

# Naturals in the City

✿ a natural hair meet-up ✿

A series of white dotted lines forming a wavy, horizontal pattern across the middle of the image.

<http://naturalnigerian.com>  
<http://screwyhair.wordpress.com>



# presenters

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## **Sherese Ijewere**

Nutrition Consultant / Caribbean Health Limited  
[www.caribhealthng.com](http://www.caribhealthng.com)

## **Natural Nigerian**

Hair Blogger / [www.naturalnigerian.com](http://www.naturalnigerian.com)

## **Nike Taylor**

Hair Blogger / <http://screwyhair.wordpress.com>

## **Esohe Aighewi**

Hair Blogger / <http://deepbrownkinks.blogspot.com/>

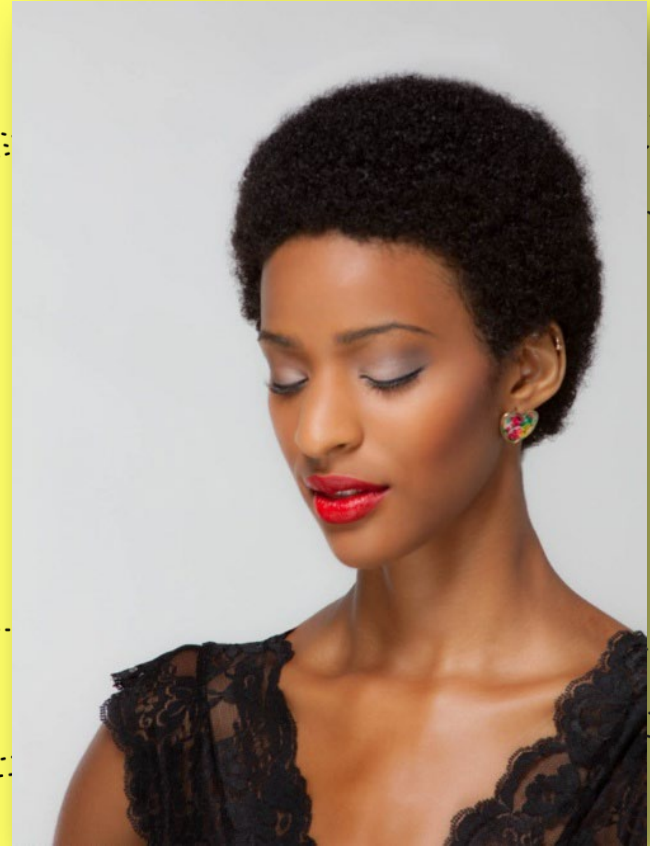
# where we're going

1. My Hair: Getting to Know It / Natural Nigerian
2. Fabulous Hair—from the Inside Out / Sherese Ijewere
3. The Kitchen Beautician / Nike Taylor
4. Finding Stuff in Lagos / Nike Taylor
5. Heart Your Hair (Demo) / Esohe Aighewi
6. Battling the Salon Forces of Evil / Esohe Aighewi
7. Help: My Boss Doesn't Like My Kinks! / Nike Taylor
8. Let's Talk Regimens / Nike Taylor
9. Bad Hair Practices / Natural Nigerian

# how do you see your hair?

- What words pop into your hair when you think of your hair?
- What words do you want to use to describe your hair?
- Are they realistic? (Get real.)

**My Hair:**  
**Getting to Know It**  
**Natural Nigerian**

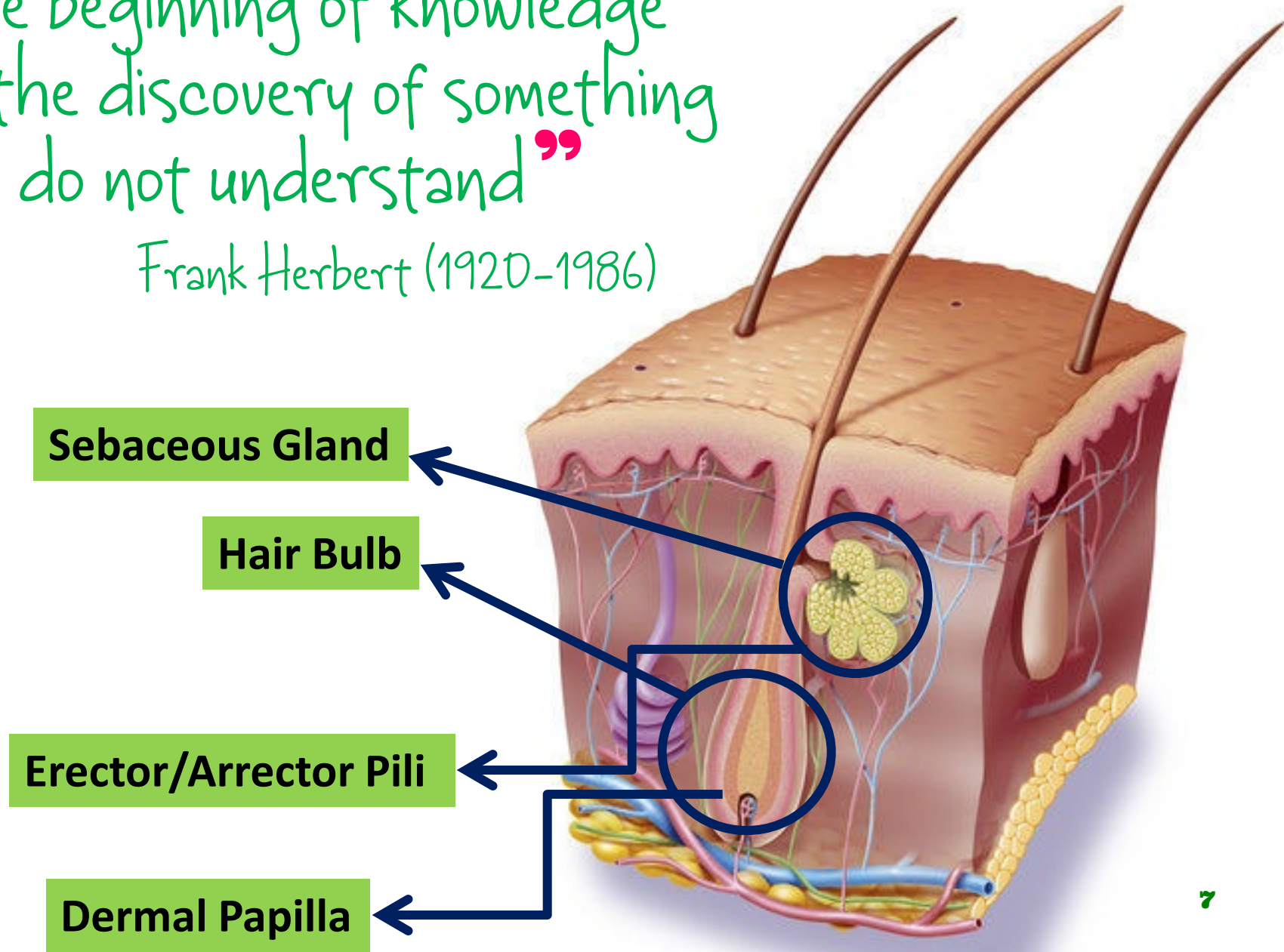


# **about Natural Nigerian (Natural Hair Blogger)**

- Hair blogger at <http://naturalnigerian.com>
- Went natural in 2009 (2 years)
- Work full-time as a Safety, Health + Environment Consultant
- Mother of one

