



The Most Extensive, Detailed Guide, on How to Grow Natural Hair That Exists Today!

Lately, I've been writing more about growing long hair, but there appears to be a group of people potentially looking for short cuts or tips that will improve their rate of hair growth.

I have been studying natural hair and hair growth techniques day and night for the past several years. In this eBook, I'm going to provide some of the information that I have about growing longer hair into a fairly comprehensive article on the topic.

If you're looking to **grow long hair**, this is one of the most important articles that you will ever read.

Not only will you learn more about hair growth, but I will also reveal very specific reasons why you might be struggling with your hair growth. Here is an overview of what I will cover in this article:

- The **missing** phase of the hair growth cycle
- Why taking biotin is completely **unnecessary** for most naturals

- How the hair on your arms and legs knows when to stop growing
- 8 food types that you should include in your diet
- The real role of water in natural hair care
- Why you have to be careful when adding trimming to your natural hair regimen
- The **secret** combing method that helps you retain length
- Forget the updos, let's really talk about what protective styling means

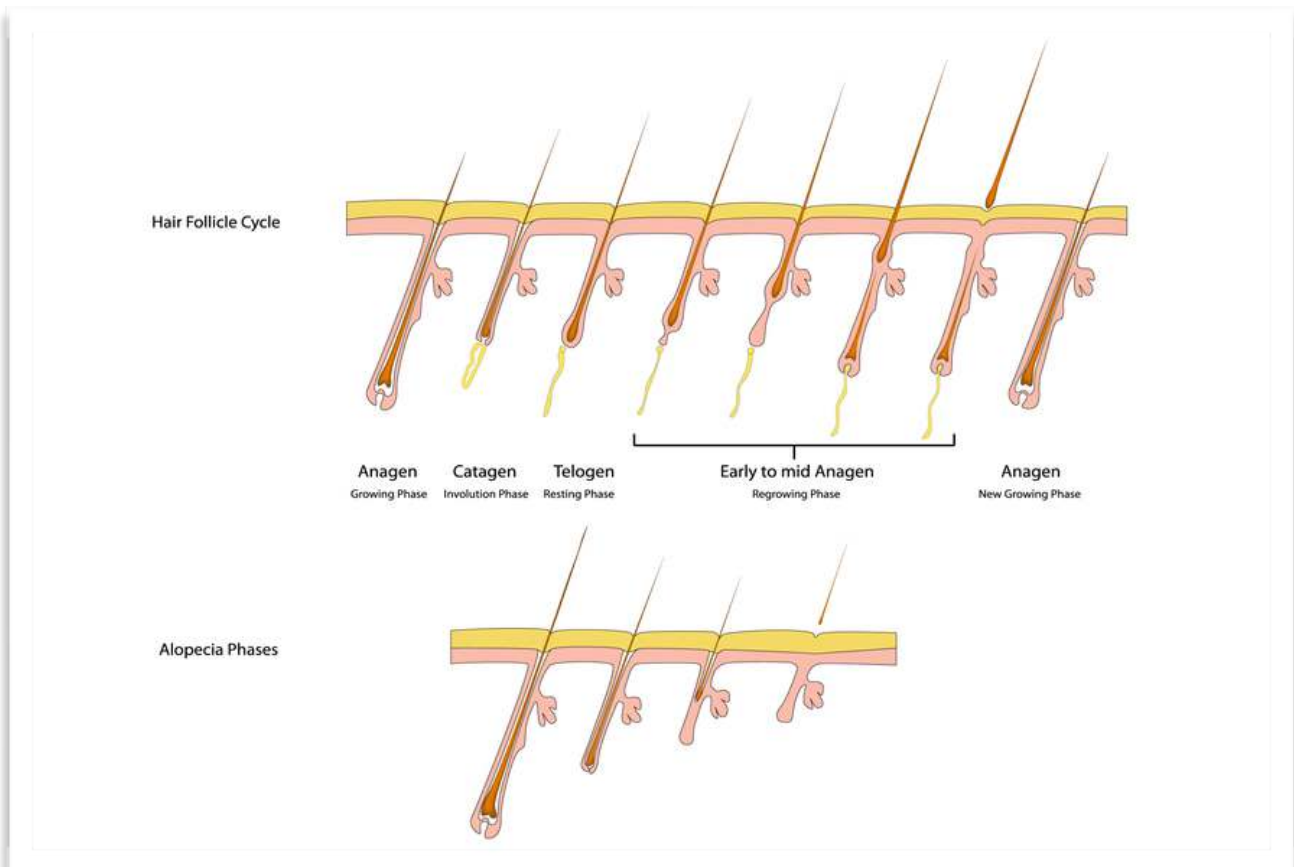
Overview

It's only natural for people to wish that their hair would grow faster. After all, we are the "microwave generation" - that is a group of people that are accustomed to nearly immediate gratification. We don't write letters very often, because email is immediate. We no longer go to the local library, because Google and Bing are only a few clicks away.

