



# HAIR AND YOUR DIET

*Eat your way to better hair with our must-have mane guide...*

Feature: Emily Louise Overy  
Main image: Istock

## **How does the hair behave if a high fat, high sugar diet is followed?**

“The human body is a very complex machine. Your body has very specific nutritional requirements. Eating refined foods and over-processed foods can also result in lack of nutrients or reduced minerals and vitamins being absorbed into the body. A well-balanced diet including plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables is always best. Hair and scalp problems can arise from either a deficiency or an excess of nutrients in your diet, and in some cases nutrition alone can even be the cause of hair loss,” says Creative Director of Russell Eaton salons, Robert Eaton.

If your diet is unbalanced, your scalp and the sebaceous glands that surround each follicle may produce excessive oils and sebum, which can coat the hair and make it look lank and greasy. Alongside dirt and pollution, this can lead to infections on the scalp and even alter hormone production. An exfoliating shampoo can help, but the best solution is to moderate your sugar and fat intake.

## **Can diet affect things like hair loss and thinning?**

Diet is a very important factor as it nurtures all areas of your body, including the blood vessels around the hair follicles. Very often people forget about their scalps, when it’s actually this sensitive area that helps to feed, nourish and ultimately grow hair.

“If your diet is lacking in any vitamins or minerals, then the skin and hair growth process can be stunted, and in some cases cause problems with hair loss. Avoid crash diets, as these can quickly starve the body of nutrients and cause your hair to shed. In some cases, this doesn’t show until around three months after the diet, which sometimes means people do not associate the hair loss with this lack of nutrients,” adds Robert Eaton. “Obesity can also cause the female hormone (oestrogen) to be less effective in women.

# The wheel of hair health



Oestrogen naturally binds to fat so there is less of it to act as a buffer to the testosterone... which in turn may manifest itself as genetic hair thinning!” adds Trichologist Iain Sallis.

## Alongside following a balanced diet, what hair products should I be using to help promote strong, healthy locks?

A good vitamin supplement can ensure that all the correct vitamins and minerals are there for successful hair growth. Iron is often a watch point, as low iron levels or incorrect absorption are also linked to hair loss. Also, a good scalp

treatment, exfoliating shampoo or scalp massage all really help to get the blood circulating and keep the scalp in the best possible state for promoting hair growth.

**Top tip:** *“For long, luscious locks, you need a diet packed with the right types of proteins. I would suggest taking a good look at your diet and increasing the amounts of red meat, eggs and oily fish on the menu.” – Iain Sallis*