

Over many years of giving lectures on skin and hair care, I have asked people if they have noticed falling hair associated with using permanent hair dyes. Each one of them individually agreed that since they have started dyeing their hair, it has started to fall, or the texture has really suffered. There was not a single case where the person said that using hair dyes has not caused a problem. Very often people have reported hair loss within 6 months of using hair dyes. As I had mentioned last month, here are some tips on frosting and streaking which I consider healthier options to dyeing a full head of hair.

Please send your questions and comments to beauty@citymasala.com.

STREAKING

Streaking may not help if there is a lot of white hair. It is more suitable for those who have a few white hairs, or are looking for a glamorous look. It is a method in which some strands, as opposed to all hair, are colored. A few streaks of color can save the rest of the hair from damage and yet, give you a new and glamorous look. You could have about four streaks in front, which means that some strands in the front are colored. This can really look attractive and will certainly cause less damage.

If you go in for half-head streaking, it also helps to limit the damage. In this method, some strands are selected. They are bleached and wrapped in special foil. It can be started from the hairline to the crown, so that the streaked hair is fully visible. You will need a touch up in about 6 weeks, as the roots of your original hair color will show through. To have the whole head streaked, more time is needed, as the entire hair is bleached into a lighter color and darker streaks are used to set it off. The dark streaks begin close to the hair line and go up to the crown.

FROSTING

Hair colors and dyes wear off, which means the procedure has to be repeated from time to time. The more you color, the more damage there will

be. So, here's some advice on how you can reduce the damage by frosting.

This is a method which is extremely popular in the US and Europe. The idea is based on the fact that colors wear off. It doesn't take long for roots of your original color to show up and you are ready for your next visit to the salon. This means repeating the entire process at shorter intervals. With frosting, you can avoid this problem. It is best done at a salon, where you are made to wear a tight plastic cap, with tiny holes all over. With a device which resembles a crochet needle, the hairstylist pulls out the particular strands which need coloring and applies color. This saves the rest of the hair where color has not worn off.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

Whether you opt for permanent or semi-permanent coloring, here are some important points that should be kept in mind.

- Try to use natural colors, such as browns, as they go better with Indian skin tones. A drastic change of color may not suit our skin tone and may look odd. For example, a light brown or blond color would not really complement our skin tone.
- Eyes should be protected from all coloring agents.

- Keep dyes away from the reach of children.

- If you are coloring your hair yourself, read the instructions carefully and condition your hair before and after coloring.



- Avoid having hair colored, straightened or permed at the same time. You should wait for about 6 weeks before the other procedure.

- Protect your hair with a scarf or *chunni* from over-exposure to the sun after coloring, as sun exposure can affect the color.

- The first time you have your hair colored, it may be a good idea to have it done at a beauty salon. This way you can see the procedure. Make sure that you use colorants which do not contain ammonia. If you have colored your hair before, avoid applying henna, as the henna will disrupt the chemical color you have used.

Next month, I will talk about using Henna for coloring hair and some other natural products that can be used instead of permanent hair dyes.

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