

You've Heard About Hyaluronic Acid for Skin — But What Can It Do for Hair?



Medically reviewed by [Susan Bard, MD](#) — Written by Steph Coelho on September 10, 2021

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If [hyaluronic acid](#) sounds familiar, that's probably because this ingredient is showing up in a wide range of beauty and skin care products.

Hyaluronic acid's popularity likely relates, at least in part, to its [humectant](#) properties. Humectants retain moisture, so they can make great additions to products intended for dry skin. Plus, hyaluronic acid tends to cause fewer skin reactions compared with other common skin care ingredients.

Different parts of your body, including your skin and eyes, naturally contain hyaluronic acid. Of course, the substance found in skin care products is typically produced in a lab.

Maybe you're already familiar with hyaluronic acid's skin care benefits, but did you know it might also help improve hair health?

Read on to get the details on hyaluronic acid's potential benefits for hair, plus a few tips on incorporating this popular ingredient into your hair care routine.

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How can hyaluronic acid benefit your hair?

We reached out to [Dr. Beth Goldstein](#), a board certified dermatologist, to get more insight into hyaluronic acid's potential hair care benefits.

Hyaluronic acid can absorb its weight in water, which adds moisture to hair follicles, she explains. "This helps provide a smooth and less frizzy appearance."

If your hair lacks hyaluronic acid, which can happen naturally with age, you'll likely notice dry, thin locks.

Supplements or topical hair treatments containing hyaluronic acid, then, could potentially:

- help revitalize hair
- boost hair's ability to hold on to moisture
- improve hair's overall look and texture

Goldstein does caution that adding hyaluronic acid to your hair care routine is unlikely to stop existing [hair loss](#), though some people do claim it can help.

Concerned about hair loss? [Try these 22 tips.](#)

What other benefits does hyaluronic acid have?

Hyaluronic acid can [do quite a bit more](#) than improve the appearance of your hair.

It can also:

- improve overall skin health
- help treat [dermatitis](#)
- help reduce the appearance of [wrinkles](#) by smoothing, plumping, and hydrating skin
- speed up wound healing
- help ease joint pain

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- help treat [eye dryness](#) and discomfort

These benefits may vary, depending on whether you use topical hyaluronic acid treatments or take supplements. You can also get hyaluronic acid injections, called [fillers](#), from a dermatologist for additional skin benefits.

While you won't get exactly the same results from topical treatments, hyaluronic acid still works well as a moisturizer.

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Can everyone use hyaluronic acid?

You can use hyaluronic acid regardless of your hair type, Goldstein says.

It'll help your hair follicles lock in moisture, banish [frizz](#), and potentially add volume to your mane. If you have trouble with dry skin on your scalp, hyaluronic acid can also help moisturize any flaky, dry areas.

You'll probably notice the most benefits if you have damaged, frizzy hair.

Ultra-dry, damaged hair, like hair that's been bleached over and over again, is more porous than healthy hair. Porous hair has a harder time retaining water, so any moisture that gets into your strands spills right back out.

Hyaluronic acid helps reduce porosity to minimize moisture loss.

But, even if you've got luscious locks already, adding hyaluronic acid to your routine can help maintain the health of your hair.

Potential risks and side effects

Existing evidence doesn't point to any major side effects of topical hyaluronic acid. Experts consider it very safe for your skin and hair.

You're also unlikely to have an allergy or sensitivity, since your body

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If you want to take a supplement, you may want to check with your doctor beforehand if you:

- are pregnant or nursing
- [have cancer](#) or a history of cancer (Hyaluronic acid supplements could promote growth of cancer cells.)

How to choose a product

To date, little research focuses specifically on the potential benefits of hair care products containing hyaluronic acid.

Most existing [research](#) focuses on how supplements and topical treatments can improve skin health.

When choosing a hair care product, Goldstein recommends choosing one that also contains strengthening ingredients, like:

- [keratin](#)
- [collagen](#)
- [nourishing oils](#), like jojoba or argan oil

She also suggests opting for a leave-in product, like a conditioner or serum, to boost the concentration of hyaluronic acid in your hair.

Tip: Rather than just swiping product on the ends of your hair and calling it good, it may be worth going the extra mile to massage it into your scalp and comb it through.

What about DIY hair treatments?

If you've already got some hyaluronic acid skin [serum](#) at home, you might wonder if you can just whip up your own hyaluronic acid leave-in conditioner.

While technically, this could work, it's best to stick with products specially formulated for your hair. Plus, you'll probably save some money in the long run, since skin care products tend to be pretty pricey.

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How to use hyaluronic acid

For best results, apply your conditioner or serum after shampooing. Massage it into your scalp while your hair is still damp.

If you have particularly frizzy or dry hair, or if you find your hair is losing its oomph as you age, Goldstein suggests using this type of product daily.

Although hyaluronic acid is unlikely to irritate your skin, she recommends watching out for other ingredients that might cause a reaction.

Tip: Always do a patch test on a small area of your scalp before applying it to the whole area.

The bottom line

While there's little research about the benefits of hyaluronic acid for hair, it does seem to have some potential for boosting your hair's moisture content and improving its appearance.

Plus, since it's unlikely to cause any adverse reactions, there's no reason not to try it out.

Steph Coelho is a freelance writer with chronic migraine who has a particular interest in health and wellness. When she's not click-clacking away on her keyboard, she's probably nose-deep in a good book.

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