

Hair Therapy

A heads-up on how to solve nine common hair woes

MOST MORNING TASKS can be accomplished on autopilot. Take the dog for a walk, make coffee, and hop in the shower. The pooch, the coffeepot, and the plumbing all cooperate. But when it comes time to do your hair, you're met with resistance. Your hair plays dead. Or it becomes unruly and lashes out with frizz and fly-aways, refusing to be trained. To put an end to these unpleasant head games, Real Simple asked top hairstylists for the cures to nine common hair problems, so that every morning your hair, like the dog and the coffeepot, will obey.

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“People get real comfortable with their features. Nobody gets comfortable with their hair. Hair trauma. It's the universal thing.”
— Jamie Lee Curtis



PROBLEM: DANDRUFF

CAUSE: “It’s a misconception that a dry scalp causes dandruff,” says Cheryl Citron, a dermatologist in Livingston, New Jersey. The flaking of the scalp is usually created by a reaction between a naturally occurring yeast and a change in hormones—the same hormones that trigger acne, says Citron.

SOLUTION: Dandruff shampoos are the most effective flake fighter. **RS pick:** Head & Shoulders (\$4 at drugstores). It contains pyrithione zinc, an antiseptic that controls yeast and therefore dandruff when used two or three times a week. Other dandruff shampoos may contain salicylic acid or tar derivatives to exfoliate dead skin cells. If the condition doesn’t abate after you’ve used a shampoo for two or three weeks, see a dermatologist. He can diagnose conditions with symptoms similar to dandruff’s, such as atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, and fungal infections.