Black Hair Can Be Beautiful, Too!

Summer sun means summer fun — except for your hair. Dryness, breakage, split ends, oxidation of color are but a few of the problems we most often hear about. So to help you get your hair back into top shape — and keep it that way, we asked prominent New York stylist, Jim Williams, for some of his hair-care tips.

"It's time someone took a more scientific approach to what our problems really are," said Williams

"There are problems with black hair. No doubt about it. But every woman has problems with her hair — especially in the summer. Our problems are just uniquely ours and we must deal with them and let go of other people's beauty standards."

Nine Important Steps

Jim has set down certain steps he feels are not only necessary — but essential — for keeping your beautiful, black head of hair in top shape, winter or summer — whether you sport an afro or press and curl your hair.

1. Brush hair vigorously every day.

"Most of my brothers and sisters do not brush their hair often for fear of losing their set."

2. Lubricate scalp every day.

"All Blacks do not have oily hair as is generally thought. Over processing, no stimulation to those vital oil glands under the scalp due to lack of brushing are a good reason. If you don't condition your scalp with a cream like Vitapointe, the hair may become brittle and break. Keep the hair and scalp as lubricated as possible.

3. Manipulate your scalp.

"Treat yourself to a massage. Run your fingers through your hair working your scalp and get those oils and your circulation to start doing their thing."

4. Do not over shampoo.

"No cheating on this rule — and there will be no need to cheat if you brush often and vigorously. For a quick pick up for your hair if you feel it looks dirty, take a very hot, damp towel and briskly rub it through the hair."

5. Use a conditioner after every shampoo.

"The best way to have healthy hair is to really get into what's being made for hair today. Whether you wear an afro or have a set, it is important after shampooing to use a product like condition by Clairol, or Hair So New which tends to relax the hair."

6. Always set the hair after shampooing.

"Use either good wire rollers — always using end papers — for a set look, or make pin curls for a natural. You may want a 'bush,' but unless you want a bushy, wild looking 'bush' set your hair!"

7. Never sleep on rollers.

"If you want to set your hair at night, use rollers on the top only and pin curls in the back and on the sides. Sleeping on rollers does, as we all have heard, split and break the hair."

8. Get regular professional haircuts.

"Even a fro needs a good shape. Make the most of what we can really get into with our hair, and if the natural is for you, well, then keep it shaped to become your face."

9. Condition: A word that goes hand-in-hand with coloring and processing.

"Whether you're getting rid of some of that grey with Loving Care, or straightening, always condition your hair after the process. And if you color your hair keep it covered when in the sun. Remember, your conditioner is your best friend."

More Helpful Hints

Jim also set down some helpful tips during his rap on how to keep a 'fro' in good condition.

1. Set hair in pincurls after shampooing and condition for a great afro.

2. For a 'long bush' braid hair EVERY night and lubricate scalp every other night and brush hair vigorously ever night to keep hair stimulated and free from excess oil buildup.

3. Remember to rub your hair with a hot towel to freshen it.

4. For a 'short afro' brush hair vigorously to release all tangles before picking it into style.

Note To Wig Wearers

An important question we asked Williams, and one we are often asked, is how to care for your hair if you are a constant wig wearer.

"Make sure the wig fits properly around the temple or hair can become damaged. Also, and this is a must, never let hair loose under a wig unless it has been straightened. Always braid natural hair."

Williams' last point to make was literally 'you are what you eat.' Good nutrition plays an important part in how your hair looks. And that goes for your skin, body and disposition as well.

'At Home' Fiesta

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½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
½ cup sugar
1 egg
1¾ cups cake flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
¾ cup milk
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Line bottom of pan with waxed paper. Lightly toss fresh blueberries with 2 tablespoons flour. In a mixing bowl cream butter; gradually add sugars and beat until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. Sift together flour, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and cinnamon; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with dry ingredients. Stir in blueberries and lemon peel. Turn into pan. Bake 35 to 45 minutes. Cool in pan 45 minutes. Turn onto rack and cool completely. Cut cake in half, frost and fill with Lemon Butter Frosting.

Lemon Butter Frosting

In a small mixing bowl cream ½ cup (1 stick) butter; add 1 cup confectioners sugar and beat thoroughly. Add 1 egg, ⅛ teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons grated lemon peel and 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Add 2 cups confectioners sugar. Beat until smooth.

DAWN Quiz

1. Who was the first black heavyweight boxer of the 19th Century?

2. Name the first person to receive the celebrated Spingarn Medal awarded annually by the NAACP?

Answers

1. Tom Molineaux. He fought all the great fighters in his day in England and on the continent.

2. Dr. Ernest E. Just of the Howard University School of Medicine in 1915 for distinguished research in biology.

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