

Hair Changes and Care During Pregnancy



Highlights

Hair may feel thicker during pregnancy due to hormonal changes.

Some women experience hair thinning or loss during pregnancy and after childbirth.

Hair dye is generally considered safe during pregnancy, but precautions can be taken.

Certain chemical treatments, like those containing formaldehyde, should be avoided.

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How Pregnancy Affects Hair Thickness

Hair follows a natural growth cycle, where each strand grows, then rests for a few months before shedding. During pregnancy, this cycle shifts due to increased oestrogen levels. As a result, hair remains in the growing phase longer, leading to a fuller appearance. Many women notice this effect around the 15th week of pregnancy.

Hair Thinning During Pregnancy

Some women may experience increased hair shedding during pregnancy due to a drop in oestrogen levels. This can be triggered by factors such as:

- Stopping oral contraceptive pills
- Experiencing a miscarriage, abortion, or stillbirth
- Hormonal imbalances during pregnancy

Postpartum hair loss is also common. As oestrogen levels return to normal after childbirth, the hair that remained in the growing phase shifts to the resting phase and sheds more than usual. This shedding typically lasts until the baby is around 3-4 months old, with hair growth returning to normal by 12 months. If excessive hair loss persists beyond this period, consult a doctor.

Using Hair Dye During Pregnancy

Hair dye is generally considered safe during pregnancy since the scalp does not absorb significant amounts of chemicals. However, as research on this topic is limited, some women choose to wait until after the first trimester to dye their hair.

Hair Dye Application Tips

- Wear gloves if applying hair dye yourself
- Do not leave the dye in longer than necessary
- Use hair dye in a well-ventilated room
- Rinse the scalp thoroughly after application
- Follow the instructions on the product packaging
- Avoid mixing different hair dye products
- Perform an allergy (patch) test before use

Chemical Hair Treatments to Avoid

Be cautious when using chemical treatments such as hair straighteners. Some treatments contain formaldehyde, a known carcinogen, which is best avoided during pregnancy.

If uncertain about a hair treatment's safety, consult a doctor for guidance.

Tools and Assistance

Consult with a Dermatologist or Trichologist: If you experience significant hair thinning or loss, a healthcare provider can assess any underlying health conditions. A dermatologist or trichologist (hair care specialist) can also provide personalized advice tailored to your needs.

Prenatal Vitamins: Some women find that taking prenatal vitamins containing biotin, zinc, and folic acid can help support healthy hair growth during pregnancy. However, it's always important to consult with a healthcare provider before starting any new supplement.

Gentle Hair Care Products: Using hair care products that are free of harsh chemicals and designed for sensitive skin can help prevent scalp irritation during pregnancy. Look for shampoos, conditioners, and oils specifically formulated for pregnant individuals.

Cold Compress or Scalp Massages: If you experience scalp discomfort or itchiness, gentle scalp massages or cold compresses can help provide relief and promote circulation, which might improve the condition of your hair and scalp.