

# **Premature Graying of Hair and Homoeopathy**

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As the age advances, normally the hair has a tendency to lose its natural colour. But premature graying of hair is a morbid condition, which renders a typical cosmetic problem and makes the young to look older. This causes a gigantic deal of concern to affected persons, especially women.

## **Anatomy of hair**

The hair is just an appendage of the skin. It is composed of the same kind of cells as are found in the outer layer of the skin, the epidermis. It grows from a hair follicle, which is a deep interlude in the epidermis. The sebaceous glands of the scalp secrete an oily substance called sebum, which is the source of nutrition, luster and blackness of the hair.

The hair cannot be fed externally, for such nourishment as the scalp requires must come to it from the bloodstream.

## **Causes of Graying**

Two primary causes of premature graying of hair are:

### **Flawed diet**

- 1- It is predominantly due to the lack of some of the B vitamins, of iron, copper & iodine in the daily diet that this hair disorder is caused at a young age these days. Mental worries produce an extraordinary tension in the skin of the scalp, which interferes with the supply of vital nutrition necessary for the health of the hair.
- 2- Other causes of premature graying of hair are unclean condition of the scalp which weakens the roots of the hair as the pores are blocked by the collected dirt;
- 3- Washing the hair with hot water & drying them in electric dryers which emits a blast of hot air;
- 4- The use of hair dyes in earlier stages when the hair has just started graying;
- 5- Diseases like chronic cold, sinusitis, anaemia, chronic constipation;

- 6- The use of factory made hair oils, which are generally cleaned with acids & some of the acids have the tendency to remain in the oil.
- 7- Heredity is another predisposing factor which gives rise to the ailment.

### **Mental worries.**

- 1- Mental worries produce an extraordinary tension in the skin of the scalp, which interferes with the supply of vital nutrition necessary for the health of the hair.
- 2- Anxieties, fear, jealousy & failures have adverse effects on the hair. They dry out the scapular marrow, the vital sap at the root of the hair.

### **Other causes**

- 1- Some other causes of premature graying of hair are unclean condition of the scalp which weakens the roots of the hair as the pores are blocked by the collected dirt; washing the hair with hot water and drying them with electric dryers which emit a blast of hot air; the use of hair dyes in the earlier stages when the hair have just started graying; diseases like chronic cold, sinusitis, anaemia, chronic constipation; and the use of factory- made hair oils, which are generally cleaned with acids and some of the acids have a tendency to remain in the oil. Heredity is another predisposing factor which gives rise to this ailment. *immature graying of hair secondary to disease*
- 2- There are many instances where a systemic disease can indirectly affect hair color. The implements by which hair color changes occur in such diseases have not been investigated in any detail although various suggestions have been made.
- 3- HIV and subsequent development of AIDS can sometimes involve changes in hair color. This may be brought about perhaps through indirect effects of the immune system in hair follicle activity, but more likely the significant alterations in hormone levels, and nutritional deficiencies as progressive wasting occurs (effectively Kwashiorkor), are the more conceivable causes.
- 4- Several studies have been conducted on the possible association of premature graying of hair and low bone mineral density (osteoporosis). It is possible that low hormone levels associated with low bone density also affect melanocyte cell pigment producing activity. It is also possible that the melanocyte cells rely upon the activity of genes that are expressed in both bone mineral deposition and pigment production. If these genes are defective in some way, it may result in low bone mineral density and low pigment production.
- 5- Some research reports suggest an association between coronary artery disease and gray hair development. Autoimmune diseases that do not normally directly affect the skin, such as hypothyroidism,

hyperthyroidism, and Addison's pernicious anemia have been associated with graying of hair.

