

Stevia And Hair Regrowth: What A New Study Uncovered

🕒 3 min read

- *Researchers discovered that adding one common compound to topically-applied minoxidil caused hair to regrow in 67.5% of the treated areas.*
- *The research was conducted on rodents in a laboratory, and scientists used a microneedling technique to help the solution penetrate better.*
- *Here, dermatologists sound off on other research-proven strategies for battling hair loss.*

When you're dealing with [hair loss](#), you're looking for [treatments that work](#). Many people turn to tried-and-true medications, like minoxidil, the active ingredient in products like Rogaine. Despite a recent connection to [certain health risks](#), many of these solutions are relatively inexpensive and available over-the-counter—a no-brainer.

Now, researchers are exploring a way to make minoxidil more effective for hair loss—and it involves stevia. You're probably familiar with stevia as a sweetener, and this hair loss hack actually repurposes it. It specifically uses the sweetener stevioside, which is derived from the stevia plant, to help stimulate hair growth. The research on this is still in its infancy, and this particular study was done on mice, not humans. But the findings are impressive enough that they're already getting plenty of attention.

Meet the experts: [Gary Goldenberg](#), MD, is an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital; [Ife J.](#)

[Rodney](#), MD, is the founding director of Eternal Dermatology + Aesthetics.

So, what's the link between stevia and hair growth? Here's the deal.

What did the study find?

[For the study](#), researchers combined stevioside with microneedle patches, which use tiny microneedles to help deliver an active ingredient—in this case, minoxidil—into the skin. The researchers tested this in mice that had been genetically engineered to lose their hair and discovered that more of the minoxidil made it into the skin and more hair grew back in the mice that used the patches with stevioside compared to those that just received minoxidil.

The researchers also found that the stevioside patches caused the mice to regrow hair across 67.5 percent of the treatment area with hair after 35 days. Mice with different treatment options didn't see as big of an impact, though.

Why might stevia help with hair growth?

That's still being explored, but the researchers have a theory: Stevioside helps minoxidil dissolve better in water and, in theory, that can help more minoxidil get under the skin and into the hair follicles to push for more growth. In essence, the stevioside "acts as a natural absorption enhancer," explains [Gary Goldenberg](#), MD, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital. "Minoxidil has limited skin permeability, which restricts its effectiveness in traditional applications," he continues. But minoxidil in dissolving microneedles that are enhanced with something like stevioside can bypass your skin's resistance to support more minoxidil penetration and, hopefully, create more of an impact, he says.

Of course, it's important to point out that more research is needed. "I do microneedling in combination with minoxidil to improve efficacy in my practice," says [Ife J. Rodney](#), MD, founding director of Eternal

Dermatology + Aesthetics. “But we need controlled trials for the efficacy with adding stevioside and also the safety. We don’t know what the potential side effects could look like.”

Don't put stevia directly on your scalp.

If you have stevia and minoxidil at home, it’s tempting to want to DIY. But Dr. Goldenberg says that’s unlikely to help. “Without the microneedling, applying stevia onto your scalp won’t help much,” he says. “Minoxidil would still have the same absorption issue as using it alone.”

It’s best to see a dermatologist if you’re dealing with hair loss, Rodney says. “Minoxidil is very useful for some types of hair loss and it’s something you can use at home while you wait to get into the dermatologist’s office,” she says. “But there are many different types of hair loss with different causes and treatments. Depending on the cause of your hair loss, minoxidil may not be the specific or only answer.” Some stand-by treatments dermatologists consistently recommend are here:

Proven Ways To Battle Hair Loss At Home





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Dandruff shampoo helps to quell inflammation and scalp yeast at bay—and may help improve hair loss too.

Your dermatologist can also explore a range of treatment options beyond minoxidil—topical and oral medications, red light therapy, platelet rich plasma, and even hair transplants, Goldenberg says. “A combination of these treatments has worked best for my patients,” he says.



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Korin Miller is a freelance writer specializing in general wellness, sexual health and relationships, and lifestyle trends, with work appearing in Men's Health, Women's Health, Self, Glamour, and more. She has a master's degree from American University, lives by the beach, and hopes to own a teacup pig and taco truck one day.



Reviewed by [Brian Underwood](#)

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Brian Underwood is beauty director at Women's Health, where he oversees content strategy for the brand across all platforms, including digital, print, and social. Underwood previously served as beauty and wellness director at Oprah Daily and O, The Oprah Magazine. During his tenure leading beauty content for the Oprah brand at Hearst, stories Underwood commissioned were awarded the Skin Cancer Foundation Media Award and a Fragrance Award for Editorial Excellence (his second). He was the launch Beauty Director of Dr. Oz THE GOOD LIFE, and has held additional editorial positions at Fitness, Organic Style, Good Housekeeping, Life & Style Weekly, and Woman's Day and has written for Self, Shape, Seventeen, Redbook, Cosmopolitan, and many more. Underwood previously served on the Skin Cancer Foundation's gala committee and as partnerships director of the Trans Beauty Clinic, a New York-based charitable organization that provided beauty services and workshops to the city's trans community.

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