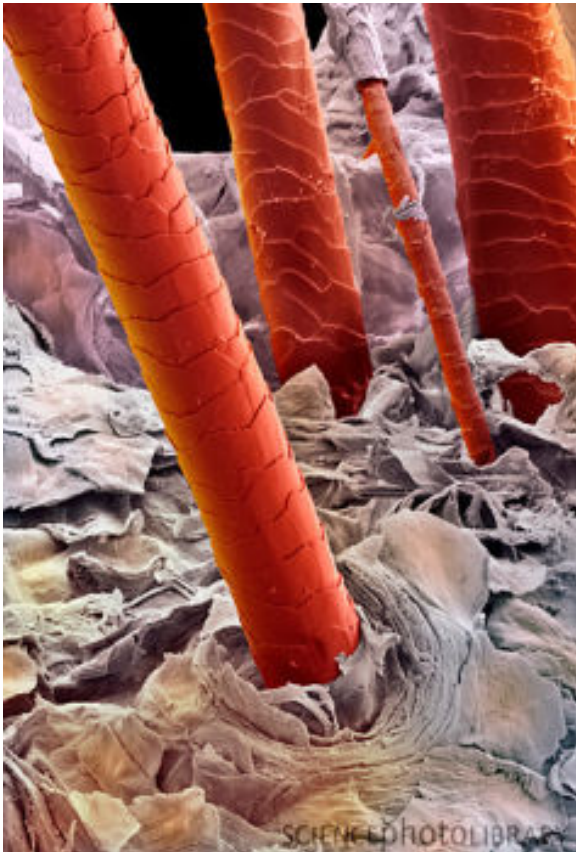
“The beginning of knowledge  
is the discovery of something  
we do not understand”

Frank Herbert (1920-1986)





# scalp: it's all rooted here



## Clean

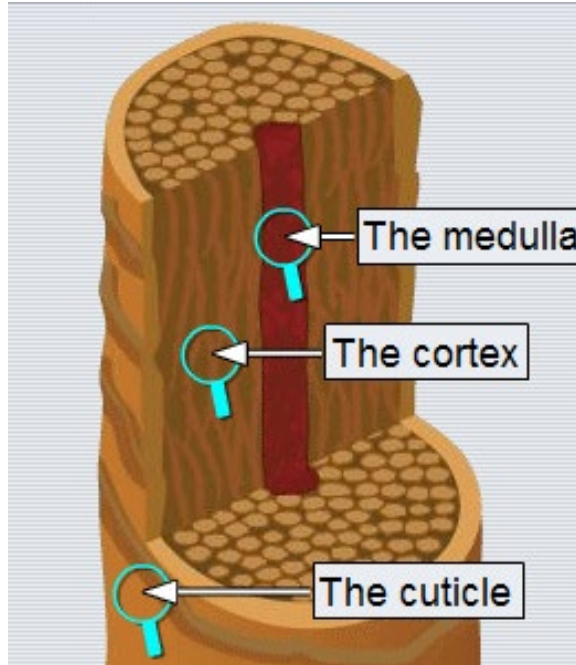
- How often?
- Washing techniques
- A word on sebum
- To oil or not to oil?

## Care

- Massage



# cuticle, cortex, medulla



## Cuticle

- Protective layer of the hair
- Overlapping layers
- Determines sheen, and how healthy hair looks
- Can be lifted and destroyed
- Vulnerability increases down the hair shaft

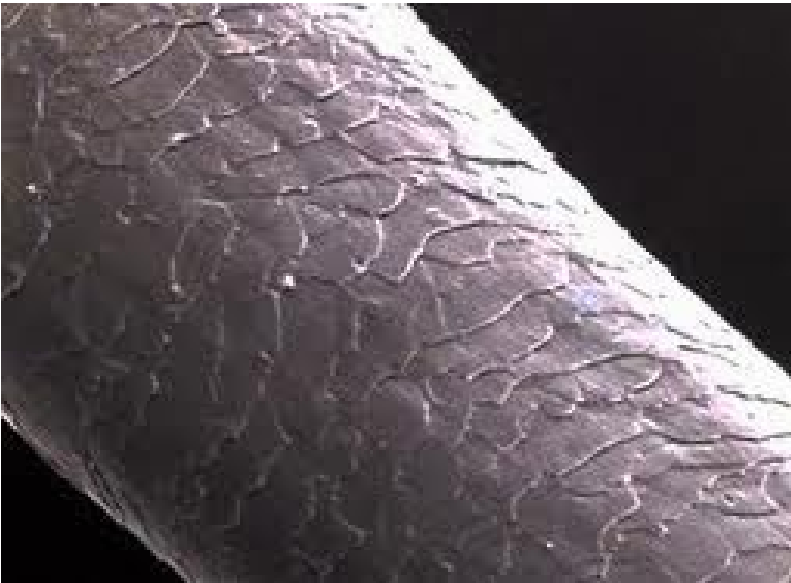
## Cortex

- Makes up 80% of hair.
- Pigmentation is present here
- Diameter varies, resulting in texture: Coarse, Medium or Fine
- Elasticity of hair are determined here
- Coconut Oil, Olive Oil and Water

## Medulla

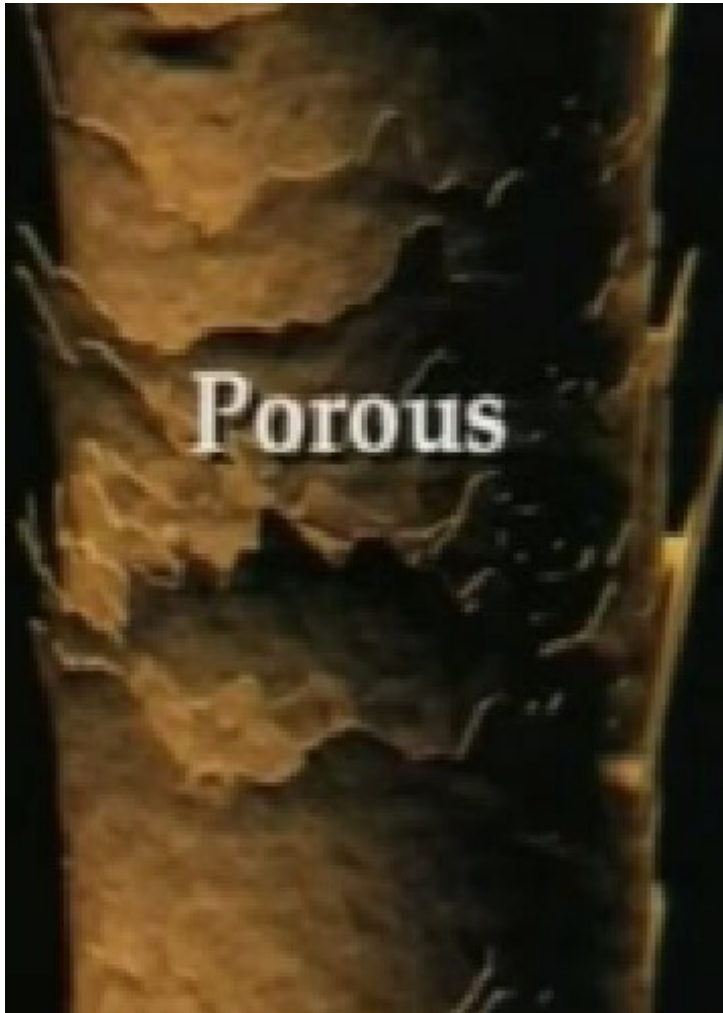
- May not be present in those with fine or very fine hair
- No known significance

# cuticle contition: normal



- Keeps moisture in the cortex
- Reflects light, giving the hair sheen

# cuticle condition: porous



- Hair shaft's ability or inability to absorb water into the cortex
- Poor/Low Porosity: doesn't readily absorb moisture. Generally healthy
- High pH increases porosity
- Low pH decreases porosity

