

What Do You Know About Hair

Did you know that hair consists of... dead cells? (The dead cells of hair – and fingernails – contain protein called keratin.)

Each hair has a cuticle, cortex (the shaft) and medulla (the center of the hair shaft). The cuticle is the translucent covering of the hair shaft. The hair shaft is rich in sulfur compounds as well as pigments that determine hair color.



Why such a boring foreword?

Knowing that hair consists of dead cells, gives a new meaning to regular trims which get rid of the oldest – and most damaged – part of hair. Understanding the structure of hair, what it is that makes hair look beautiful, is key in hair care. Of course, there are numerous general factors that affect the appearance of hair. (Among the most important ones is your overall health and eating habits.) But there are others, most notably protecting and nourishing hair. What are you protecting and nourishing? The hair cuticle! Hair becomes dull and unmanageable when the surface of the hair cuticle is damaged.

So here's a list of don'ts. If you want to have beautiful hair:

- don't expose it to excessive heat
- don't expose it to sunlight
- don't use hair accessories that pull on – or rip – hair
- don't over-brush or over-rub while drying hair with a towel
- don't overuse hair products
- don't have chemical treatments (such as hair coloring, perms or hair straightening) more often than recommended by your stylist

And here's the list of things to do. If you want to have beautiful hair:

- cleanse your hair from hair product buildup, regularly (Adding one teaspoon of baking soda to one tablespoon of shampoo does a great job. **STOP!** If your hair has been chemically treated, talk to your hair stylist **FIRST** to make sure the cleanse won't ruin the treatment or affect your

hair color!)

- always rinse away salt and chlorine after swimming: both can not only negatively affect your hair color but make hair dry, brittle and dull
- **condition, condition, condition!** (Leave-in hair conditioners get into the hair cuticle and protect it while on. Deep conditioners also penetrate the hair cuticle but last significantly longer. Choose conditioners that are right for your hair type. Protein based conditioners are best for thin hair that breaks easily. Moisturizing conditioners help restore moisture to coarse and thick hair.)