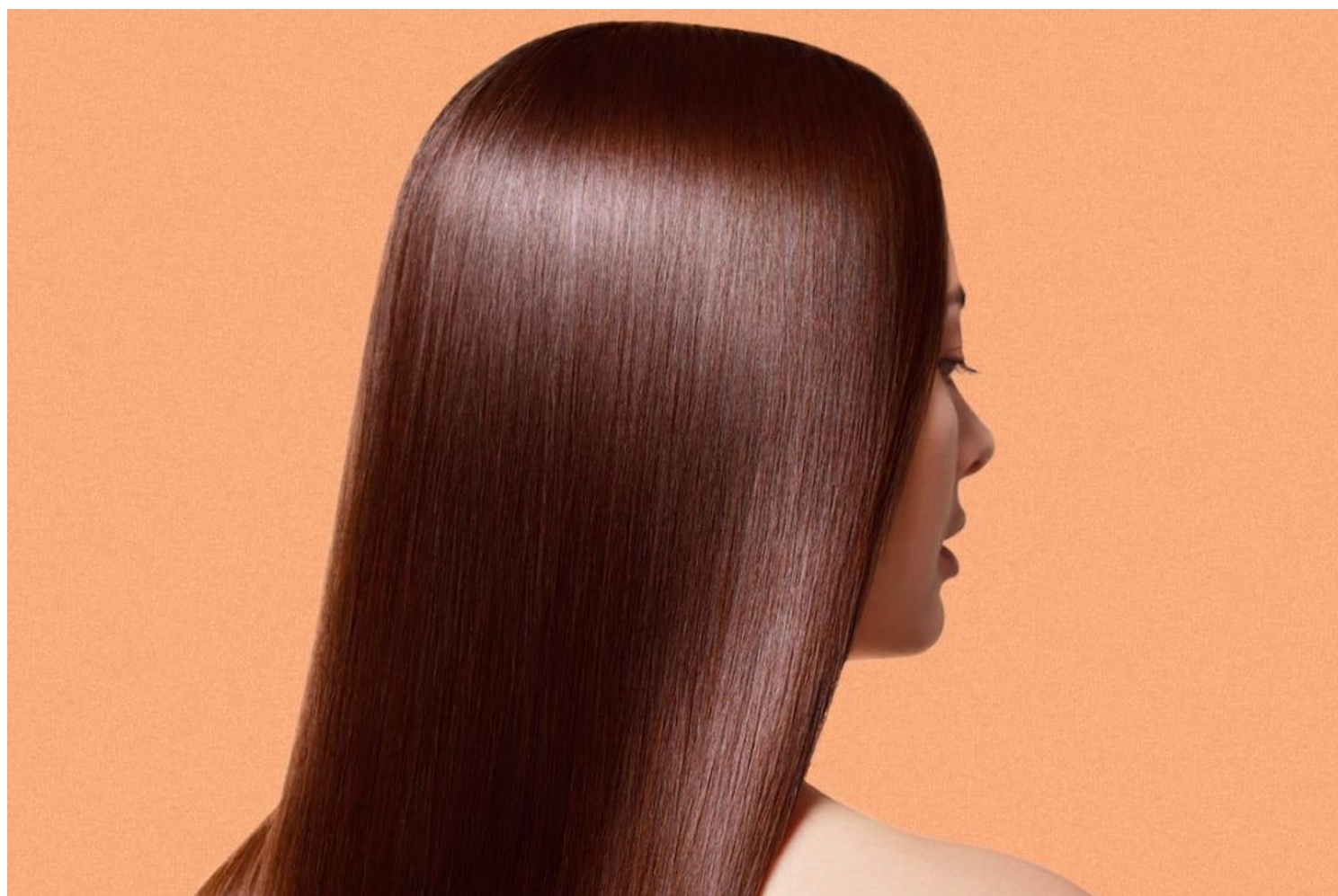


Dealing With Dull, Winter Hair? 9 Ingredients To Spring Strands Back To Life



mbg Associate Editor
By Jamie Schneider ⓘ



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We don't need to tell you that frigid temperatures can wreak havoc on your hair. A lack of moisture in the air, plus physical wear and tear (like from hats and over-brushing), can equal dry, brittle strands—which just so happen to lack luster. So if you've recently looked in the mirror and thought, *My hair looks so dull right now*, you're in company.