# cuticle condition: damaged



— Lets everything in and out

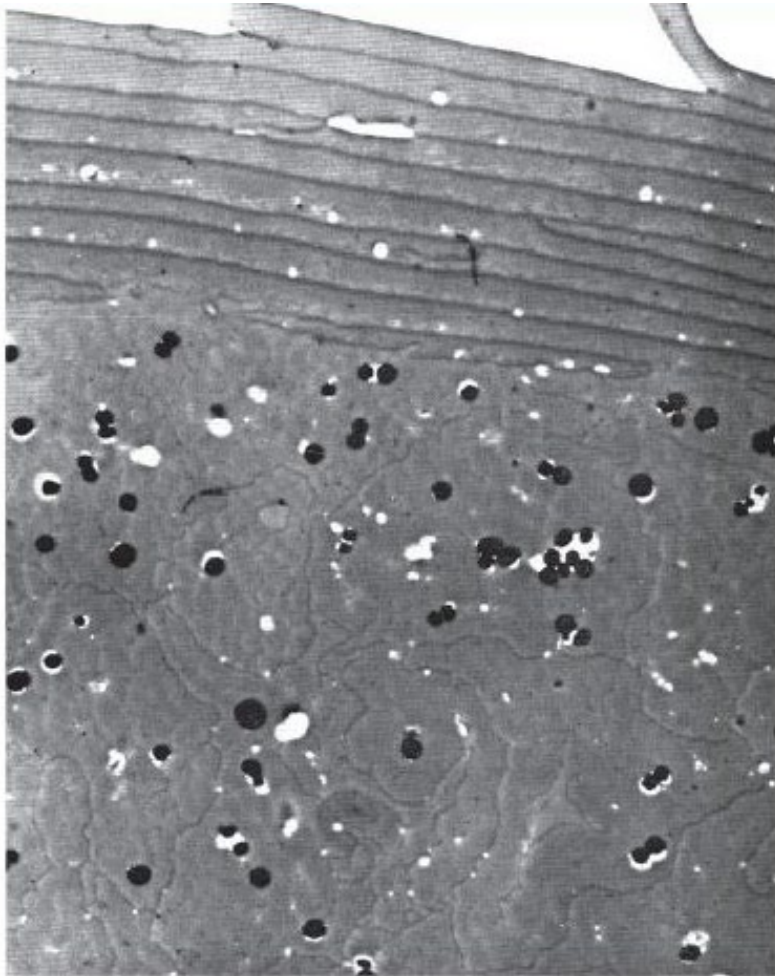
	1	
Lemon Juice	2	Hair cuticle tightens and contracts. As cuticle scales close, hair porosity decreases and shine is enhanced.
Apple Cider Vinegar	3	
Hair Conditioners, Aloe Vera	4	
Hair and Skin	4.5 - 5.5	Hair is normal. Normal shine and luster.
Black Coffee	5.5 - 6	Hair begins to swell, and cuticles begin to lift. As pH increases, the shaft incurs an increased amount of damage. Lipids are lost from the hair.
Pure Water	7	
Blood, Semi-Permanent Hair Color	8	
Baking Soda, Soaps	9	
Milk of Magnesia	10	
Relaxers	11	
Relaxers, Ammonia	12	Hair begins to dissolve.
Relaxers	13	
Relaxers	14	



## Hair

- pH
  - Conditioners, Shampoos, Relaxers
  - Water
- Water and your hair
  - Hard and Mineralised





Cuticles are overlapping and are about 5 -11 layers thick

*Figure 1.* Transverse section of cuticle and cortex of an oriental hair. No contrast enhancing treatment was used. Magnification, 10,000



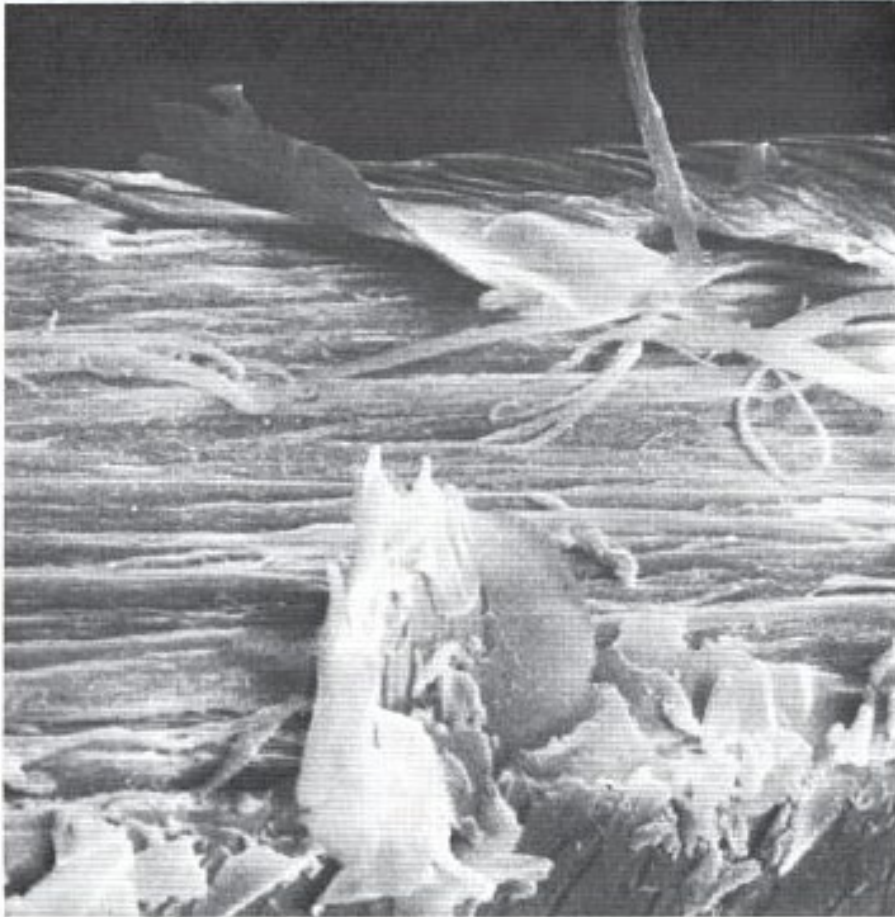
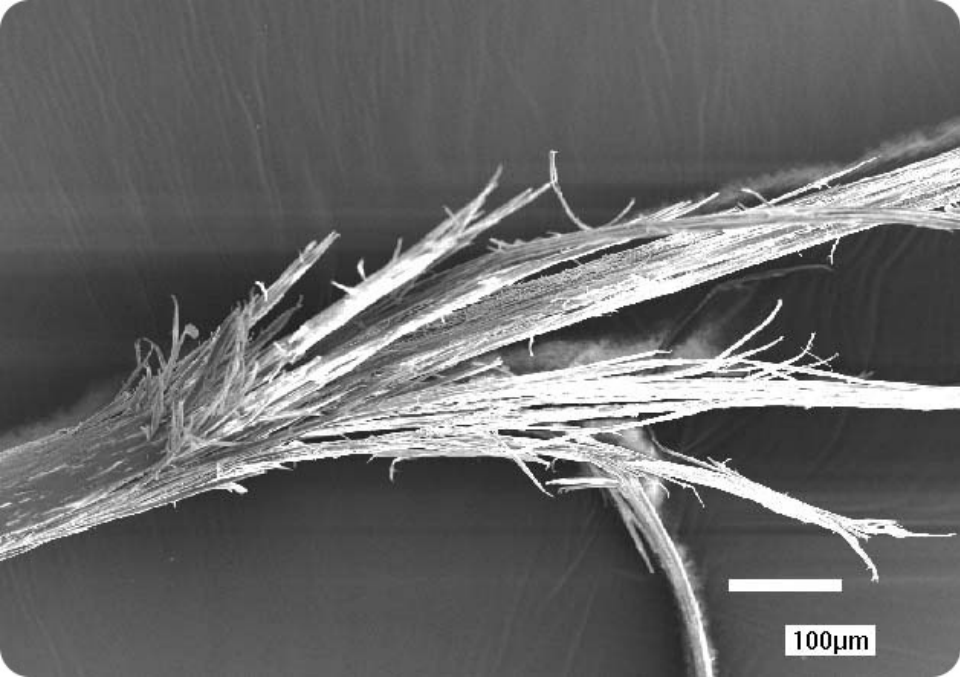


