HAIR CARE PRACTICES IN SKIN OF COLOR

Nkanyezi Ferguson, MD, FAAD
University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics
Iowa City, IA
DISCLOSURE OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY

U074 - Hair Care Practices and Hair Disorders in Skin of Color

DISCLOSURES

No relevant relationships with industry
OBJECTIVES

• Discuss practical management of seborrheic dermatitis in skin of color patients
• Discuss practical management of hair fragility (trichorrhexis nodosa) in skin of color patients
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

• Chronic inflammatory condition
  • Occurs on the scalp, face, & chest
  • Can affect infants, children and adults
  • Itchy, dry, flaky
  • Hypopigmented, hyperpigmented or erythematous plaques
  • Can result in alopecia due to underlying inflammation and scratching/rubbing
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

- Exact cause is unknown
  - Immune response to Malassezia furfur
  - Active sebaceous glands
- Risk factors in skin of color
  - Decreased frequency of hair washing
  - Build up of hair products on the scalp can cause irritation
  - Oils on the scalp can mask the scaling and result in more irritation
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

• Treatment
  • Recommend appropriate hair cleansing interval
    • Daily hair washing is usually not feasible in patients of color
    • Increase shampoo interval to weekly as tolerated
  • Wash out potentially irritating hair products as soon as possible
  • Use hair oils on the hair shaft only
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

- Treatment
  - Anti-dandruff shampoos selection
    - Several popular anti-dandruff shampoos can be very drying to the hair and can cause breakage
      - E.g. Ketoconazole and Selenium sulfide shampoo
    - Less drying shampoo alternatives
      - Zinc pyrithione (sulfate-free shampoo*)
      - Ciclopirox shampoo (Rx)
      - Sulfacetamide-Sulfur*
      - Keratolytic shampoos containing salicylic acid or coal tar

Waldroup W. JDD 2008;7(7):699–703
C. Aguh & G. Okoye. Fundamentals of Ethnic Hair
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

Treatment

- Anti-dandruff shampoos - tips to reduce hair dryness
  - Apply shampoo only to the scalp
    - Can also do this ~30 min prior to washing hair
  - Rinse out completely
  - Follow with use of regular shampoo and conditioner
  - Use leave in conditioner
  - Consider using oil treatment prior to shampoo or after leave in conditioner

Dandruff Shampoos

Why should I use dandruff shampoos?
- Flaking
- Itching

How do I use dandruff shampoos?
- Wash your hair at least 1 time a week.
  1. Rub the shampoo gently into your scalp only. It can be drying to your hair.
  2. Leave the shampoo on for at least 5 minutes before rinsing.
  3. Use your normal shampoo on the rest of your hair.
  4. Use a moisturizing conditioner after using dandruff shampoos.
- Using two shampoos with different active ingredients works best. Switch shampoos each week.
SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

• **Treatment**
  • Antidandruff conditioner/scalp crème
    • Deep Moisture Masque conditioner treatment (*zinc pyrithione, coconut oil, sulphate free*)
    • Daily moisture leave-in scalp cream (*zinc pyrithione, coconut oil*)
  • Topical steroids
    • Alcohol-based solutions can be drying and not conducive with hairstyling practices
    • Prescription oil or ointment-based topical steroids preferred
      • Compound pharmacy can provide higher potency topical steroids in oil*
    • Quick drying aerosolized foams may be acceptable
ACQUIRED TRICHHORRHEXIS NODOSA

• Response of the hair shaft to extrinsic or environmental insults
  • Heat, chemical processing, dyeing, drying hair products
• Results in hair breakage or lack of growth
• Evaluation of patient
  • Determine by history if hair breakage is occurring along the hair shaft
  • Obtain history of all hair care and styling practices
  • Examine hair and scalp to rule out alternate etiologies*
    • “Broken” or short hairs
    • Hair pull test
    • Evaluate hairs under microscopy
ACQUIRED TRICHOHRHESIS NODOSA

- Principals of management
  - Manage expectations (can take 2 years to notice improvement)
    - Because hair is non-living tissue, total repair of the hair shaft is not possible
  - Management of this form of hair loss involves protecting the hair shaft and minimizing further damage
    - Strict avoidance of damaging hair care practices
    - Practicing a healthy hair care regimen
ACQUIRED TRICHOHRHEXIS NODOSA

- Counseling and education

Hair Fragility

What is hair fragility?
It is hair that is dry, brittle, and breaks easily with a small amount of handling. It can lead to hair loss. Fragile hair can be:
- Inherent to African, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean hair
- Caused by hair care practices and styling techniques

