

## MAINTAIN HEALTHY HAIR DURING STRESSFUL TIMES WITH THESE TIPS

V spoke with expert Dr. Margo Weishar about hair loss during the pandemic and how to revive your hair.

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TEXT: INDIA ROBY

Not only is the COVID-19 pandemic raising health concerns worldwide, but those trapped at home are noticing an increased amount of hair loss, alongside worrying about weight gain, finances, and countless other concerns projected from social media. It is completely normal to *not* feel your best during stressful and unprecedented times when there is no certainty in the future. And for the first time for many individuals, it definitely can feel like the world is ending.

The truth is that most of your hair concerns can stem from various reasons like stress and diet change, and even washing your hair less often can cause hair to *seemingly* shed more. But fear not — V Magazine spoke with Dermatologist and expert Dr. Margo Weishar on hair concerns and how to revive it back to life!

**V Magazine:** Why is the pandemic affecting hair loss?

**Dr. Margo Weishar:** There is no one on the planet who has escaped the stress brought on by the global pandemic. We know that hair growth is very affected by stress in the body- whether physical or mental. The hair growth cycle of active growth, the resting phase, and shedding are very sensitive to the internal health environment. Anything that throws your system out of balance can affect hair growth and shedding. Fever, severe illness, and mass stress due to job loss, uncertainty, and worry can all cause hairs to prematurely go into the resting phase from active growth. They will then start to be shed all at once after a few months.

**V:** What are some little known facts about hair loss that everyone should know?

**Dr. Weishar:** Hair grows in cycles- and there is a normal amount of shedding that occurs every day of about 100 hairs a day. Just because you see hair in a comb or on the floor of your shower does not mean that your hair is thinning. Each person has a genetically defined growth phase (that's why only some people can grow their hair long enough to sit on it) and then the hair goes into the resting phase. And 4-6 months after it enters the resting phase, it is released or "sheds." In normal times, new hairs are growing to replace the shed hair.

**V:** What are the most basic/affordable ways to repair thinning hair?

**Dr. Weishar:** For temporary thinning due to stress, the best way to promote hair health is to recognize that your body is showing physical signs of stress, and to focus on overall wellness like eating right, getting enough sleep, stress reduction through exercise, meditation or whatever method works best for you. Knowing that this reaction is normal and temporary may help as just the idea of losing your hair can add to the overall stress. There are several supplements on the market that can reduce environmental and oxidative stress on the hair follicle to allow for the best environment for regrowth.

**V:** What are some of the more intense, impactful ways of growing back hair?

**Dr. Weishar:** There are many causes of hair loss. If you are experiencing prolonged or sustained hair loss, I recommend an evaluation by a board-certified dermatologist to look into the cause — the list of things that can cause hair loss include hormonal imbalance, genetic disorders, nutrition, inflammatory disorders, medications and a huge list of other possibilities. It is important to separate reversible vs irreversible causes of hair loss and treat any underlying medical problem before embarking on a treatment plan.

**V:** Do you feel that hair loss, in general, is under "our control" or is it a genetic thing that we have no say over?

**Dr. Weishar:** Sometimes hair loss can be due to things we can control — nutrition, stress, over manipulating hair with treatments and styling devices, and uncovering underlying medical problems. However, some hair loss is genetically determined and requires lifelong treatments to try to maintain the hair.

**V:** What is the actual chemical relationship between hair loss and stress?

**Dr. Weishar:** Lol- don't know this.....

**V:** What are popular treatments for hair loss?

**Dr. Weishar:** Topical Minoxidil has been over the counter for many years and works to stimulate hair growth. There are newer preparations that compound other promising topicals available through your dermatologist. PRP, or platelet-rich plasma, is derived from elements in your blood and can be used to stimulate healthy hair growth. Supplements can also be taken to provide the best environment for healthy follicles. Lastly, the science of hair restoration grafting (hair transplants) has come a long way and can produce very natural results in people with permanent hair loss.