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# Hair and Hair Care

# edited by Dale H. Johnson

Helene Curtis, Inc. Rolling Meadows, Illinois



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## About the Ser

The Cosmetic Science an sion of a broad range of and technology. The serie or edited volumes with academia, and the goven

The aim of this ser technology. Topics are dr chemistry, physics, bioc safety, efficacy, toxicity, and polymer chemistry, toxicology all play a rol

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## **Conditioning of Hair**

#### Myra A. Hoshowski

Helene Curtis, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Hair that is conditioned is in a proper and healthy state. Healthy hair looks shiny, feels soft, is easy to comb and style, and retains body and bounce.

If hair were left alone, it would tend to remain in a conditioned state. The cuticle, or outer layer of hair would remain intact and a layer of sebum would provide the hair with protection from mechanical friction. However, a buildup of sebum gives the hair an undesirable appearance. During the process of cleansing, wet hair is vulnerable to mechanical abrasion and therefore becomes damaged. Chemical treatments used to permanently alter hair's color and curl further weaken and damage hair.

It is the job of conditioners to help counteract these negative effects. When conditioning agents are applied to the hair, frictional force is reduced and combing becomes easier, thus maintaining the hair in its proper and healthy state. Some conditioning agents may even penetrate the hair fiber to actually restore damaged hair to a healthy condition.

There is no single perfect conditioning agent, but rather a multitude of conditioning agents available to the formulating scientist. An endless number of combinations of these conditioning agents can be used in conditioners. By utilizing the technical information that is provided about the conditioning agents and examining the examples of formulations, the formulator can use this chapter as a starting point for developing a balanced conditioner which meets the needs of his or her target market segments.

#### II. HOW HAIR STRUCTURE RELATES TO ITS CONDITION

The hair shaft is composed of two major morphological regions, the cortex and the cuticle. The cortex's function is to provide mechanical properties such as strength to the hair fiber. The cuticle is the chemically resistant outer layer responsible for protecting the cortex. Six to 10 layers thick, the cuticle resists physical and chemical degradation by forces such as friction, pulling, bending, and ultraviolet radiation. Hair's appealing visual and tactile characteristics are due to the cuticle's arrangement. Cuticle cells arranged in overlapping scales lie flat, reflecting light and allowing each strand to slide smoothly against its adjacent neighbors. Even though the cuticle is remarkably resistant, it is not impervious to attack and will break down from repeated exposure to the environment, physical manipulation during grooming, and chemical alteration. This greatly simplified overview of hair structure is provided to show how hair's structure relates to its condition. Robbins (1) and Chapters 1 and 2 of this volume explain the morphology of hair in greater detail.

#### III. HAIR DAMAGE AND ITS CAUSES

Numerous researchers have studied the way in which physical and chemical processes damage hair by observing how hair loses its color and luster, becomes more harsh, stiff, weak, brittle, and flyaway.

#### A. Grooming

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Gould and Sneath (2) compared the cross sections of proximal, or root portions of the hair to the distal, or end portions of the hair before and after repeated shampooings. They found that damage was limited to the cuticle and increased from the proximal to the distal portion of the hair fiber.

Kelly and Robinson (3) studied the effect of the normal grooming process of shampooing, towel drying, wet combing, and wet brushing on the cuticle. During the shampooing stage of the grooming process, hair becomes tangled in knots. Wet hair has a lower resistance to abrasion than dry hair, while at the same time, the wet hair is subjected to very strong abrasive forces. Although shampooing and towel drying alone can abrade the cuticle, wet combing and particularly wet brushing inflicts much greater damage. Cuticle layers are lost at a rate of 1 to 2.5 cuticles per 50 treatments. On the basis of this rate, if the grooming procedure is undertaken only twice per week, the entire cuticle is removed in only 14 to 60 months leading to subsequent splitting of the cortex.

Sandhu et al. (4) developed a sensitive colorimetric method to quantify the amount of hair protein fragments abraded during combing. Chemically treated hair exhibits greater protein loss than untreated hair.

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