Most of the movie retailers (like Blockbuster) have either completely changed their business model or gone out of business, because people would rather watch movies on demand immediately. The microwave generation is generally impatient. Sometimes we even find ourselves in front of the microwave wondering why it's taking so long to cook that Lean Cuisine.

This is especially true for women who like to change their hair style(s) often or who are unhappy with their current short haircut. Alright, enough with the introduction, here are the main things that you need to know about how to grow natural hair:

The Hair Growth Process



Hair growth is about time, but not only about time. There are numerous factors that determine the rate of hair growth, but the one that is most important is time. There simply is no substitute for just letting your hair grow.

There are things that can be done to encourage and enhance the growing process, but nothing is more of a factor than the passage of time. Hair growth is a process; and for your hair to be healthy and look its best, that process must be carried out in full and that process requires time.

The average person's hair grows about 1/2 inch a month or approximately six inches per year. Some ethnic groups have a tendency to be above or below the mean; but since the world has become such a melting pot and considering the theory of miscegenation, I typically don't dive into norms related to various ethnic groups since the norms are so difficult to apply. Frankly, these differences are not enormous and can sometimes be completely erased by genetic factors.

Some people just naturally have hair that grows faster or slower than others. The good news is that regardless of your natural rate of hair growth, your hair is always in the process of growing on a 24 hour basis. Hair growth tends to follow a pattern. Most of the time when growing out your natural hair you will notice an increase in your hair's thickness before you notice much increase in length.

Beware of comparing the characteristics of your own hair growth to others, as what is normal for one person may not be normal for you. It is also worth mentioning that you are not always the best judge of how fast and how well your hair is growing, because of your over familiarity with it. You look at your hair and study it everyday, which can make it difficult to appreciate subtle changes that others who see you less frequently will notice immediately. Chances are your hair is actually growing faster than you realize.

I have written extensively on hair growth cycles previously, so I will only briefly cover growth cycles within this article. In my previous article, I discussed the three common hair growth cycles - anagen (growth) , catagen (regression) and telogen (rest). For years, the shedding function of the growth cycle has been thought to be a part of the telogen phase.

While reporting it this way is considered accurate (see the graphic above), according to the [Journal of Investigative Dermatology](#), exogen (shedding) is the "official" name for the shedding phase of the growth cycle. To be completely accurate, shedding occurs throughout the hair growth cycle.

Should You Take Biotin?

Now, the reason why [taking biotin](#) is considered unnecessary: [The Institute of Medicine](#), which is a national agency that is responsible for setting daily requirements for nutrition values, recommends that an individual intake only 30 micrograms of biotin per day. They haven't "recommended" a safe upper limit for biotin intake.

While it's true that many naturals have taken high doses of biotin without any major adverse effects, there are many misconceptions about the vitamin. The body doesn't absorb excessive amounts of biotin, so increasing your intake is likely worthless.

Biotin is a water-soluble vitamin, this means that excess biotin will not be absorbed and your body will flush it naturally. The key takeaway is that we don't recommend taking any dietary supplements (including Biotin) unless you receive prior approval from a medical professional.

Dealing With Terminal Length

A common concern of those wondering how to grow natural hair is the concept of "terminal length", which is the notion that some people's hair can only grow so long and no further. This has less to do with genetics than it does with taking proper care of your hair.

As your hair gets longer it can have a tendency to break, unless you make an effort to practice **protective styling**, control your hair's exposure to extreme heat, and make sure that your hair has the protein and moisture it needs. It's likely fair to characterize "terminal length" in the following manner: inappropriate hair care is likely more of a factor for any limited growth that you're experiencing, than a natural limitation on your ability to grow long hair.

Yet, no matter what you do, there is no way to prevent the hair growth cycle from placing some limitations on growth. Every individual hair on your head has a growing period after which it will fall out and be replaced by a new strand of hair. Fortunately the rate at which this process takes place is different for each hair, so the numerous hair strands on your head are never simultaneously in the process of falling out and being replaced all at the same time. Obviously, that would be terrible if all your hair shed at once. You would be confronted throughout your life with recurring periods of complete baldness (not that there is anything wrong with that).

