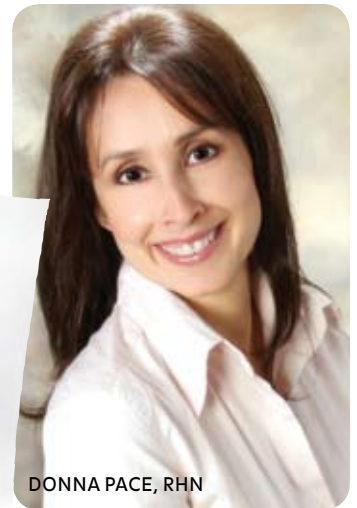


Insider secrets for natural beauty



DONNA PACE, RHN

Q | Are there any organic hair ingredients for African Americans? Also, do you have any tips on shopping for the right make-up shades?

–Shawnelle, St. Catharines, Ontario

A | Dear Shawnelle,

Good hair care starts from the inside-out. That means eating a balanced diet to give your body all the nutrients it needs in order to grow the healthiest hair possible. Although African American hair appears tough and strong, it is actually fragile due to its tight natural curl and loses moisture very quickly. This means that your hair will appear to be dry, coarse and frizzy. It needs oil to lock in the moisture. So when purchasing moisturizing products for your hair, look for those with natural oils such as jojoba, olive oil and shea butter. Consider experimenting with different organic hydrating shampoos and moisturizing conditioners as some work better than others depending on your hair type.

African-American skin can be hypersensitive, so it is important to pay attention to skin type when choosing make-up. Skin colour that is brown or lighter tends to have warm undertones, so make-up in the gold or honey range will be ideal. Darker skin tones tend to have cooler undertones, hence make-up in blue, plum and mauve (purple) will be better suited. Look for a mineral make-up line as it has antibacterial properties that sit on the skin, reflecting light and giving you a more natural glow.

Q | I am only 18 years old, but my hair is already thinning. Baldness is hereditary through my dad's family. Is there any way to stop or slow hair thinning in its track?

–Rajdip, Mississauga, Ontario

A | Dear Rajdip,

First I would suggest that you see a naturopathic doctor or a nutritionist to address any nutritional deficiencies. Regarding heredity, it has long been suspected that these factors are important in causing hair loss. Hair loss can be inherited from either side of the family, however, it is unclear which genes are involved. A certain amount of hair loss is normal (anywhere from 50 to 100 strands per day), though the causes of accelerated hair loss are different for every person and depend on hormonal and metabolic imbalances, emotional stress and nutritional deficiencies.

Dietary causes of hair loss can be a result of vitamin D, vitamin A, iron and protein deficiencies. The two most commonly overlooked causes of female hair loss are iron deficiency and thyroid problems. Another cause is traction alopecia (common in teenagers and young women who use hair straighteners or wear their hair in tight ponytails). Daily styling, environment conditions, menstrual cycles combined with a poor diet can lead to decreased hair vitality and temporary hair loss. ♥



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