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By Shannon Zitz

Experts Say These 16 Foods Can Support Hair Growth Naturally



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It's easy to take your hair for granted until it starts growing at a snail's pace or shedding. While there are plenty of treatments out there to boost your hair, loading your plate with the best foods for hair growth can help, too.

“Your hair’s health is built from the nutrients you eat, so if your diet is lacking the proper nutrients it needs, it shows,” says [Asmi Berry, D.O., F.A.A.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at BHSkin Dermatology in Los Angeles. [Gary Goldenberg, M.D.](#), a board-certified dermatologist practicing in New York City, agrees. “Start with a nutrient-rich diet emphasizing whole foods like lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats,” he says.

Meet the Experts: [Asmi Berry, D.O., F.A.A.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at BHSkin Dermatology in Los Angeles; Keri Gans, M.S., R.D., registered dietitian and author of *The Small Change Diet*; [Melissa Prest, D.C.N., R.D.N.](#), national media spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and member of the [Prevention Medical Review Board](#); [Gary Goldenberg, M.D.](#), a board-certified dermatologist practicing in New York City.

If you want to get more specific, the three most important vitamins for healthy hair growth are vitamins A, C, and B7 (Biotin), says [Melissa Prest, D.C.N., R.D.N.](#), national media spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and member of the [Prevention Medical Review Board](#).

“[Vitamin A](#) helps hair grow and is used to produce an oil called sebum, which moisturizes the hair and scalp. [Vitamin C](#) is used to make collagen, which is important to the production of keratin. [Biotin](#) is a B vitamin that can help support hair growth,” she explains.

Protein is a crucial nutrient to focus on, too. “Protein is key because hair is mostly made of keratin, a protein. If you are not getting enough, hair growth slows down, strands weaken, and shedding increases,” Dr. Berry says.

If you're struggling with hair growth, it's worth consulting with a board-certified dermatologist to see what could be going on. But while you're waiting for an appointment, it doesn't hurt to take a closer look at your diet to see if you could make adjustments to support your hair health.

So, which foods are helpful for hair growth? These nutrient-rich options can help you reach your healthy hair goals, according to doctors and nutritionists.