A typical hair has a "life" of between two and six years. Therefore one of the barriers of growing hair fast is where your old or damaged hairs are in the growth cycle. It may be necessary in order to reach yourself hair growth goals for your damaged hair to reach its telogen phase and fall out. As healthy new hair grows in and you begin to take care of it properly, you should be able to achieve greater length retention.

Obviously, this process takes time (there is that word again), but it is necessary if you are to achieve your hair length goals. There is simply no substitute for good hair care over an extended period of time, if you plan to grow long hair.

Despite genetically determined growth and resting phases for the hair, most people can successfully get their hair to middle back length. It would be uncommon to have a maximum hair growing length of less than a foot. These measures are based on the same natural restrictions on hair growth that prevent our eyelashes or the hair follicles on your arms from growing too long. Many people point to dreadlocks as evidence of unlimited hair growth but that is misleading since dreadlocks are formed by matting hair that would otherwise have split or fallen out.

If we assume that everything is optimal for growing your hair in terms of genetics and quality hair care, here is a guide on how long it should take to reach specific hair length goals: Armed with the information that the average growth rate is 1/2 inch per month, if you're retaining

significantly less than an average of 1/2 inch, there might be an opportunity to dig into your hair regimen and make sure that you're meeting the needs of your hair.

Starting a **natural hair journal** can help you quickly learn more about the wants and needs of your hair. Regardless of what your hair goals are (armpit length, bra strap length, or some other length) the key to reaching these lengths in the fastest way possible is to practice excellent hair care. Here are the best ways for you to maximize your growth rate:

Eat a Healthy Diet



Just like the rest of your body, your hair and the way it looks and grows is dependent on your overall health. Having the right nutrients in your body will determine how fast and how well your hair grows.

Hair is heavily dependent on protein so make sure you get enough of it through the foods you eat - examples include steak, fish, chicken, eggs, tofu, legumes and beans. Fruits and vegetables also contain nutrients that encourage hair growth so eat plenty of those as well.

Vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin and biotin are vitamins that many people believe will lead to healthier hair and increase your hair growth potential. So, **taking a multivitamin supplement**

that contains these vitamins is the best approach (if you decide to take an oral supplement). Again, be sure to check with your medical doctor before taking oral supplements.

I have touched on this briefly, but here is another quick note about biotin. Scientific data doesn't support the claim that biotin improves hair growth. Regardless of this fact, biotin deficiencies are extremely rare. The chance that your body doesn't have the proper amount of biotin already is very slim, since intestinal bacteria produces biotin in excess of the body's daily needs.

For more specifics about why we don't recommend taking biotin supplements, check out this article: [Does Taking Biotin For Hair Growth Really Work?](#)

Also, you must avoid activities or practices that negate the beneficial effects of eating a healthy diet, such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and other unhealthy practices. So, establish a healthy, balanced eating plan. It's generally considered best practice if you plan your meals for maybe a week at a time. This will allow you to make sure that you have the proper ingredients that you need to make the meals.

Check with your doctor first and if necessary, you can incorporate an over the counter multivitamin into your daily routine. I don't recommend taking biotin, unless it's specifically suggested by a medical professional. Otherwise, you're likely just wasting money.

Here are 8 food types that I recommend incorporating into your diet:

No. 1: Want to reduce the price of "gas" and add protein to your diet? Then, eat your beans. Maybe the gas comment was unnecessary, but you get the point. Beans are a great source of protein and other nutrients.

No. 2: Asparagus and spinach, anyone? What about broccoli? Surely you can find a few vitamin-packed dark green veggies to incorporate into your diet.

No. 3: Nuts aren't just for squirrels and psychiatrists. Get it? Nevermind. Some nuts are thought to benefit the scalp, like brazil nuts, while others are great sources of zinc and other nutrients. According to many experts, for example [Columbia University Health Services](#), proper zinc intake can mitigate excessive hair shedding. Zinc can be obtained through many other foods besides nuts, like meats and cheese as well.

No. 4: What's your favorite egg dish? I really like a good frittata or quiche, while my six year-old daughter prefers her eggs lightly scrambled (no cheese). Regardless of how you prefer your eggs, they provide a great source of protein for your diet and are always a staple in my meal plan.

No. 5: Vitamin A promotes a healthy scalp, so look for foods packed with this vitamin. How about raw carrots? Sounds good.

