



# GROWING PAINS

It's estimated that more than half of women in America will experience *hair loss*—and numbers may have only *risen during the pandemic*.

**S**tress—whether from a breakup, giving birth, contracting COVID-19, or simply living through the year-and-counting pandemic—can be a common trigger for hair loss. “When we experience abrupt changes, the body helps essential tissues thrive at the expense of nonessential tissues, like hair,” says Palm Beach, Florida-based psychologist Bridgette Hill, the founder of Root Cause Scalp Analysis. While losing up to 100 hairs a day is normal, some dermatologists say they are seeing more patients with excessive shedding than ever before. According to a study in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, hair loss increased by more than 400 percent between November 2019 and August 2020 in two racially diverse New York City neighborhoods, most likely due to COVID-related inflammation or stress.

FDA-approved minoxidil (found in Rogaine) is the gold standard for over-the-counter treatments. But Beverly Hills dermatologist Ava Shamban, MD, says Redensyl, a blend of ingredients including a special peptide, may rival minoxidil, potentially with fewer side effects. “Peptides are our body’s messengers,” Shamban says. “They deliver news to cells, telling them to perform a specific function.” Redensyl, found in products like Philip B Scalp Booster (\$85) and The Ordinary Multi-Peptide Serum for Hair Density (\$18), communicates directly with hair stem cells to encourage healthy follicle activity.

For more dramatic results, you may want to consider an in-office treatment. A noninvasive option is HydraFacial Keravive, a “scalp facial” that includes exfoliation, a stimulating scalp serum, and red LED light. New York dermatologist Jessica Weiser, MD, also suggests KeraLase. This treatment starts with a laser (which creates small punctures in the scalp at the same depth as the hair follicle bulbs), followed by a serum rich in peptide and growth factors. “The serum triggers a new follicle, which leads to growth of new hair,” Weiser says.—MARGAUX ANBOUBA



## ROOTING for You

Whether you're facing hair loss or simply want to grow your healthiest head of hair, Hill recommends this three-step scalp care routine.

### 1. PRETREAT

Moisturizing and maintaining the pH of your scalp is critical, Hill says. Fifteen minutes before showering, apply an anti-inflammatory mask or oil to scalp and strands.

**Fable & Mane HoliRoots Hair Oil**, \$34, [fableandmane.com](http://fableandmane.com).

### 2. MASSAGE

Fill this palm-size brush with serum for a treatment that is both relaxing and rejuvenating to the scalp. Use circular motions to improve circulation and stimulate scalp muscles while removing dead skin cells.

**WetBrush Head Start Exfoliating Scalp Massager** (\$15); **Bread Beauty Supply Scalp-Serum: Exfoliating Scalp Treatment** (\$28).

### 3. WASH GENTLY

Choose your shampoo carefully: Swap in a hyaluronic acid or apple cider vinegar formula on occasion to remove product buildup without irritation.

**Neutrogena Healthy Scalp Hydro Boost Shampoo with Hyaluronic Acid** (\$12).—MA