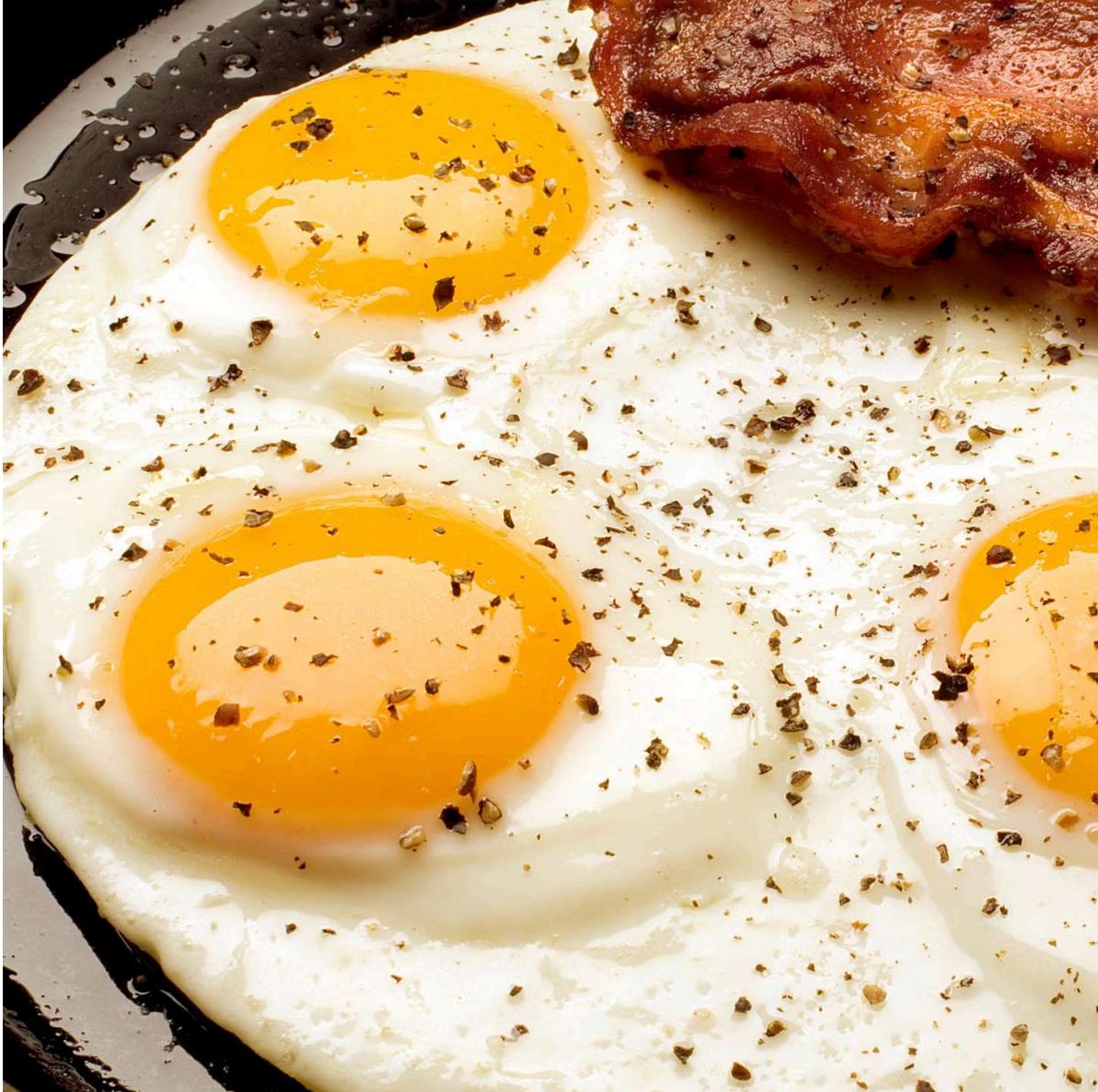


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1

Strawberries

Strawberries are an excellent source of **vitamin C**, says Keri Gans, M.S., R.D., registered dietitian and author of *The Small Change Diet*. “Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant with anti-inflammatory properties that may help increase blood flow through our body, including our scalp, and hair follicles are stimulated—supporting the growth of our hair,” she explains.



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2

Egg yolks

Egg yolks are a good source of **biotin**, which has long been associated with hair growth, says Gans. “Specifically, biotin helps produce keratin, a

naturally occurring protein in your body that helps form hair,” she explains.



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3

Lentils

Lentils are a good source of **iron**. Iron helps to transport oxygen to the cells in our body which may promote hair growth, says Gans. “When someone is iron deficient, also known as anemic, it is not uncommon to see hair loss,” she adds.



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4

Fatty fish

Fatty fish (ie. salmon, herring, mackerel) are good sources of **omega-3 fatty acids**, says Dr. Berry, “which reduce scalp inflammation and help with hydration and shine.” Fatty fish are also **protein-rich** and contain **selenium, and vitamins B and D**. Selenium, a trace mineral, helps regulate thyroid hormone levels and plays a role in limiting oxidative stress on the hair follicle while vitamin D “has been linked to new hair follicle stimulation,” adds Dr. Berry, noting that those with low levels of vitamin D often struggle with hair thinning.



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5

Spinach

Spinach is a leafy green vegetable that is a good source of **iron, vitamin A, folate, and vitamin C**. Iron “helps carry oxygen to hair follicles,” explains Dr. Berry, who adds that low levels of iron can cause excessive hair shedding. Additionally, folate, a B vitamin, “essential for keratin production and healthy hair growth,” she says.

While vitamin A is important for scalp health, it is important to note that an excess of vitamin A may actually impair hair growth. Some [research](#)

suggests that having more than an average of 1.5 mg (1,500 µg) a day of vitamin A over many years may affect your bones, making them more likely to fracture when you're older, not to mention stunting your hair growth.



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6

Sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes are high in **vitamin A**, **biotin**, and **some vitamin C**, says Prest, all of which are known to boost your hair growth. Plus they are full of flavor and make for a great addition to a well-rounded plate.



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7

Carrots

Carrots are high in **vitamin A** and **vitamin C**, says Prest. Orange foods like sweet potatoes and carrots are also high in carotenoids, which are known to protect against UV damage and help [improve skin](#) elasticity, hydration and texture—win-win for healthy hair and glowing skin!



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8

Broccoli

Broccoli is high in **vitamin A, vitamin C, and biotin**, says Prest. With scalp-boosting vitamins A and C, along with keratin-producing biotin, this combo is sure to support healthy hair growth.



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9

Plain yogurt

Plain yogurt is high in **biotin and vitamin A**, says Prest. Top it with some berries and some nuts and you've got yourself a healthy hair-boosting breakfast!



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10

Red bell peppers

Red bell peppers are high in **vitamin C and vitamin A**, says Prest. With vitamin C's important role in collagen production, and vitamin A's role in sebum production, both vitamins do wonders for your scalp health.