No. 6: Yogurt, milk, and even cottage cheese are great options to incorporate into your diet. They provide good sources of calcium, protein, and other nutrients. Wait! Is it too late to remove cottage cheese? I can't stand the way that stuff looks.

No. 7: Whole grains can add a nice dose of zinc, iron, and B vitamins to your diet. I would recommend adding a few whole grain foods to your diet - like whole grain bread, cereal, and rice.

No. 8: Finally, chicken, turkey, lean-beef, and salmon provide high-quality sources of protein – in addition to other nutrients.

Bonus Tip: While it's true that drinking water doesn't directly lead to increased hair growth, being properly hydrated is an important factor in your ability to retain length. Several different areas of the body are made up of mostly water. When your body is dehydrated, the critical areas of your body that need water for your survival will receive water first. As you might have imagined, your hair isn't at the top of the list. So, your hair needs water - inside and outside.

Scalp Care, Protective Styling & Trimming

Everything starts with a healthy scalp. Once your hair begins to grow from your scalp, it's your job to protect it. Your scalp is the place on your head where your hair is actually growing from, so it shouldn't be surprising that proper scalp care is essential to encouraging healthy hair growth.

Faster hair growth is partly a factor of good blood circulation, which can be stimulated by a daily scalp massage. It doesn't have to be time consuming, just use your fingers to massage your scalp in a circular motion for about five minutes a day. If you like you can also use natural massaging oils such as coconut oil. Other important factors to ensuring that you have a healthy scalp include avoiding product build-up, using gentle products, avoiding extreme heat and eating balanced diet.

Protective Styling

Protective styling is also really important. When I talk about **protective styling**, I'm not specifically referring to protective hairstyles, which are different really. Wearing updos and french rolls are all good and beneficial, but it's not really what I had in mind.

The process of protective styling that I'm referring to is really about making sure that you're constantly doing things that protect your hair from damage. So, it's more so about the process used to style your hair and not the actual style that you decide to wear. Here is an example, if you're going to utilize heat on your hair, there are precautions that you need to take in order to mitigate the possibility of incurring heat damage.

One thing you might do is use a heat protectant, but to really **mitigate heat damage** there are many other things that you will want to consider. This is starting to sound cliché, because I've said it a lot recently, but it's really about increasing the number of good things that you do for your hair and eliminating the bad things.

The ends of your hair are the oldest parts of the hair. You have to work to preserve the ends if you really want long hair. So, one of the primary keys to getting long hair is the concept of length retention. If you don't handle your hair with care, it will be more prone to break and you will **"struggle to grow long hair"**. Every single time you touch your hair it becomes weaker -

