

StylespeakTM

The salon & spa journal

₹150 ■ 136 pgs ■ June 2024



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**A to Z of
Nail Health**



Give Your Hair a Glycolic Acid Boost

Glycolic acid is a versatile and beneficial addition to hair and scalp care routines and is becoming increasingly popular.

Words | Bindu Gopal Rao



When applied to the hair, glycolic acid offers several benefits that contribute to the health and appearance of the hair. Experts weigh in on how to use it and do it right.

The Concept

Glycolic acid, a type of alpha-hydroxy acid (AHA) derived from sugar cane, is a well-known skincare ingredient that has recently gained recognition for its benefits in hair care. It works by gently exfoliating the scalp, effectively removing dead skin cells and product buildup. This process helps reduce scalp irritation, minimizes dandruff, and promotes a healthy scalp, contributing to overall hair health.



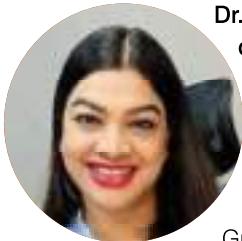
Taniya Pandey, Vice President Marketing - Beauty & Wellness, VLCC says,

“When choosing a glycolic acid product for scalp care, opt for those with a concentration between 5% to 10%, as higher concentrations may be too harsh. Always follow the product instructions and start with a small amount

to test your sensitivity. Additionally, glycolic acid can be used in combination with appropriate hair care products, such as shampoos and conditioners, to enhance its benefits. However, it's important to avoid mixing glycolic acid with other potent ingredients like tea tree oil or coconut oil simultaneously, as their interaction may cause irritation.”

Being Effective

Using glycolic acid effectively on the scalp and hair involves a few key steps and considerations. It is available in various forms, including shampoos, conditioners, and scalp treatments. Before applying glycolic acid to your scalp, perform a patch test. Apply a small amount of the product to a discrete area of your skin and wait 30 minutes to check for any adverse reactions such as redness, itching, or irritation.



Dr. Nishita Ranka Internationally acclaimed dermatologist, Medical Director & Founder, Dr. Nishita's Clinic for Skin, Hair & Aesthetics, says, "Start by using glycolic acid products once or twice a week. Overuse can lead to irritation, so it's important to give your scalp time to adjust.

Gradually increase the frequency if your scalp tolerates it well. Apply glycolic acid treatments directly to the scalp, focusing on areas with buildup or flakiness. Massage gently to ensure even distribution. Leave the product on for the recommended time specified on the product label, typically a few minutes, before rinsing thoroughly." After using glycolic acid, it's essential to follow up with a moisturizing conditioner or scalp serum to replenish any lost moisture and to soothe the scalp.

and enhance hair texture and shine by smoothing the hair cuticle. "Additionally, its antibacterial properties help reduce scalp acne.

However, there are some potential downsides to using glycolic acid on the scalp. Overuse or high concentrations can lead to irritation and dryness. It may also strip hair colour and make the scalp more sensitive to the sun, necessitating extra sun protection. As with any treatment, it's important to use glycolic acid with caution and consult a dermatologist if you have concerns," adds Pandey.

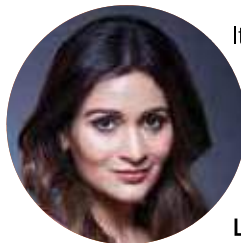
Weighing the Pros and Cons

Using glycolic acid on the scalp offers several notable benefits. One of the main benefits is its exfoliating ability, which helps remove dead skin cells, excess sebum and product build-up that can clog hair follicles and prevent hair growth.



Dr Trishna Gupte, Clinical cosmetologist and Trichologist, International trainer and Head of academics, Founder and owner, The Cosmo-Square clinic, ISCA

says, "This thorough cleansing can lead to a healthier scalp environment and potentially reduce problems such as dandruff and itchiness. In addition, the moisturising properties of glycolic acid can improve the hydration level of the scalp, increase hair elasticity, and reduce breakage. By smoothing the hair cuticle, glycolic acid can also increase shine and manageability, contributing to healthier, more attractive looking hair."



It is important to follow the product instructions carefully and not exceed the recommended frequency of use to avoid any side effects. **Dr. Geetika Mittal Gupta, Aesthetic physician, and founder of ISAAC Luxe (International Skin & Anti-Aging Centre), an aesthetic clinic** adds,

"Due to its exfoliating nature, always follow glycolic acid treatments with a hydrating conditioner or hair mask. This will replenish any moisture lost during exfoliation and soothe the scalp. Its humectant properties are significant. Glycolic acid draws moisture from the environment into the scalp and hair, ensuring they remain well-hydrated. This is crucial for maintaining elasticity and suppleness."

A clean, well-exfoliated scalp is the foundation for hair growth. Glycolic acid's ability to clear debris and sebum from follicles can foster a better environment for hair to thrive. **SS**

Do it Right

Glycolic acid offers several benefits for scalp care. It effectively removes dead skin cells and product buildup, promoting a healthier scalp environment. By increasing blood circulation, it can also support hair growth

