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Everything You Need To Know About Menopause and Hair Loss, According to Dermatologists, Trichologists, and Hairstylists

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In addition to a host of not-so-fun [menopause symptoms](#) (ahem, [hot flashes](#)), menopause hair loss is another side effect many women may experience. So if you're in the thick of the "big change" and wondering, "Why is my hair falling out?" it's important to know that there is a connection here... and it's actually pretty common.

So common, in fact, that about half of women experience hair loss during menopause, says [Ellen Marmur, MD](#), a board-certified dermatologist and founder of [MMSkincare](#). Unsurprisingly, one of the main culprits is the big hormonal shifts that occur during this period, along with other health and lifestyle factors that can contribute to thinning.

The good news is that there are strategies to help you manage and address menopausal hair loss—and the earlier you start them, the better. Keep reading for what the experts want you to know.

Does menopause cause hair loss?

The short answer is, yes—but more specifically, it's the hormonal changes women experience during menopause that can impact hair growth.

"During menopause, estrogen and progesterone levels fall, meaning the effects of the androgens, or male hormones, are increased," Dr. Marmur explains. "Because of this, two things can start to happen to your hair. You start growing hair in places where you didn't before, like the chin, and you might see the hair start to shed, thin, and become fine."

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That said, hormonal shifts aren't the only potential cause of hair loss during menopause—all of the *other* factors that can cause hair loss throughout your life are at play here, too. Certain autoimmune diseases, medications, poor diet and nutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies (like iron and vitamin D), and [stress](#) can also negatively affect hair growth, says [Bridgette Hill](#), a certified trichologist and hair colorist.

Aging, in general, also impacts hair health. "As we age, we experience decreases in our body's lipids, cholesterol, ceramides, and fatty acids," Hill explains. "All of these are necessary to retain the moisture and strength of the hair fiber and a stable scalp microbiome and skin barrier for healthy scalp function."

Furthermore, improper scalp and hair care and wear and tear can also lead to the deterioration of hair fibers over time, leading to hair loss. "Years of excessive exposure to the sun, mechanical damage as a result of hair styling, heat styling, and chemical services are all external factors that can accelerate damage to aging hair coupled with the body's natural aging process," says Hill.

What does hormonal hair loss look like?

Menopausal hair loss typically shows up as overall thinning hair throughout the head, but tends to be most prominent around the front hairline, along the part, and near the temples, explains [Shah Caspara](#), a trichologist, hairstylist, and founder of [The Leona Way](#). "Those follicles in those areas are more subjected to negative impacts from hormones," she says. Dr. Marmur adds that, generally, menopause hair loss doesn't lead to noticeable bald spots (phew!), but the hair itself may also become thinner and more brittle during menopause.

How can I stop hair loss during menopause?

While there are no guaranteed ways to prevent hair loss during menopause (gotta love those hormones), there are [hair loss solutions](#) that can help reverse thinning after the fact. The key is to look at hair growth holistically, taking into account your lifestyle, stress levels, diet, environment, medications, and any other factors that contribute to overall health. As Caspara puts it, "Your hair is a marker of your health."

Pinpointing the root causes of hair loss or hair thinning during menopause is also important, and for that, Hill says a proper evaluation from a trichologist or dermatologist is required. So read on to learn some strategies to combat menopause hair loss, but remember to consult with an expert before self-diagnosing and treating.

1. Incorporate hair-friendly foods into your diet

[What we eat](#) plays a big role in our hair health. "Hair requires a plentiful supply of protein, energy-producing nutrients, and adequate amounts of iron and vitamin B12," says Hill. For this reason, she encourages adding foods rich in these elements to your diet, such as green juices and smoothies, kale, collard greens, avocado, and cucumber.

Dr. Marmur also recommends consuming more foods that contain [fatty acids](#) (salmon, tuna, walnuts, and almonds), [vitamin B6](#) (organ meats, bananas, spinach, pistachios, eggs, and milk), and [folic acid](#) (asparagus, leafy greens, broccoli, brussel sprouts, and citrus fruits). And bonus points for noshing on dates, which, Dr. Marmur says are a great food to target hair loss thanks to the vitamin B vitamins and iron they provide.