Figure 4. Scanning electron micrograph of hair abraded with a blade. Magnification, 1700

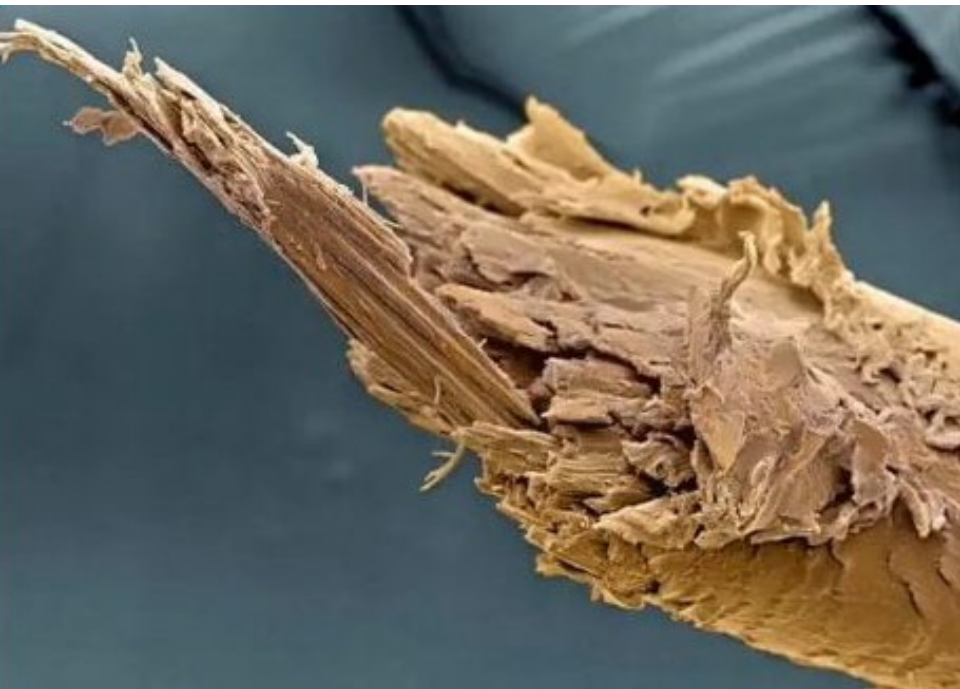
Hair abraded by a blade

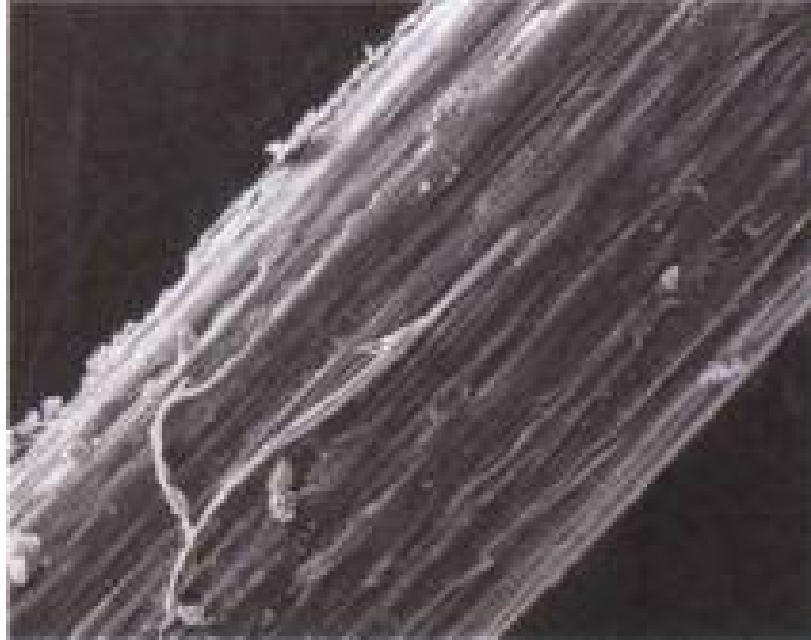


Badly-cut hair



Split ends

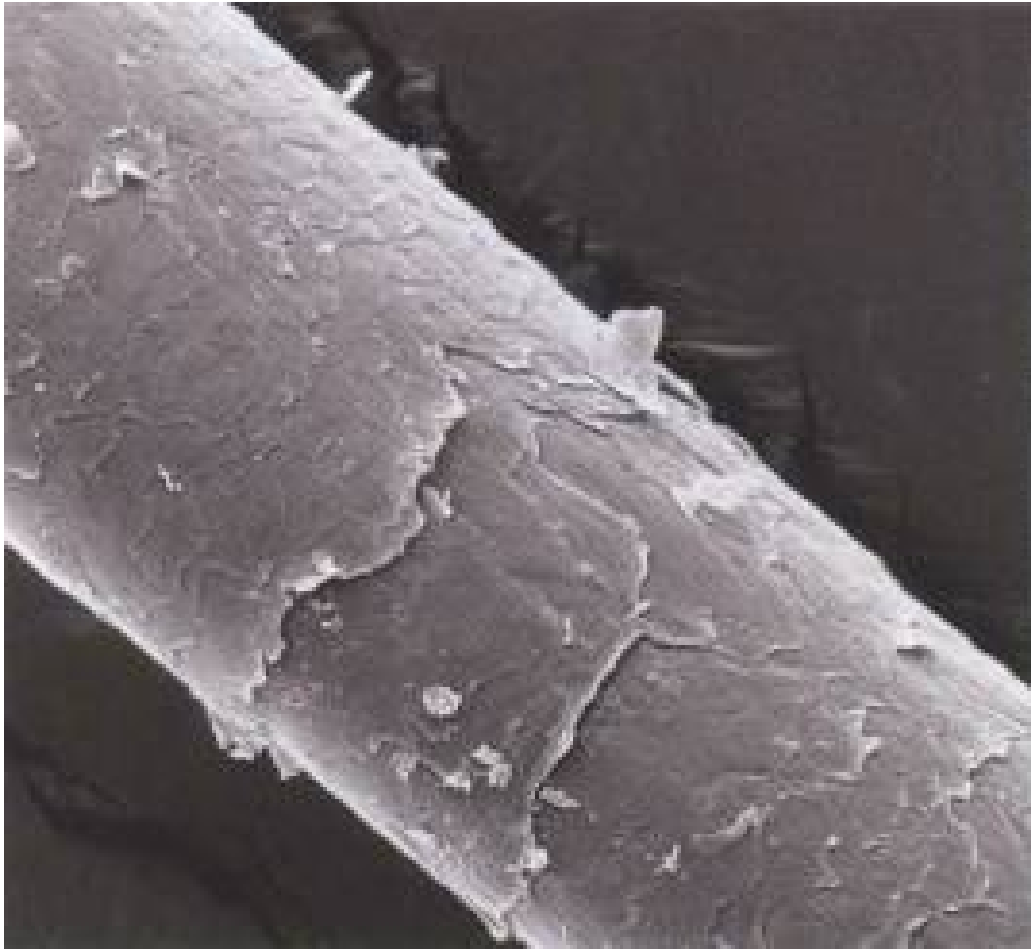




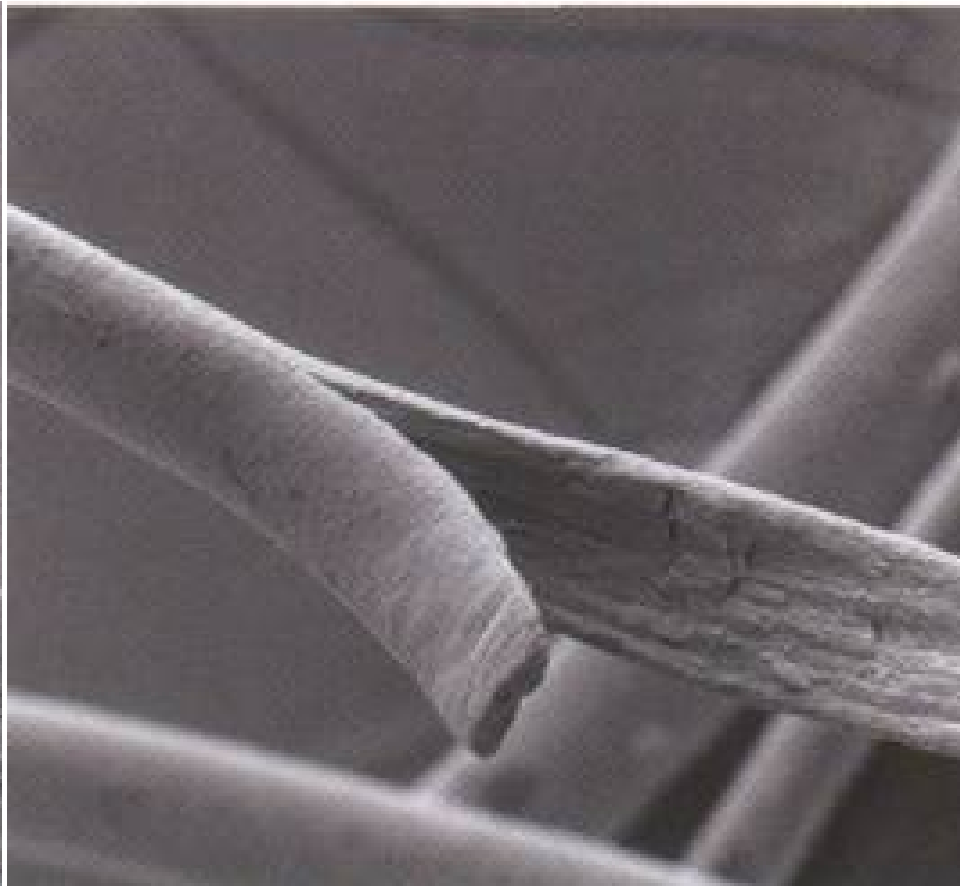
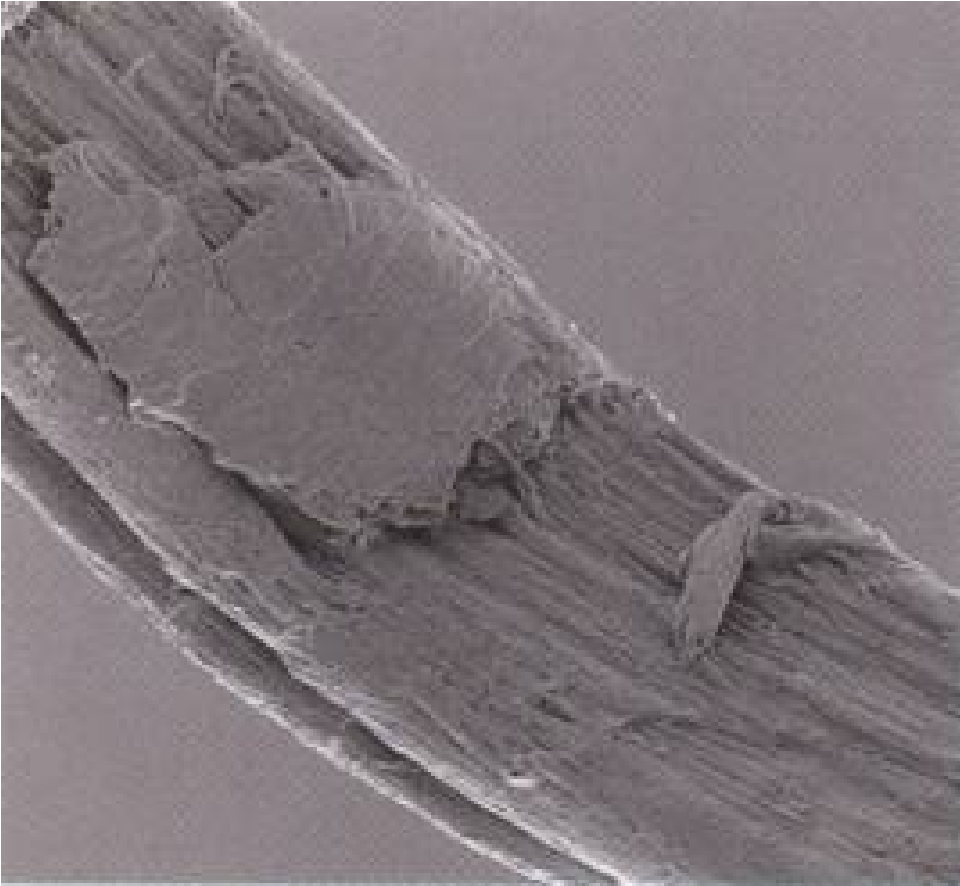
## Heat Damage



The cortex was disrupted by an overheated hair dryer



Hair damage caused  
by hair bands



Chemical Relaxer Damage









## Texture

- Hair Shaft Diameter
  - thick, coarse, fine
- Amount of hair per head
  - dense, medium, sparse

## Cuticles

- porous, normal, damaged

**Fabulous Hair**  
**—from the Inside Out**  
**Sherese Ijewere**  
**Caribbean Health Limited**



# **about Mrs. Sherese Ijewere**

## **(Nutrition Consultant)**

- Associate's degree in Nursing  
(Polk County Community College, Lakeland, Florida)
- Bachelor's degree in Communication + Nutrition  
(University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida)
- Writes a health column in THISDAY online
- Heard on  
    Inspiration 92.3 FM                      (Saturdays)  
    Classic 97.3 FM                         (Mondays)
- Jamaican + raised in Jamaica
- Happily married to a Naija
- They have 4 children

# what is your body going thru?



- Our hair is a mirror of what conditions our body is currently going through, be it:
