



VIP MedSpa Clinic News

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Medical News

How Can I Help My Immune System At Its Peak?

There are 5 things you can do. The first is to eliminate the negatives that drag your immune system down and pollute your body. These include smoking, excessive use of alcohol, and drugs and excessive sun exposure without protection. You also can change your diet to an anti-inflammatory diet that is more plant-based, such as the mediterranean diet. Eat wholesome and real foods that are colorful and fill your plate.

Exercise moderately by getting 150 minutes of moderate to intense physical activity a week. You can do this activity in 5 or 10 minute sessions. Avoid overtraining, which can make you vulnerable as well. Modify stresses and work on achieving mental and spiritual health.

Lastly, don't forget about sleep hygiene. Poor sleep drags the immune system down as it affects our brain and the way we interact.

November is Healthy Skin Month

VIP MedSpa Clinic and Dr. Maryam Hekmat will help you achieve your healthy skin goals. Call to schedule your FREE consultation (858) 451-6500.



Massage from Medical Director of VIP MedSpa Clinic

Maryam Hekmat, M.D, FACP

Think Age Spots Aren't So Cute? Here's What to Do

Tips to get rid of age spots and avoid more

Your doctor has told you that those brown spots that appeared suddenly on your skin are nothing to worry about – they are simply age spots.

That's great news! But if you don't like how they look, you might be wondering how you got those

Your Guide to Aging, Thinning Hair: 6 Simple Tips

To keep our hair looking good as we age, it needs special attention. Why? The sad story of our hair is that over time, fibers become thinner and begin to drop out – and never regenerate. Pigment cells stop producing as much pigment. Hormones that help stimulate follicle fibers diminish. Then of course, there's damage from chemicals used in hair dye. But don't despair. There are steps that women can take after menopause to offset these natural changes.

1. **Wash less frequently:** Don't overdo shampoo, but you should wash your scalp at least twice per week. Use the type of shampoo for which for fine, oily or dry — that best suits your hair type.
2. **Don't forget conditioners and volumizers:** They are an important part of the mix. They work like a splint to strengthen your hair, providing more volume per fiber. They also change the electrostatic charge so that fibers stand apart from one another and your hair has more visual volume.

spots, how can you get rid of them and how to avoid getting more.

Age spots, which are sometimes called liver spots or solar lentigines, happen after exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. They can be tan, brown or black, vary in size and usually appear on the areas most exposed to the sun such as the face, hands, shoulders and arms. "Age spots are common in adults older than age 50, but younger people can get them too, especially if they spend a lot of time in the sun or use [tanning beds](#)."

How age spots develop

Your skin contains melanin, which gives your skin its color. Melanin also gives you a tan when your skin is exposed to UV light. Age spots appear when melanin becomes clumped in the skin or is produced in high concentrations, such as when your skin is exposed to lots of UV light. Anyone can develop age spots, but you may be more likely to develop the condition if you have light-colored or fair skin or have a history of frequent or intense sun exposure or [sunburn](#).

Older women are more susceptible to age spots — and sun damage — because they have reduced amounts of melanin in the skin.

3. If you color your hair, use the right products: Be sure to protect your hair with shampoo or conditioners made specifically for color-treated hair.

4. Eat a complete diet:

Be sure you are eating enough overall. As you age, you start to eat smaller portions because your taste level goes down, and you become nutritionally deficient. Usually when a person says, I'm on a healthy diet, they're on a restricted diet.

5. Don't skim on protein

Women eat a little bit of low-fat red meat a couple of times a week. This captures your protein and other vital nutrients. Also with age, subtle thyroid disease sneaks in. Patients get a little tired and think it's old age, but they have mild iron deficiency anemia.

6. Check medications with your doctor:

Talk to your doctor about how any of your medications could affect your hair, and ask advice on how to help counteract negative effects. Some drugs for conditions like cardiac disease or lipid-lowering medications can cause shedding of finer fibers. Also, when women stop hormone replacement medication, they should expect a fair amount of hair loss.