But as the weather thaws, you may hope to emerge from your winter's den with a high-gloss, silky sheen. We're right there with you: Below, find the best (and underrated) ingredients to refresh dull tresses, just in time to tiptoe into spring:

1. Aloe vera

Let's kick off with aloe vera, the hero hydrating ingredient. Brimming with water, vitamins, minerals, and amino acids, it's an incredibly moisturizing ingredient—and you can't achieve shiny hair without moisture. "Studies have focused on skin benefits primarily, but one can make some extrapolations to hair given that it is also composed of keratin," board-certified dermatologist Cynthia Bailey, M.D., a diplomate of the American Board of Dermatology, tells us about aloe vera for hair.

Aloe contains seven of the eight amino acids (isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, and valin, in case you're curious), which can "help repair hair damaged by coloring or overdrying," says Gary Goldenberg, M.D., assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York. Dabble with this DIY hair mask to keep strands smooth and shiny.

2. Apple cider vinegar

Quick lesson: When hair becomes damaged, the cuticles lift. Says hairstylist Josh Rosebrook: "The cuticle raises, chips, becomes fragile, easily tangled, and loses moisture, luster, and the shine that's created when the cuticle is flat and smooth." That said, sealing down the cuticles is key for keeping the hair silky and frizz-free.

Enter apple cider vinegar: The acidic solution dials the pH down, which seals the cuticle shut—and hello, glossy strands. You can find ACV in a plethora of hair care products, or you can concoct your own rinse at home.

3. Hyaluronic acid

Ah, the beloved HA: the poster child for humectants, many would say, as it helps pull in and hold water. While much of the hype centers around skin care, those same properties can carry over to hair care as well, pulling water from the air and delivering it to thirsty hair fibers. You can find it in plenty of hydrating formulas, like this hair-strengthening conditioner and this frizz-control serum.

4. Potato flour

Hear us out: Potatoes are rich in vitamins and minerals, like vitamin B, C, and iron—all of which can help strengthen those strands. It's been used for ages in Ayurvedic medicine as a way to support healthy hair growth.

Try this potato flour shampoo recipe from celebrity hairstylist and Beachwaver tool creator Sarah Potempa: Combine ¼ cup of potato flour and 2 cups of water into a saucepan on low heat, letting it warm for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and add 2 teaspoons of apple cider vinegar (another helpful ingredient for shiny hair). Let it cool, pour into a container, and apply on the scalp and lengths of your hair when shampooing.

5. Yogurt

For curls in particular, plain yogurt makes a stellar hair mask. The natural lactic acid in yogurt acts as a humectant (aka, it's able to pull in water from the environment), which can help hair retain moisture. It's the easiest recipe: Apply plain yogurt all over your hair, and let it sit for a minimum of 20 minutes before shampooing.

6. Avocado oil

Oils are star players for healthy, shiny hair, but a few especially take the cake. Such is the case with avocado oil: "Avocado oil is extremely rich in oleic acid and monounsaturated fats, making it one of few oils that can actually penetrate the hair shaft and moisturize your hair rather than sitting on top and coating your hair," says Muhga Eltigani, founder of NaturAll Club, about the famed oil. "These fats also strengthen the hair shaft and help prevent breakage." Not to mention, avocado oil is chock-full of antioxidants, like vitamins A, D, and E.

Needless to say, it's worth seeking out avo in your hair care products, or you can always massage some of the pure oil into the strands.

7. Argan oil

Another noteworthy oil, argan oil is beloved for high-gloss shine. It's commonly referred to as "liquid gold," as 99% of the stuff is made up of triglycerides, or essential fatty acids. "It's great for many conditions, especially dry, damaged hair because its trove of fatty acids locks moisture into the hair follicle," says Bindiya Gandhi, M.D.

You'll find it sprinkled within a bunch of nourishing hair oils, or you can use 100% pure argan oil as a hair mask or conditioning treatment.

8. Honey

We cannot sing the praises of honey enough: Not only does the amber bee sap have anti-inflammatory properties, but it also acts as a humectant (again, this means it can attract water from the air) and can help your hair and scalp retain moisture. It's no wonder you can find honey in a variety of hair care products, from shampoos to leave-ins to stylers. And, of course, it shines all on its own as a healthy hair mask, which you can DIY here.

9. Eggs

Eggs contain a handful of amino acids to help moisturize the strands, as well as protein to support the hair structure. Specifically, egg yolks are naturally rich in lecithin, a lipid commonly used in market conditioners (you can also extract it from sunflower or soy) for its emollient properties.

To make a hair-healthy mask, whisk up an egg (or two, for longer hair) and slather on until your tresses are covered. Leave for 20 to 30 minutes and rinse with cool water before shampooing. You might want to stick to this treatment once a month, though, since too much protein can potentially damage the hair.

The takeaway.

Dull hair is a winter hair care woe, no doubt, but these ingredients can help increase the shine. Look for them in products, or attempt the DIY route at home, and your tresses will spring back to life. You know, just like the weather.