

New Way To Shampoo

I am definitely not a big fan of many of the shampoos and conditioners on the market today because of the silicones now commonly used. These silicones are added to give the appearance of soft and shiny hair by coating the hair shaft. It basically reflects light and gives it a silky "feel", but silky glistening that you're feeling and seeing is NOT your hair actually becoming softer or shinier.

Some companies even use the theory that these silicones protect your hair- which in a sense, it does. Yet, at the same time, it is also creating a barrier so that your scalp can't breathe and your hair can't absorb the natural oils produced by the scalp. These natural oils are important if you desire truly healthy and strong hair. It can also sometimes play a part in hair loss or excess shedding of the hair. Trust me- I used to swear by some of the more expensive brand conditioners years ago, until I read an article about people trying shampoo bars and vinegar rinses instead. I gave it a shot, and to my surprise the giant wads of hair mangled in my hair brush gradually got smaller and smaller. I'm finding years later because of my awareness of this subject I have more of a fierce mane now than I did in my younger days!

Now I have embraced the fact that not everyone will welcome a complete vinegar rinse method or change over to soap based shampoo bars. It can take a long time for not only the person to get used to, but also their hair. These natural methods work wonders but there could be several weeks of devastating hair days in between as the hair adjusts, and on certain hair types it could be far worse than others! Some people just may not have the time, in the commonly busy lifestyles our society is used to today, to put into mixing whatever concoctions in question before hopping in the shower. I realized there had to be a solution somewhere in between, and I think I have a few ideas that might help. Following these simple steps may help you get luscious hair while taking a baby step into embracing the more natural.

First, ditch the conditioners! As I said, those silicones won't be your friend years down the road. We have to learn to embrace our hairs' natural oils as a means of conditioning. In my experimenting, I found my hair to actually feel better and more balanced by using a more moisturizing shampoo than simply conditioning afterward. Using a conditioner after seemed to weigh my hair down more. Also, learn to read your shampoo labels. Anything that ends in "-cone" is likely to be a form of silicone.

Now it's time to learn how to shampoo. Contrary to popular belief, you don't need an abundance of lather to clean. Use smaller amounts of shampoo than you usually do and aim for the scalp and hairline. This will help keep your hair from appearing dingy or greasy while leaving some of your natural oils at the tip of your hair, where breakage and drying is most prone.

Now it's time to play!!! Yes, we're going to have some fun with our shampoo! For those with busy lifestyles, which is the main reason I think people have a hard time giving up shampoo, it's a lot easier to mix a concoction and leave it by your shower than it is to have to prepare for each shower. What you add and how much is dependent on your hair type. The key is to start small- remember you can't take out what you already put in the bottle. Start with just a few drops of a nourishing oil, vegetable glycerine, or a healthful extract for extra nutrients and shake up your bottle. That's it. You'd be surprised how much even just a few drops of a nice oil to your shampoo can leave your hair! Begin with "lighter" oils too, and you can work your way up until you find a nice balance that leaves your hair with the desired conditioning in the end.

Here's some ideas for ingredients that you can add to your shampoo in order of "light" to "heavier". "Heavy" ingredients will give more moisturizing and conditioning results, but may weight your hair down depending on your hair type - remember to work your

way up!

- Extracts- Rosemary, chamomile, and grapefruit are examples of extracts that provide antioxidants and a nice touch of shine to the hair.

- Essential Oils- Most essential oils tend to be on the "light" side and many have various positive effects on the hair. Some of the best include rosemary, ylang, cedarwood, peppermint, orange.... the list could go on and on!

- Light oils- Sunflower, safflower, jojoba, sweet almond oil, and fractionated coconut oil are examples of lighter oils you can use for conditioning.

- Heavy but nourishing oils- Avocado, olive, and castor oil are massively enriching ingredients that could be added, but you want to go sparingly until you know how much your hair really needs!

- Natural vegetable glycerine- The ultimate in moisturizing because it acts as a natural "humectant", meaning it draws moisture from the air to the skin or hair. However, too much glycerin can leave a film on your hair and give it a waxy sort of feel. (That is the one drawback of soap based shampoo bars and why vinegar rinses are recommended after using them.)

- MOST important tip of all- Do NOT add anything such as milk, juice, or anything water based to your shampoo unless you plan to keep it in the refrigerator in between use! Water based products already contain preservatives in the correct amount. Adding more moisture or anything perishable could invite bacteria or mold, which we definitely don't want to smear anywhere on our bodies!

An occasional vinegar rinse for your hair in the very least , even if once a month, is recommended no matter what hair regimen you use. Vinegar acts as a conditioner by smoothing the hair shaft and help break down excess build-up, whether it be natural glycerine or those horrid silicones. By smoothing the hair shaft without stripping the hair, it will make your hair actually shinier and less prone to breakage.

Now as for me, personally, I am sticking to my vinegar and shampoo bars. Not only do I feel better about making a step in favor of the environment (most store bought shampoos and soaps contain sodium laurel sulfate, which is NOT environmentally friendly), but I am quite enjoying the effects of my faster growing hair while needing trimmings less frequently. However, different people have different tolerances and preferences- which I can understand and completely respect. That's why I have been experimenting with these ideas and sharing them, in hopes to give others possible tips and ideas to find their personal balance between modern and natural living.

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