2. Add supplements to your routine

Another way to step up your vitamins for hair loss during menopause is through [supplementation](#). As a refresher, low levels of iron and vitamin D are linked to hair loss, so if you have a deficiency in those, taking them in supplement form can be helpful. However, before adding a year-long supply of supplements to your cart, Dr. Marmur recommends getting your levels [checked by a doctor](#) to ensure you're getting the nutrients your body needs.



3. Try hair loss treatments

The shift in hormones during menopause causes something called *miniaturization*, which is when the hair follicles start to shrink and lose their ability to grow, says Caspara. To get ahead of this process, she recommends using devices that can help extend the hair's growth phase and restimulate the cells in the hair follicle. "They kind of keep things activated and living and functioning longer than they would have should we have left it without any kind of support," she says.

Dr. Marmur adds that [platelet-rich plasma therapy \(PRP\)](#)¹, [LED light therapy](#)², and [oral minoxidil](#)³ also help stimulate hair growth. "These three all work by preventing shedding and promoting more hair; both density and caliber increase," she says. Particularly, she promotes PRP as a very safe and effective treatment for hair regrowth and hair loss prevention. "Unlike other hair loss prevention treatments, PRP therapy is associated with very few side effects, especially when the procedure is performed by a board-certified dermatologist," she says. If you can't get into a dermatologist's office for a pro-grade PRP session, you can try [microneedling your scalp at home](#), which stimulates circulation and can promote growth.



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5. Incorporate a topical or serum into your regime

Though there are plenty of topical solutions on the market that specifically target hormonal hair loss in mature women, not all of them are created equally—which means finding the "best products for menopausal hair loss" that actually *work* may take some trial and error.

For starters, you can go ahead and skip out on any product that purports to be the "best shampoo for thinning hair due to menopause," as Caspara notes that their evidence is lacking. Dr. Marmur seconds this advice, adding, "No shampoo in itself will address the issue of hair loss during menopause."

There are, however, topicals and serums for menopausal you can add to your routine that may be more effective—the actives in these formulas tend to be more concentrated (and stay on your scalp for longer), which allows them to work better than shampoo. Hill explains that these products work by extending the hair cycle's growth phase, reducing inflammation, encouraging blood flow and cellular turnover in the scalp, and increasing nutritional support to the hair follicle's cells and tissues. "I find clients that commit to a regular scalp routine with a topical are able to transition through changes in the body that may trigger hair shedding and loss with less severe shedding as well as retain healthier, stronger hair fibers," she says.



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FAQs

Will hair loss from menopause grow back?

All that said, you may still be wondering: Is menopausal hair loss permanent? And, well, it depends.

While Dr. Marmur confirms that hair can grow back after menopause, she notes that that likely won't be the case if you don't do anything to deal with it. She says that staying on top of your vitamin and hormone levels and opting for treatments, like PRP, are the best ways to nurse your hair back to health.

The longer you wait to address your hair loss, the more difficult it will be to reverse it. According to Caspara, if your hair has been thinning for years without any intervention, regrowth will be a challenge. "If hair follicles become dormant for too long, it's really hard to bring them back to life and restimulate them," she says. So once you start to notice shedding, it's best to implement the above strategies to help restimulate hair follicles sooner rather than later.

Does biotin help menopausal hair loss?

Although [research surrounding the efficacy of biotin](#) (a form of vitamin B) is limited, Dr. Marmur notes that some research suggests the nutrient can help prevent hair loss—but *only* for those who have a biotin deficiency. If that's the case, taking a biotin supplement can help restore the vitamin B levels your body needs to combat hair loss. That said, there's no point in adding biotin into your routine unless you actually need it, so check with a doctor before you go all in with it.

What age does hair loss occur in menopause?

Hair loss due to menopause typically begins two years before menopause actually starts, says Dr. Marmur (so if the average woman hits menopause at age 50, she'll likely see some thinning around her 48th birthday). However, Hill notes that hormonal hair loss, in general, can occur long before menopause. "Most women begin to experience hormonal hair loss shifts as young as 30 years old," she says. And as we now know, the earlier you do something about it, the healthier your hair will be throughout your life.

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