### **Treatment**

- 1- Diet is of utmost momentousness in the prevention and treatment of premature graying of hair and persons suffering from this disorder should take a diet rich in all essential nutrients. The vitamins contemplated useful in premature graying of hair are pantothenic acid, para-aminobenzoic acid or PABA and inositol. The minimum daily requirement of these vitamins appears to be 10 mg. of pantothenic acid, 100 gm. of para-aminobenzoic acid and 2000 mg. of inositol. To obtain satisfactory results, all three of these vitamins, belonging to B group, should be supplied at one time preferably in a form which gives all B vitamins, such as yeast, wheat germ and liver. These three anti-Gray hair vitamins can be produced in the intestinal tract by bacteria.
- 2- Drinking a liter of yogurt (yogurt is a slightly acid, semisolid, curdled milk preparation. It is rich in vitamins of the B complex group and a good source of protein. It also gives a medium in the tract of the stomach and intestines that slows the growth of harmful bacteria and aids in the absorption of minerals) daily with a tablespoon of yeast before each meal will be an excellent remedy for the prevention and treatment of premature graying of hair. If one wishes to take tablets of calcium pantothenate and PABA, they should be taken in addition to the yeast and yogurt and not as a substitute for them. Besides fish, which is the main source of iodine, the requirement of minerals can be met by adequate intake of carrots, bananas and similar other vegetables and fruits.
- 3- Carrots are especially useful in equipping fresh blood and maintaining the health of the hair.

### **Home remedies**

- 1- Amla- It is a precious hair tonic for enriching hair growth and hair pigmentation. The fruit, cut into pieces, should be dried, more willingly in the shade. These pieces should be boiled in coconut oil till the solid matter become little charred dust. This darkish oil is very useful in preventing graying. The water in which dried amla pieces are soaked overnight is considered highly beneficial in the treatment of premature graying of hair and also nourishing to the hair. This water should be used for the last rinse while washing the hair. Massaging the scalp with a teaspoonful of amla juice mixed with a teaspoonful of almond oil or few drops of limejuice, every night has proved beneficial in the prevention and treatment of premature graying of hair.
- 2- Curry- Progressive intake of curry leaves is considered beneficial in preventing premature graying of hair. These have the property to give vitality and strength to hair roots. New hair roots that grow are healthier with normal pigment. The leaves can be used in the form of

chutney or these may be squeezed in butter- milk or lassi. When the leaves are boiled in coconut oil, the oil forms an excellent hair tonic to stimulate hair growth and bring back hair pigmentation.

- 3- Cow Milk Butter- The butter made from cow's milk has the property to prevent premature graying of hair. A small spindle may be taken internally and a little quantity may be massaged into the hair root at least twice a week.
- 4- Torai- Ribbed gourd called as torai in the vernacular, boiled in coconut oil is another effective remedy for premature graying of hair. Pieces of this vegetable should be dried in the shade. These dried pieces should be soaked in coconut oil and kept aside for three or four days. The oil should then be boiled till the solid is reduced to a blackened residuum. This oil should be massaged into the scalp. It will help enrich the hair roots and restore pigment to the hair.
- 5- Hair Dye -The blend of henna leaves, boiled in coconut oil to get a darkish oil, can be used as a hair dye to blacken gray hair. The paste itself can be applied to the hair and washed away after a few hours to dye the gray hair.
- 6- Washing the hair with concentrated tea extract twice a week is also considered useful in colouring gray hair to brown or black.

### **Ultimate Treatment- Homoeopathic Medicines-**

Repertorial therapeutics-

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|--|---|
| 1. HEAD - HAIR - color changes-<br>purpurea) | Kali-i1, Sarr1 (Sarracenia  |
| 2. HEAD - HAIR - gray, becomes-              | Ars2, graph1, hipp1, kali-<br>i2, kali-n1, kreos1, lyc3,<br>nat-m2, op1, ph-ac2, sec1,<br>sil2, staph1, sul-ac1,<br>sulph1, thuj1 |
| 3. HEAD - HAIR - gray, becomes - spots, in-  | Psor1   |

Any constitutional Remedy whichever indicated.