  - stress
  - unhappiness
  - unbalanced diet
  - inadequate intake of proper nutrients or
  - ingestion of toxins



- Symptoms of damaged or weak hair include:
  - hair breakage
  - split ends
  - clumps of hair falling out, balding
  - thinning
  - dandruff/dry scalp





- Damaged or weak hair may be a result of:
  - chemically treated hair
  - stressing the hair through
    - heat
    - tight braiding
    - tight weaves
  - not giving the hair a chance to breathe when constantly wearing wigs

# foods to eat for healthy hair



## Water

- Drink 2-3L of water per day
- One liter within 30 minutes upon rising + the rest throughout the day



## Salmon

- Loaded with Omega 3 fatty acids
- Filled with Vitamin B12 + iron
- Salmon supports scalp health
  - a deficiency gives hair dry scalp + a dull look





## Dark Green Leafy Vegetables

- Spinach, greens, ugu, tete
  - Vitamins A + C
  - Iron + calcium which your body needs to produce sebum (the oily substance secreted by your hair follicles)
- Also known as a natural hair conditioner



## Beans

- Brown beans, white beans, kidney beans, lentils
- Provide protein to promote hair growth
- Contain iron, zinc, biotin. Biotin deficiency can result in brittle/weak hair
- 3 or more cups of lentils each week is recommended.





