

## The Science behind Healthy Hair: Exploring Hair Follicle Health

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### DESCRIPTION

Hair, an essential aspect of appearance, holds immense significance in defining style and confidence. The health of hair follicles plays a vital role in maintaining lustrous and strong locks. Hair follicles, small organs located within the skin, are responsible for hair growth and maintenance.

This article discusses about the structure, functions, and effective strategies for promoting their health. By understanding the intricacies of hair follicles, we can unlock the secrets to achieving and maintaining healthy, vibrant hair.

Hair follicles are complex structures composed of multiple layers and cell types. Each hair follicle comprises the hair bulb, papilla, sebaceous gland, and arrector pili muscle. The hair bulb, located at the base of the follicle, houses actively dividing cells responsible for hair growth. The papilla, a specialized cluster of connective tissue, supplies nutrients and oxygen to the hair bulb, aiding in hair development. The sebaceous gland, positioned near the hair bulb, produces sebum, an oily substance that moisturizes and nourishes the hair and scalp. The arrector pili muscle, connected to the hair follicle, enables hair to stand on end when stimulated.

The hair growth cycle involves three phases they are anagen (growth phase), catagen (transitional phase), and telogen (resting phase). During the anagen phase, cells in the hair bulb divide rapidly, producing new hair fibers. In the catagen phase, hair growth slows down, and the follicle prepares for the telogen phase, where the hair rests before shedding.

### Promoting hair follicle health

Several factors influence hair follicle health, including genetics, age, nutrition, and external factors. While genetics and aging process cannot be controlled, certain habits can be adopted to maintain optimal hair follicle health.

**Proper nutrition:** A balanced diet rich in essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals is crucial for healthy hair follicles. Include protein-rich foods like lean meats, fish, eggs, and legumes to provide the necessary building blocks for hair growth.

Additionally, incorporate foods abundant in vitamins A, C, E, and B-complex, as well as minerals such as iron, zinc, and selenium, which contribute to healthy hair follicles.

**Scalp care:** A clean and well-nourished scalp creates a favorable environment for hair follicles. Regularly cleansing scalp with a mild shampoo, avoiding harsh chemicals that can strip away natural oils. Gently massage the scalp to stimulate blood circulation and promote nutrient delivery to the hair follicles. Deep conditioning treatments and scalp massages can also enhance follicular health.

**Avoid excessive heat and chemical damage:** Frequent use of heat styling tools like flat irons, curling irons, and blow dryers can damage hair follicles. Minimize heat exposure and use protective products to prevent excessive dryness and breakage. Similarly, limit the use of harsh chemical treatments like perms, relaxers, and bleaching agents, as they can weaken the hair follicles and cause long-term damage.

**Stress management:** Chronic stress can negatively impact hair follicle health, leading to excessive shedding and thinning. Engage in stress-reducing activities such as exercise, meditation, and hobbies to promote overall well-being and support healthy hair growth.

**Hydration and moisture:** Proper hydration is vital for hair follicle health. Drinking adequate amount of water daily to keep the body and scalp hydrated. Additionally, use moisturizing hair products to prevent dryness and promote elasticity and strength.

**Avoid tight hairstyles and pulling:** Constant tension from tight hairstyles, such as ponytails, braids, and buns, can stress hair follicles and lead to breakage. Opt for loose styles and avoid excessive pulling or tugging on the hair to maintain follicular integrity.

**Regular trims:** Regular hair trims help eliminate split ends and prevent damage from traveling up the hair shaft, ultimately preserving the health of the hair follicles.

Nurturing healthy hair follicles is key to maintaining vibrant and resilient hair. By understanding the structure and function of hair follicles, by implementing effective strategies to promote

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their health. Through proper nutrition, scalp care, stress management, and protection against excessive heat and chemicals, hair follicle function can be optimized to support the

healthy hair growth. Small changes in daily hair care routine can have a significant impact on the overall health and appearance.