

Dandruff - Normal

Definition

- Dandruff means seeing tiny flakes of dead skin cells in the hair

Health Information

Symptoms

- Tiny flakes of dead skin are seen in the hair and scalp.
- The white flakes often collect on clothing covering the neck and shoulders.
- Itching is absent or mild unless the scalp is also very dry.
- There is no loss of hair.

Cause

- Dandruff is a normal process of shedding dead skin cells from the scalp.
- Shedding dead skin cells occurs on the entire body every day throughout life.
- On most of the body surface, the flakes of dead skin fall to the ground without notice.
- In the hair, they can build up.
- Dandruff is more common in people who have dry skin. Dry scalp is also more common during dry winter weather.
- Dandruff is not caused by a fungus or other germ. It is not contagious.

Care Advice

1. Overview on Treating Dandruff:

- Dandruff is the normal shedding of dead skin from the scalp.
- It's a harmless cosmetic problem that's easy to correct.
- It can occur in most people.

2. Shampoo the Hair More Often:

- Wash the hair daily or at least every other day.
- Reason: The key to fighting dandruff is removing the flakes as fast as they form.
- A regular shampoo usually works fine. Finish with a moisturizing conditioner. Reason: corrects a dry scalp.
- Brush your child's hair before each washing to loosen up dry skin.

3. Special Dandruff Shampoo:

- If your dandruff does not go away using a regular shampoo, use a dandruff shampoo.
- If the scalp is red and irritated or the scales are thick, start with a medicated dandruff shampoo. Most contain selenium sulfide or zinc.
- These medicated products also slow down the rate of skin shedding.
- Dandruff shampoo is used in a special way: lather the hair and wait 3 or more minutes. Then rinse the hair thoroughly.
- Do this 3 days in a row and then once a week.
- Use a regular shampoo on other days.
- Your pharmacist can help you select a dandruff shampoo.

4. **What to Expect:**

- Dandruff usually starts with puberty and rapid growth.
- Dandruff from normal scalp shedding will last a lifetime.
- Visible dandruff can be controlled by washing it out of the hair.
- You probably won't ever be able to wash it less often than every 3 days.

Call Your Doctor If

- Dandruff does not go away after 4 weeks
- Hair loss occurs
- Red areas occur in the scalp
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP

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