## Nuts

- Walnuts, Cashew, Pecans, Almonds, Brazil nuts
- Source of selenium, an important mineral for your scalp
- Source of Zinc—deficiency of Zinc leads to hair shedding
- So make sure nuts are a part of your regular hair menu



## Poultry

- Chicken/Turkey (notice their feathers?)
- Without adequate protein or low quality protein, hair can be weak or brittle



## Eggs/Fish

- Eggs are high in protein
  - contains biotin, vitamin B12
- Fish is also high in protein



## Whole Grains

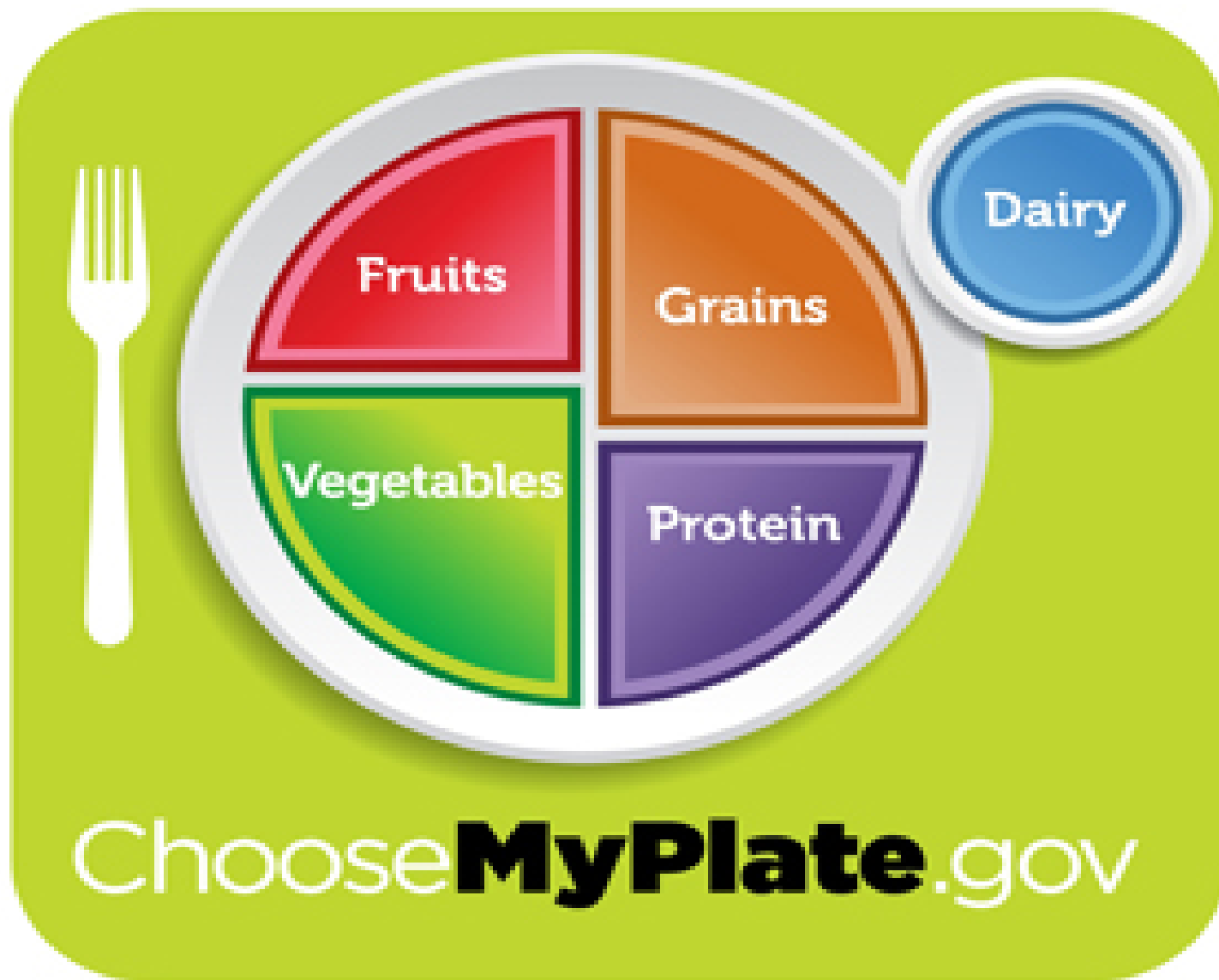
- Whole grain bread/cereals/Rice
  - contains zinc + iron + vitamin B's



# think about it

“An overall balance diet of lean protein, fruits, vegetable, whole grains, legumes, and fish will keep hair healthy”







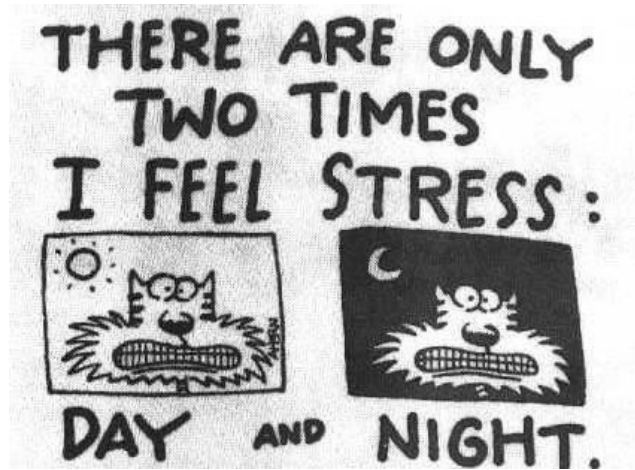
# what robs your hair?



- Fad diets rob your hair
- Crash diets can cause hair loss
- Medications affect hair as well as body
  - anti-clotting drugs
  - cholesterol lowering drugs
  - menopausal drugs
  - NSAIDs
  - birth control pills
  - Antibiotics
  - anti-cancer drugs
- Usually hair grows back when medications are stopped







- Stress
- Thyroid problems
- Giving birth
  - hormones rage while pregnant + hair grows. After birth for some people hair loss or shedding occurs after birth
- Anemia, thyroid disease, vitamin B12 deficiency, + vitiligo cause premature greying (before age 40)
- Immune system disorders
  - mistakenly attack hair follicles, causing hair to fall out suddenly (Alopecia)

# think about it

“Hair consists of Proteins:  
–Amino Acids and Vitamins.  
A lack of these slows down  
hair growth”



# recap: vitamins



## Vitamin A

- fish liver oil, meat, milk, cheese, eggs, spinach, broccoli, cabbage, carrots

## Vitamin C

- citrus, strawberry, kiwi, pineapple, honeydew melon, tomatoes, green pepper, dark green leafy vegetables

## Vitamin E

- enhances scalp circulation
  - vegetable oil, soybeans, raw seeds + nuts, dried beans, leafy vegetables





## **Biotin**

- produces keratin that prevents hair loss + graying
- whole grains, egg yolks, almond milk, rice milk

## **Vitamin B3 (Niacin)**

- scalp circulation
- chicken, turkey, fish

## **Vitamin B5 (Pantothen)**

- prevents graying + hair loss
- egg yolk, organ meats



## **Vitamin B6**

- Vegetables, organ meats, egg yolks

## **Vitamin B12**

- chicken, fish, eggs

# food for thought

“Foods good for your hair  
are also good for your heart”







Thank you.

**The Kitchen Beautician**  
**Nike Taylor**  
**[screwyhair.wordpress.com](http://screwyhair.wordpress.com)**



# **about Nike Taylor**

## **(Hair Blogger)**

- Hair blogger at <http://screwyhair.wordpress.com>
- Went natural in 1999 (12 years)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> big chop in April 2011 + renewed her natural hair journey
- Works full-time for a content production company + is Creative Director of Zahara Creations, a brand + graphic design boutique ([www.zaharacreations.com](http://www.zaharacreations.com))
- Mother of one



- Some of the best products for your hair exist in nature—and in your kitchen
- Living in Nigeria, being a kitchen beautician works
- You don't have to spend a fortune on your hair
- So get creative: Experiment + find what works for you

# so many options, so little time



## Apple Cider Vinegar

- Made from fresh ripe apples through fermentation
- 30 nutrients + 12 minerals + 6 vitamins
- Essential acids + beneficial enzymes + pectin
- PH of 4.25 to 5.00 (acidic, while most shampoos are strong alkaline)
- Balances hair's PH + removes product buildup
- Closes cuticle for shinier, healthier hair
- Better for hair than regular vinegar: yeast produced during fermentation heals + maintains healthy scalp
- Acidity + enzymes work against dandruff + itchy scalp by killing bacteria that cause dandruff + scalp conditions
- Use as a clarifying rinse  
1 part ACV to 6-8 parts soft/distilled water