How do I know if I am at risk for fragile hair?
You are at higher risk if:
- You are of African descent.
  - Hair follicles in most people of African descent are shaped like an oval instead of a circle. This causes hair to curl and twist when it comes out of the scalp. Due to this shape, there are many possible breaking points along the hair shaft.
- Your hair is tightly curled.
  - Sebum, a natural moisturizer made by the oil glands, has a hard time traveling down the hair shaft when it is tightly curled. This makes water loss and damage to your hair more likely.
- You use chemical relaxers.
  - They work by breaking disulfide bonds in the hair to loosen the curl. They also make hair weaker by stripping it of proteins.
- You use shampoos that strip your hair of natural oils.
  - This can lead to dryness. You need to put moisture back into your hair by using conditioners or moisturizers.
HEALTHY HAIR CARE REGIMEN

• Principles of hair cleansing regimen
  • Proper cleansing of the hair is one of the cornerstones of any healthy hair care regimen
  • Although sebum acts as a natural moisturizer, it is also a potent attractant of dirt, dust and other pollutants
  • Inadequate cleansing of the hair and scalp can result in the buildup of styling aids which can lead to scalp irritation
  • Regular cleansing is necessary to maintain a healthy hair and scalp
SHAMPOO

• Avoid drying shampoos as this can lead to increased fragility and breakage
• Shampoos that contain nonionic surfactants
  • Gentler and less likely to strip moisture from the hair shaft
  • Decyl glucoside, fatty alcohol ethoxylates (cetyl alcohol, stearyl alcohol, etc.), sorbitan ether esters
• Anionic shampoos have excellent cleansing, but leaves the hair dry and susceptible to breakage
  • Lauryl sulfate, laureth sulfates, sarcosines, sulfosuccinates, sodium myreth sulfate, sodium stearte
HEALTHY HAIR CARE REGIMEN

• Counseling and education

What is the treatment for fragile hair?
The hair shaft is non-living tissue, so you cannot fix the damage. You can prevent more damage by:

Washing
Sebum is a natural moisturizer, but it also attracts dirt and dust between shampoos. Shampooing your hair removes sebum and buildup from styling products.

How often you should shampoo depends on your hair type, curl pattern, and the condition of your hair. We recommend washing your hair 1 time a week for most people with tightly curled hair. If your hair is very dry, brittle, or damaged, wash your hair with conditioner 1 time a week and with shampoo 1 to 2 times a month.

Chemicals in shampoos clean hair differently. Shampoos that have a chemical called sodium lauryl/laureth sulfate clean hair well, but can make hair very dry and more likely break.
CONDITIONING

- Conditioning is the most important component of a healthy hair care regimen
- Formulated to mimic the action of sebum
- Types of conditioners
  - Rinse-out conditioners
  - Deep conditioners
  - Leave-in conditioners
  - Protein-containing conditioners and protein treatments
CONDITIONING

• Types of conditioners
  • Rinse-out conditioners
    • Less effective at repairing hair damage
    • Use of rinse-out conditioners in place of shampooing (“co-washing”)
  • Deep conditioners
    • Typically left on the hair for at least 10 min
    • Alternative to leave on for 10-30 min under shower cap with warm damp towel wrap
    • Enhance moisturization and are beneficial for severely damaged hair
CONDITIONING

• Types of conditioners
  • Leave-in conditioners
    • Can help prevent damage from routine grooming
  • Protein-containing conditioners and protein treatments
    • Contain proteins, which are small enough to penetrate the hair shaft and repair holes and defects
    • Use monthly or every two month basis
HAIR CARE

• Counseling and education

**Moisturizing**

It is important to keep moisture in your hair.

- If you have a lot of hair or long hair, part it in sections when you are putting product in. This will help the product cover more evenly.
- If you have fine, straight hair, use a light moisturizer so it does not weigh your hair down.
- If you have thick, curly, or dense hair, use a thicker moisturizer.

After you wash your hair:

- Gently pat your hair dry with a towel.
- Put in a leave-in conditioner.
- Put in a moisturizing cream and/or oil.
  - Coconut oil has been shown to lower water and protein loss from damaged hair if used before and/or after you wash your hair.
- Detangle your hair with your fingers or a wide-tooth comb.
SOAK AND SMEAR’ OR ‘LOC’ METHOD FOR HAIR

- Some oils (e.g. coconut oil) when applied to wet hair can decrease moisture loss and protein loss
  - Helps to prolong the benefits of shampooing and conditioning
  - ‘Soak and smear’ treatments
    - 1. Shampoo and/or condition the hair as normal and lightly blot the hair with a towel
    - 2. Follow with the application of a water-based leave-in conditioner to the hair
    - 3. Immediately apply an oil or thick occlusive moisturizer (e.g. coconut oil, olive oil, jojoba oil, or mineral oil to the hair)
    - 4. Allow the hair to air dry and style as desired
CONCLUSION

• Understanding different hair care practices can help dermatologists have more meaningful and impactful discussions with patients

• Important to understand the unique approaches to management of seborrheic dermatitis and trichorrhexis nodosa in skin of color