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11

Avocados

It turns out avocado toast or a serving of guacamole might just help you on your hair growth journey. Dr. Berry says this fruit is rich in **biotin and healthy fats**, which are both known to bolster hair growth and contribute to healthier, shinier hair.



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12

Oysters

Oysters are rich in **zinc**, “which helps with tissue repair and prevents hair follicle weakening,” says Dr. Berry. They are also an excellent source of **protein** and contain **vitamin B12**.



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13

Beans

Beans, such as black beans, kidney beans, and garbanzo beans, contain high levels of nutrients like **protein, iron, zinc, biotin, and folate**, which experts have explained are all essential for healthy hair follicles and scalp circulation, and may promote hair growth.



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14

Chicken

Lean meats like chicken supply high-quality protein. “That’s essential for keratin formation, along with iron, which is essential for hair health and growth,” Dr. Goldenberg says. He also points out that iron deficiencies are common, especially in women—and this can lead to hair shedding.



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15

Almonds

These powerhouse nuts are rich in vitamin E, an antioxidant that protects against damage, Dr. Goldenberg says. “They also have biotin to aid keratin production and magnesium to strengthen follicles, promoting faster, healthier growth and reducing breakage,” he adds.



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16

Walnuts

Walnuts are another nut that's great for hair and scalp health. "Walnuts provide omega-3 fatty acids to nourish the scalp, reduce inflammation, and improve circulation," Dr. Goldenberg says. They also contain biotin and antioxidants to help fortify follicles and minimize oxidative stress, supporting thicker, shinier hair, he points out.

Why do some foods impact hair growth?

It all comes down to the nutrients they provide, according to Dr. Goldenberg. “Some foods can support hair growth by providing essential nutrients and vitamins to promote and support hair growth,” he says. He lists off nutrients like biotin, vitamins B12, D, and E, along with minerals such as iron, zinc, and omega-3 fatty acids, as being important for hair growth. These nutrients “play a key role in cell growth, reducing inflammation, and maintaining follicle strength,” Dr. Goldenberg says. “Deficiencies in these can weaken hair, while a nutrient-rich diet helps promote thicker, healthier strands.”

What is the effect of nutritional deficiency on hair?

“When your body is missing key nutrients, it prioritizes essential organs over hair growth. This can lead to hair shedding, brittleness, and slow regrowth,” explains Dr. Berry. “Low iron, protein, or zinc can cause thinning, breakage, and even hair loss conditions, like telogen effluvium. With telogen effluvium, there is excessive hair shedding due to stress or vitamin deficiencies. Once nutrient levels are restored, hair will often grow back.”

How important is hydration?

It’s very important, according to Dr. Goldenberg. “It maintains scalp moisture to prevent dryness and breakage, and enhances overall blood flow for optimal growth, he says. But being chronically dehydrated can do your hair health a disservice. “Dehydration can lead to brittle strands and slower growth, as well as increase inflammation,” Dr. Goldenberg says.

How to grow hair faster

When it comes to growing your hair faster, “eating well is a great start,” says Dr. Berry. “But a holistic approach will help you achieve the best results.” Below, find her top tips for hair growth in addition to a healthy, well-rounded diet.

✓ **Pay close attention to scalp care.** “Regular scalp massages, gentle cleansing, and exfoliation can improve circulation and create a healthier environment for hair growth,” says Dr. Berry. She also recommends using a scalp mask to soothe and nourish the scalp which may boost hair growth by creating an optimal environment for the hair follicles to thrive.

✓ **Manage stress levels.** “Chronic stress pushes hair follicles into the resting phase of hair growth, which can lead to shedding and slow regrowth,” Dr. Berry adds. “I recommend patients try exercise, meditation, and good sleep.”

✓ **Be gentle on your hair.** If your goal is to grow your hair faster, it’s also wise to make an effort to reduce breakage which will help you retain existing length. Dr. Berry advises patients to limit heat and chemical damage from things like excessive heat styling, bleaching, or harsh hair treatments, which can all break and thin the hair. “Always use a [heat protectant](#) spray before styling!” she adds.

✓ **Consider supplements.** While not necessary, “supplements can help too,” Dr. Berry explains. However, it’s important to use these as a part of a healthy diet and always consult your physician before adding one to your daily routine. “I love the hair vitamin [Nutrafol](#),” Dr. Berry says. “It contains collagen and adaptogens, which support hair growth. However, it takes three months before you start seeing results. ”