## Lemon & Lime Juices

- Many uses
  - colds, indigestion, constipation, burns, skin care, hair care, deodorant (esp. for kids), detox
- Vitamins A + C
- PH around 2 - 3 (acidic)
- Promotes shine + elasticity; strengthens hair roots
- Treats dandruff + itchy scalp
- Use as clarifying boost  
1-2 tbsp to conditioner or ACV rinse





## Milk

- High in protein; strengthens hair
  - Deep conditioner + protein conditioner
  - Use as protein conditioner
- Once a month + leave in for 10-20 min



## Honey

- Good humectant
  - Promotes shiny hair
  - Sticky + drips
  - Use as a deep conditioner
- Should be used with other moisturisers (e.g., coconut/olive oil)
- Follow with a moisturising conditioner



## Black Tea

- Reduces shedding + adds shine
- Excessive use can stunt hair growth  
Use only once every 3-4 washes
- Use as a rinse  
Rinse with water after 5-10 min  
1 heaping tbsp to 1 cup + cool to room temperature



## Eggs

- High in protein + cholesterol
- Egg white strengthens without hardening
- Yolk conditions + promotes shiny hair
- Drippy + smells
- Use as deep conditioner (alone or with honey and oils)  
Use or add one egg to deep conditioner



## Avocado (and Avocado Oil)

- “The world’s most complete food”
- Many uses
  - Skin care, hair care
- Rich in 25 essential nutrients and vitamins, including vitamins B6 + E + K
- Rich in antioxidants + protein
- Rich in oleic acid (monounsaturated fat)
- Anti-fungal, anti-bacterial flesh
- Strengthens, fortifies, moisturises + conditions hair
- Promotes shiny hair
- Use as a deep conditioner

Mash up one very ripe avocado with olive oil and an egg), apply, then co-wash/shampoo out



## Mayonnaise

- Main ingredients: eggs, vinegar, oil
- Rich in fatty acid, fats, and oils (all nutrients of ingredients), so it's an effective hair conditioner
- Traditional, natural treatment for dry hair
- Promotes moisture, volume, shine
- Use instead of eggs
- Can make scalp oily; apply only to ends if it does
- Use as a deep conditioner  
Apply liberally for no less than 2 hours, cover with a plastic cap (preferably all day or overnight), then co-wash/shampoo out





## Yogurt (Plain)

- Same benefits as mayo + eggs
  - High in protein, enzymes, lactic acid, zinc, calcium, vitamins B1, B2, B-6, B-12, yeast + oils
  - Many uses
    - Protects bones, fights off osteoporosis, battles cancer, cancer, diarrhea, high blood pressure + yeast infection, skin care, hair care
    - Bolsters digestion, immune function + weight control
    - Natural antifungal + antibacterial properties promote healing
    - Natural zinc fights acne
  - Reduces pore size, improves skin + hair texture, promotes a healthy skin glow
  - Strengthens + conditions hair + reduces frizz
  - Fights dandruff + itchy scalp by acting as a natural cleanser that tightens + clarifies the scalp pores
  - Use instead of eggs
  - Use as a deep conditioner (alone or with a egg + oils)
- Whip yogurt, apply, leave in for 1-2 hours, then co-wash/shampoo out



## Bananas

- Rich in potassium, natural oils, carbohydrates + vitamins
  - Strengthens + conditions hair + skin
  - Promotes shiny hair
  - Promotes hair elasticity, preventing split ends + breakage
  - Avoid using Yoruba bananas (gummy + extremely difficult to wash out); use Eastern bananas instead (smoother, much less gummy, easy to rinse out)
  - Use as a deep conditioner with eggs, coconut milk, or oils, etc.
- Blend ingredients together, apply, cover with a plastic cap, leave in all day or overnight, rinse/co-wash



# Oils & Butters



## Coconut Oil

- One of the most nutritious hair foods
- High in lauric acid, capric acid, caprylic acid, vitamins E + K, fatty acids
- One of the few oils that can penetrate the hair cuticle
- Antimicrobial, antioxidant, antifungal + antibacterial properties
- Excellent moisturiser + conditioner
- Seals the hair shaft + improves hair elasticity
- Helps minimise protein loss during washing to keep each hair strands strong
- Use as a moisturiser + sealant  
Add to deep conditioner  
(alone or with other oils + butters)



## Olive Oil (Extra Virgin, 1<sup>st</sup> Cold Press)

- High in monosaturated fats, vitamin E; contains vegetable mucilage
- Many uses
  - Beneficial in treating high blood cholesterol levels, cardiovascular diseases, earaches, constipation, stomach upset
  - Stimulates metabolism, promotes digestion, lubricates mucous membranes
  - Protects digestive tract
  - Reduces dry skin + stretch marks, strengthens finger nails
  - One of the best cooking oils
  - Frees stuck zippers, good furniture polish
- One of the few oils that can penetrate the hair shaft
- Promotes hair elasticity, strengthens + moisturises hair, reduces frizz
- Always choose the highest grade
- Use as a moisturiser + sealant  
Add to deep conditioner  
(alone or with other oils + butters)



## Jojoba Oil

- Non-greasy, heavy oil that is considered most similar to sebum
- One of the few oils that can penetrate the hair cuticle
- Good conditioner for dry hair + scalp
- Anti-bacterial properties promote healthy scalp
- Used to treat psoriasis



## **Castor Oil**

- (Unrefined) Jamaican black castor oil is the most nutrient-packed form
- Promotes hair growth by strengthening hair

## **Sweet Almond Oil**

- Excellent source of protein
- Promotes hair growth by strengthening hair



## **Aloe Vera Juice/Gel/Plant**

- Rich in enzymes that stimulate hair growth
- Many uses
  - Skin care, hair care, treats dandruff, heals minor cuts, sunburn, diminishes acne, natural laxative, heartburn relief, stomach disorders
- Anti-fungal + anti-bacterial properties
- Effective moisturiser
- Balances PH of the hair
- Enhances cellular regeneration
- Short shelf life, so must be refrigerated
- Use as a regular moisturiser or add to your deep conditioner





## Unrefined Shea Butter

- Made from shea butter nuts that grow in West and Central Africa
- Colour + texture may vary from one species to another, but nutrients remain the same
- Rich in fatty acids, vitamins A + E
- Is easily + quickly absorbed into the skin, hair + scalp without clogging pores
- Many uses
  - Cool burns, soothe sores, fade scars + stretch marks, cure skin conditions (e.g., dermatitis, psoriasis, dandruff, eczema, etc.), diminishes appearance of wrinkles
- Moisturises the skin, promotes cell regeneration + increases circulation
- Effective hair sealant that protects hair from weather damage + harmful UV radiation
- Promotes hair elasticity + seals in moisture
- Use often, depending on your hair regimen



## Henna

- Penetrates the hair cuticle + binds with keratin to strengthen hair + fill in rough spots on a frayed cuticle without locking out moisture
- All-natural hair dye (non-fading red after first application)
- Promotes shine, fullness + colour
- Strengthens hair (lawsone dye)
- Darkens hair with multiple applications + reduces curl
- Strong smell + messy application
- Must be left in 4-12 hours; experiment to find your routine
- Dries out hair for some
- Colour varies depending on lighting
- Cassia Obovata is **not** henna



# **tips for using natural products**



- KISS Law: Keep It Simple, Sugar
- Don't microwave: use a bowl o hot water
- Use a T-shirt
- Sleep in a satin bonnet (with a plastic shower cap to trap in moisture)
- Use soft water

**Finding Stuff in Lagos**  
**Nike Taylor**  
**[screwyhair.wordpress.com](http://screwyhair.wordpress.com)**





## **Markets + villages**

- Honey
- Shea butter
- Abakali rice
- Etc.

## **Grocery stores + pharmacies**

- Olive oil
- Apple cider vinegar
- Mayonnaise
- Yogurt
- Castor oil, jojoba oil, essential oils
- Etc.

