Fly Away Hair

The primary cause of fly away hair is damage to the outer cuticles of the hair.

Hair forms deep within the hair follicle where the build-up of soft keratin cells form to produce a hair. During this process, the keratin cells are pushed up to the surface, these approach the surface, they harden (keratinisation), producing hair. This hair has a strong over lapping outer protective layer, which is called the cuticle. There may be from seven to fourteen layers, depending on the type of hair. The cuticles protect the inner structure of the hair - the cortex, the medulla - helping them retain moisture. Moisture is essential to the elasticity of the hair and this is important as hair is hydroscopic (water loving).

Hairs on the head are referred to as terminal hairs. These terminal hairs have a life span ranging from five to eleven years and this lifespan is determined when the baby is forming in the womb. Each hair strand is made up of many components, some of which have negative and some positive charges. Damage to the cuticles can lead to an imbalance between these charges, a loss of negative electrons and a build-up of static electricity, causing hair to become attracted to nylon combs and brushes and even your hand, and therefore difficult to manage.

Damage to the cuticles

This damage can occur when the hair has been subjected to prolonged and excessive use of electrical straighteners, curling irons, chemicals, and even brushing and combing. The overuse of electrical equipment such as straighteners or curling irons removes the water content from within the hair shaft. This removes the ability of the hair to have elasticity and so becomes fly away. When it comes to combing, many people drag the comb from scalp to ends which over stretches the hair and damages the outer layer.

Incorrect use of chemicals or over-frequent use can also cause damage. This includes applying tints or bleaching repeatedly to the entire hair length, when you should only be having the root section treated.

Over stretching of the hair can also remove or push the cuticles out of alignment, such as when hair is worn for a long period very tightly in pony tails or cane rows. Traction can also occur with prolonged wearing of hair extensions, braids and weaves.

Even drying your hair too vigorously with a towel, may cause static while correct use of a hair dryer may avoid this.

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Published - May 2020

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Shampoos and Conditioners

The correct use of appropriate shampoo and conditioner can help reduce the experience of static. Shampoos and conditioners have a negative charge and are attracted to the positive charges in the hair. Using a rich moisturising shampoo, gently apply a small amount to wet hair. Whilst working the shampoo through the hair remember to gently work on the scalp. This should be repeated to make sure your hair and scalp is free from any previous styling products, dirt and any build-up of loose scale.

After thoroughly cleansing and rinsing the hair, then coat hair in a, rich moisturising conditioner, which adheres to the damaged areas of the hair cuticles. After rinsing off the excess and gently blotting with a towel, remove excess moisture, then spray a light leave -in- conditioner.

Dressing aids

Applying any styling aid, such as mousses, gels, thermal protectants, waxes or hairsprays, will help coat the surface of the hair temporarily, sealing in moisture.

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