What you can do about age spots

If you're unhappy with the appearance of age spots, you can lighten or remove them. The pigment is at the base of the epidermis — the topmost layer of skin — so any treatments meant to lighten the age spots must penetrate this layer of skin.

Age spot treatments include:

- **Prescription lightening creams** (hydroquinone, glycol acid or kojic acid) used alone or with retinoids (tretinoin) and a mild steroid may gradually fade the spots over several months. "Regular and consistent use over the course of several weeks or months may be necessary to produce noticeable results.
- **Laser and intense pulsed light therapies** can target melanin granules and melanin-producing cells (melanocytes) without damaging the skin's surface.
- **Freezing, or cryotherapy, involves applying liquid nitrogen** to the age spots to destroy the extra pigment.
- **Laser resurfacing**, which can remove sun-damaged cells to freshen skin and fade spots.
- **Chemical peel**, which involves applying to the age spots an acid that releases the outer layer of your skin.

These procedures can have side effects, so discuss your options carefully with your doctor. It's important to make sure your doctor is specially trained and

experienced in the technique you're considering.

Why Hair Turns Gray

It's a natural process, but stress and smoking don't help!

Unless you dye, your hair eventually loses its color, usually beginning in your 30s or 40s. Though going gray is natural, many people dread it because of society's notions about aging. Here's what researchers know about how and why graying hair happens.

What gives hair its natural color?

Melanin, the brown/black or yellow/red pigment that tints skin and eyes, also dictates your hair's hue. Like paint-mixing, the amount and combination of melanin determines hair color.

Why does hair have color?

Scientists aren't sure. The trait may have evolved partly to help pre-humans stand out from each other and attract mates, and to help regulate body temperature by absorbing or reflecting sunlight.

Why does hair turn gray?

Gray hair is hair with reduced melanin, while white hair completely lacks it. That's partly because of a gradual decline in the number of stem cells that mature to become melanin-producing cells. Scientists aren't sure why. The cells may wear out, become damaged, or lose the support systems meant to keep them working. Genes are also a factor, since they help control melanin production.

Can anything prevent hair from graying?

For now, no. Scientists experimenting with mice recently showed that three specific genes can help maintain stable numbers of melanin-producing cells. By manipulating the genes, the researchers prevented or reduced gray hair in the mice. But no product based on the research is currently available.

Can stress or fear cause hair to suddenly lose color?

Probably not. Historical accounts claim jailed British Statesman Sir Thomas More, and French Queen Marie Antoinette went white overnight while awaiting execution. But dermatologists say the likely explanation is either that their vegetable- or mineral-based hair dye washed away, or that they had *alopecia areata*, an autoimmune disease that can be triggered by stress and causes pigmented hair to rapidly fall out but doesn't affect white hairs, creating the illusion of a sudden color change.

Can stress cause gradual, long-term hair graying?

Maybe. Researchers examining gray hair have found evidence of “free radicals” — damaging chemicals caused by stress, smoking, inflammation or radiation exposure, among other things — and propose that they're responsible for destroying pigment-producing melanocyte stem cells. But there's no conclusive proof.

Can smoking cause premature graying?

There's definitely a link. A 2013 study found that smokers on average went gray three years earlier than non-smokers. Scientists suspect that smoking causes chemical changes that damage the body's melanin-producing cells.

- ◆ 90% of the world's population has black or brown hair.
- ◆ Waste Disposal on Your Head: Melanin molecules snag toxins, so melanin-filled hair can help trap and shed dangerous chemicals we ingest.
- ◆ An All-Over Fade: Our skin and eyes lose pigmentation as we age, though not as dramatically as hair does.

- ✦ Put Down Those Tweezers: Studies show that repeated hair-plucking accelerates graying.
- ✦ To Dye For: An estimated 60% of adult men and women in the western world use hair-coloring products.
- ✦ Your Mustache Looks Great: Facial and body hair turn gray later in life than scalp hair does.
- ✦ A Heady Difference: Gray hair in men usually begins at the temples, while women begin graying at the edges of their hairline.