## **Make your own**



**Help: My Boss Doesn't  
Like My Kinks!**

**Nike Taylor**  
**[screwyhair.wordpress.com](http://screwyhair.wordpress.com)**



# **office politics: natural hair in the workplace**

## **Poll**

The VP position just opened up at your firm and they are interviewing only the best candidates. You know that the President of the firm seems to prefer hair that is a bit more "put together". What do you do? Do you straighten your hair just this once, so they can focus on your skills? Or do you wear a fresh twist out, to stand out?

Would you change your hair for work?  
Have you done it before?

Be honest ladies!

**Let's Talk Regimens**  
**Nike Taylor**  
**[screwyhair.wordpress.com](http://screwyhair.wordpress.com)**




# **Bad Hair Practices**

## **Natural Nigerian**

**[naturalnigerian.com](http://naturalnigerian.com)**



- 
- 
- Rubbing vigorously with a towel
  - Back combing
  - Letting hair dry out
  - Following the crowd
  - Relying on products and not technique
- 
- Use a Microfiber Towel or an old T-Shirt
  - Comb in the direction cuticles naturally lie
  - Moisturise and seal
  - Get to know what works for you! We are all different
  - Learn & apply Technique



**New Naturals**  
**Natural Nigerian**  
**[naturalnigerian.com](http://naturalnigerian.com)**



## **on another note...**

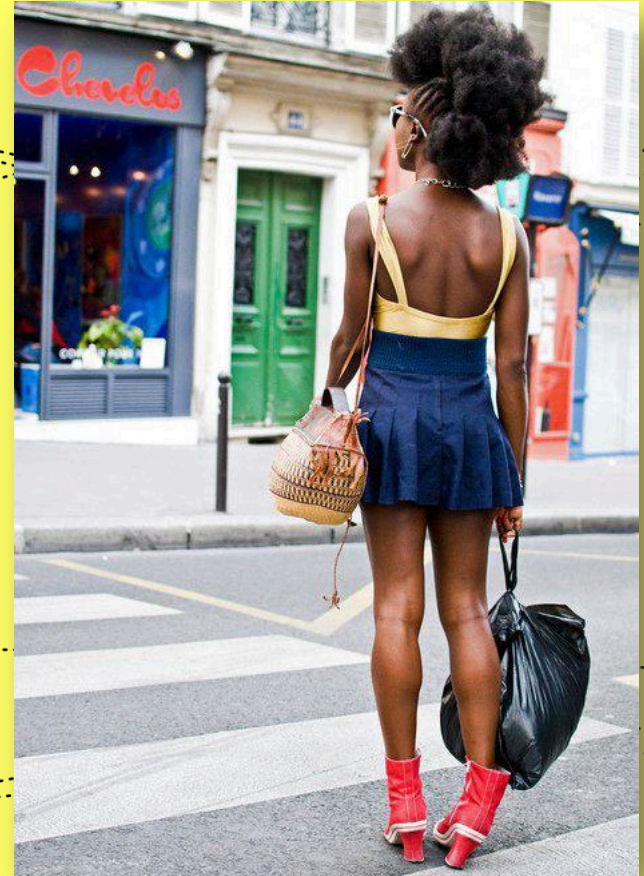
### **Relaxed Hair Best Practices**

- Go to a professional
- Follow the instructions closely
- Use a Neutralizing Shampoo
- Do not do any other chemical treatments immediately after
- Follow up with a Protein treatment
- Deep condition your hair regularly
- Understand your hair

# **Heart Your Hair (Demo)**

**Esohe Aighewi**

**[deepbrownkinks.blogspot.com](http://deepbrownkinks.blogspot.com)**

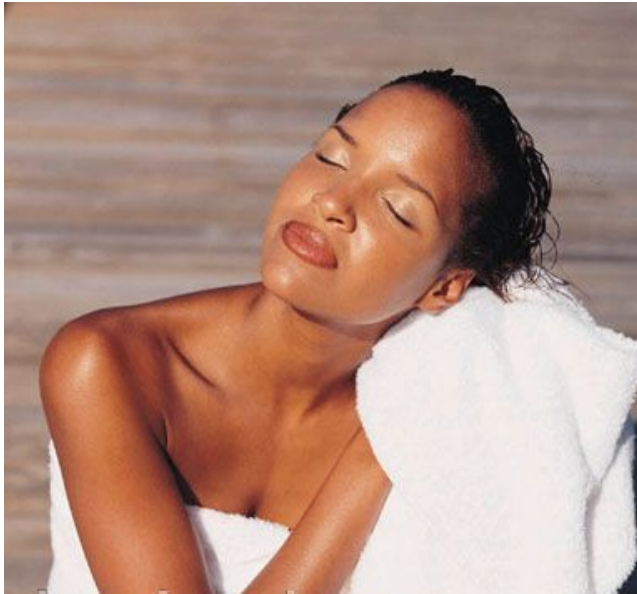


# **about Esohe Aighewi**

## **(Hair Blogger)**

- Hair blogger at <http://deepbrownkinks.blogspot.com>
- Went natural in 2009 (2 years)
- Currently a youth corper and in love with great hair

# wash day guide



- Wash day need not be a hassle. For best results:
  - Section your hair into 4-8 parts (depending on length)
  - Apply your favourite oil
  - Detangle using your fingers (best) or a comb
  - Wash each section
  - Condition + deep-condition while hair is still in sections to reduce tangling
  - Use an old cotton T-shirt to dry your hair. Pat dry or scrunch your hair with the T-shirt. **Do not** rub dry



# stretching your hair



## No-Heat Methods

- Braids
- Twists
- Flexi rods
- Banding
- And my new favourite: Threading!



## Low-Heat Methods

- Roller sets
- Blow-drying

Can be done on dry or damp hair, but is best done on damp hair

# caring for your locks



- Locks should be washed at least once a week, more often if you have an itchy scalp
- Use a residue free shampoo made for your hair type
- Use warm to cool water to wash your hair
- Focus on your scalp and let the suds run down the length of your locks
- Use natural shampoos and not drugstore brands. Shampoo bars are very popular among dread heads. (They're really fantastic)





## Rinsing Your Locks

- Rinsing properly is very important to lock health
- Residue left behind damage locks over time and make them look dirty, causes itchy scalp + gives a dull stiff look
- Use an after-shampoo ACV rinse on your locks to get them clean, help tighten them + get rid of any residue



## Conditioning

- Use natural products on your locks like oils and hair butters. Apply these conditioners to your hair after washing and every 3-4 days after as needed
- Shea Butter
- Rosemary Oil
- Jojoba Oil
- Hemp Seed Oil
- Olive Oil

## Drying

- Use a microfiber towel to dry your hair after washing. Regular towels leave lint in your hair and may be too abrasive
- Either air dry or sit under a warm bonnet dryer to get your locks completely dry
- Make sure your hair dries completely. Damp hair gets musty and mildews over time, weakening your locks



## NOTE

- Use a lock twisting hair butter to groom your locks
- Tie a silk or satin scarf around your hair before you go to sleep. This keeps it hydrated and lint free
- Use lock grooming oils and butters for dry locks




# **styling your hair (demo)**



# **battling the salon forces of evil**

- Teach your stylist how to wash your hair yourself **or do it yourself**
- Teach your stylist how to comb your hair **or do it yourself**
- **Do not** let your stylist comb your hair with the evil small comb!
- Bring an old cotton T-shirt to the salon to dry your hair
- **Do not** your stylist roughly towel dry your hair. Pat dry or scrunch your hair with the T-shirt. **Do not** rub it dry
- **Before getting braids done**, wash, dry, + stretch your hair at home

- 
- **Always** make your stylist section your hair when washing, conditioning, or styling. Each section should be twisted/braided after it's done
  - **Do not** let your stylist apply heat without proper deep conditioning + using a heat protectant

# think about it

“Heart the hair you have.  
We are all beautifully &  
wonderfully made—every lady  
with her unique curls or coils  
If you love you, the world will  
love you”





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Peace, heart & natural