti - thinning Shampoos**

Over the counter products like anti thinning shampoos could also be used post-medical prescription. These shampoos provide volume to the hair so that hair looks more voluminous than it actually is. Many such shampoos also have amino acids and vitamins that might keep the scalp healthy and foster hair regrowth.

1. **Home Remedies**

Time and again home remedies and Ayurvedic treatment have been recommended by practitioners and experts to naturally treat such conditions. We keep hearing about natural ingredients like amla, lemon, onion, aloe vera, etc Here is how you can use a few :

* Aloe vera

Rich in proteolytic enzymes, aloe vera can effectively treat the scalp. It stimulates hair growth by repairing damaged hair follicles and thus increases the volume of the hair. Aloe vera also has conditioning properties that keep the hair smooth and shiny. It also reduces dandruff and prevents an itchy scalp.

*How to use Aloe Vera to reverse hair thinning?*

* Slice a large leaf of aloe vera with a knife
* Extract 2 spoons of gel from the leaf
* Whisk the gel in a deep bowl
* Massage this gel onto your scalp with your fingertips for 5 minutes
* Leave it for 20 minutes and rinse with lukewarm water.

Alternatively;

* Slice a large leaf of aloe vera with a knife
* Extract 1 spoons of gel from the leaf
* Add an equal amount of coconut oil (1 spoon) to the gel
* Whisk the mixture in a deep bowl
* Massage this mix onto your scalp with your fingertips for 5 minutes
* Leave it for 30 - 40 minutes and wash off with a mild shampoo.
* Amla

Indian gooseberry, amla, has a number of health benefits. The vitamin C content in amla is often beneficial to cure skin and hair conditions. It also has other nutrients, antioxidants and minerals which foster hair volume and improves hair texture.

*How to Use Amla to reverse hair thinning?*

* Take 2 spoons\*\* of amla powder and lime juice in the bowl such that you get a smooth mixture
* Apply this mix to the roots and hair and let it stay for 10 - 15 minutes until it dries a little. Make sure it doesn’t get too dry.
* Wash off with cool water
* Apply a hair revitalizing mask on your hair (not roots), keep for 3 - 5 minutes and rinse it off.

*\*\*Note: The quantity of ingredients depends on your hair length and density.*

1. **Dietary Supplements**

If you experience thinning hair which might be due to lack of sufficient necessary nutrient intake, here are a few supplements which you could consume:

* Biotin

It is Vitamin B7 which is naturally found in lentils, nuts or liver. Eating a balanced diet naturally avoids biotin deficiency unless it exists since birth. If you are sure that your body needs external supplements for biotin, then the intake of this supplement can result in better hair growth.

* Folic Acid

It is crucial for new cell generation and helps the hair follicles generate new hair. If you are folic acid deficient, the intake of this supplement could make your hair thicker.

* Omega - 3 & Omega - 6 Fatty Acids

These are essential fatty acids. Foods like flax seeds and fish oil are natural sources of these nutrients. These supplements can be taken if advised because the body does not make these fatty acids.

* Vitamin D

Vitamin D revitalizes hair follicles and fosters hair growth. With the kind of lifestyle people are now used to, consuming Vitamin D supplement is recommended for experiencing hair loss.

It is highly recommended to consult your doctor before consuming any supplements.

1. **Medical Treatments**

Prescription drugs, therapy, or laser treatments can also be carried out to reverse hair thinning. Here are a few medications which can be taken under medical supervision :

* Minoxidil

Popularly known as Rogaine, minoxidil treats hair loss when applied directly to the affected area. It is usually available in liquid and can be applied twice a day.

* Spironolactone

This medication is prescribed to women who have lost hair due to hormonal fluctuations. A blood examination is carried out before prescribing this to the patient.

* Finasteride

This medication is prescribed only to men. Women, especially those who are ovulating or pregnant, should refrain from this drug.

* In conditions of extreme hair thinning, doctors might treat the condition by injecting necessary medication into the scalp.

**Tips to Prevent hair thinning :**

* **Avoid stress** :

Easy to preach, hard to implement. Yes! But giving your best to free yourself from anxiety will help a long way in solving the issue of hair thinning

* **Stop using harsh hair products** :

It is very important to apply the right things onto your hair and scalp. Make sure you read the product application instructions. Never apply conditioners directly to the scalp. Avoid exposing your hair follicles to chemicals.

* **Eat Right :**

Your hair needs as much external care and proper nutrient intake as your desire for beautiful hair. Make sure you consume the right food in the right amounts. You might consult experts for an all-inclusive nutrition plan that serves the purpose.

* **Follow proper hair care routine** :

Keep your hair clean, apply natural products, go for home remedies to keep your hair strong and intact.

* **Do not wear your hair too tightly**

The way your body feels comfortable clothing is similar to the comfort that your hair follicles need when being styled for any occasion.

* **Consult an expert and consider side effects before consuming medicines**.

Consuming certain drugs for the treatment of conditions like acne, depression, birth control, cholesterol results in hair loss. Ask your doctor if this side effect can be managed in some way.

The process of hair thinning is disturbing and might concern you significantly when observed at first but it is most treatable. Instead of letting it take a toll on you, taking proper care and following precautionary measures under expert supervision would visibly stop your hair from thinning in six to nine months. However, even after making all possible efforts you still experience hair loss consult a dermatologist to get suitable medical treatment.

References :

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