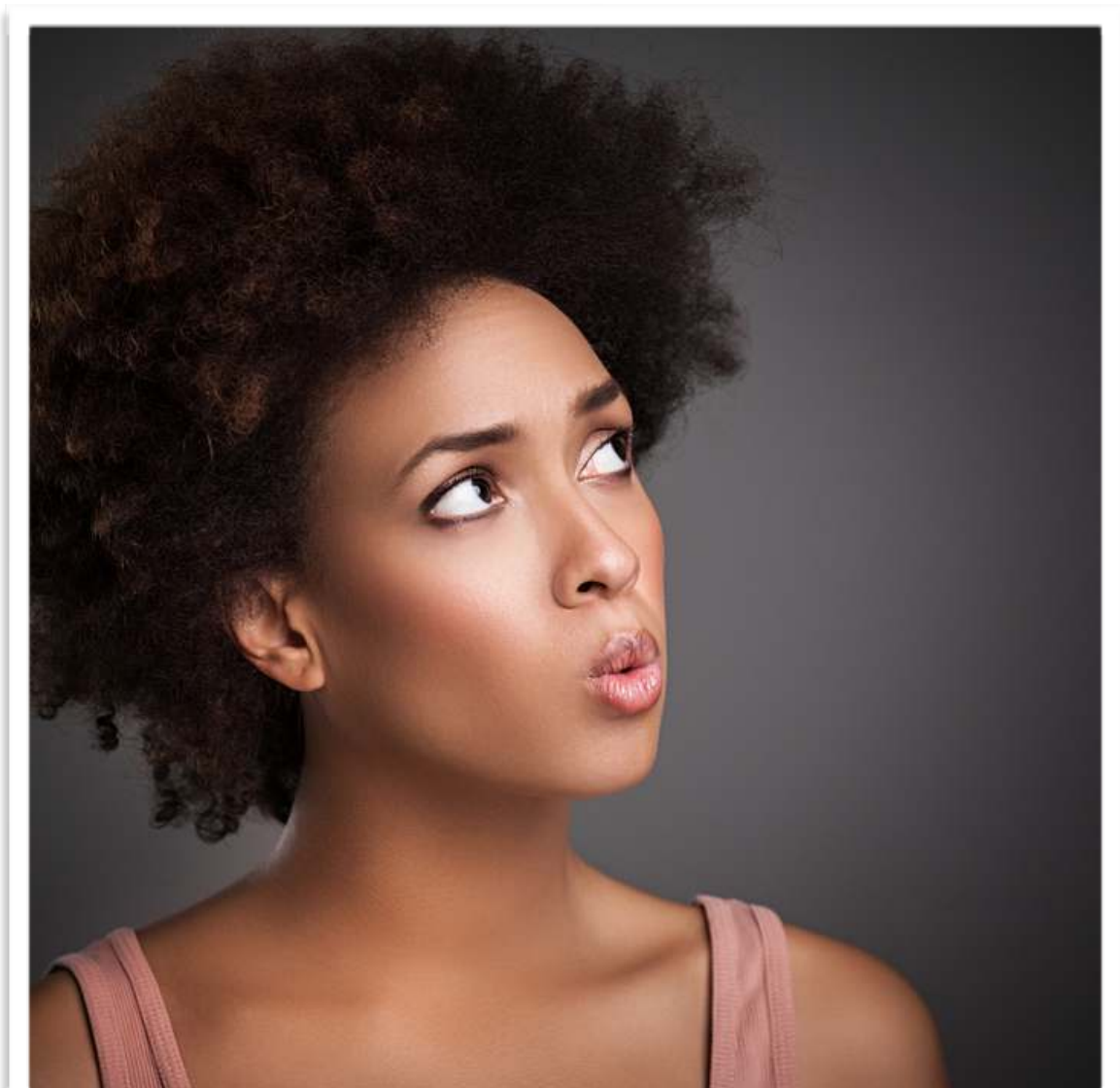
generally speaking. That's the reason that many women preach low manipulation styles (i.e., protective hairstyles) and care.

Finally, Let's Talk About Hair Trimming

Only trim your hair when necessary. Please **do not trim your hair monthly** or at any specific interval. This is almost always extremely bad advice. Trimming your hair does not make it grow, it only makes it shorter.

Plus, if you consider that the average growth rate for hair is approximately 1/2 inch per month, then you're likely to cut most (or all) of your new growth off if you trim every month. I do suggest that you watch for split ends and carefully trim them away as needed. This will ultimately mitigate the possibility of split-ends causing problems for hair growth goals.

Also, trimming your hair when it's dry is the safest approach due to various things - but just know that it's likely to be less damaging to the hair strands.



The Secret Combing Method That Can Help You Retain Length

There are some hairstyles that you could wear that don't require much manipulation/combing, but many hairstyles require you to comb your hair more often. Just keep in mind that combing improperly can cause significant damage to your hair. Don't comb or brush your hair more than you have to and always make sure your combs are clean. Dirt, chemicals, and oils that accumulate on dirty combs can also damage your hair.

Use wide toothed combs that do not yank on your hair or pull out strands of hair when combing. Be gentle with your hair when you comb it. Oh yeah, the secret method of combing that can help you retain length is finger combing. Finger combing isn't **really** a "secret" combing method, but it works well for many women with natural hair.

Some Final Thoughts On How to Grow Natural Hair

There is a direct correlation between your overall health and the health of your hair. Yet sometimes treating various illnesses with medications can influence how your hair looks and how fast it grows, even resulting in thinning hair and [hair loss](#).

The list of medicines that can negatively affect your hair is extensive. If you think you're taking medicines that might be impacting your hair growth, be sure to discuss with your doctor your desire to maximize hair growth and whether any medications you are taking will affect your hair's growth rate.

Sometimes your doctor can recommend a different prescription that will not have a negative impact on your rate of hair growth. Finally, it's important to note, how well you take care of your hair will have more to do with your rate of hair growth and length retention than anything else.

Keep yourself healthy by eating right. Don't damage your hair with exotic treatments or harsh hair care products. Don't expose your hair to extreme heat or potentially harsh chemicals/elements. Comb carefully and be aware of how medications can influence hair growth. After reading this article, if you have any questions about **how to grow natural hair**, please ask them in the comment section.