

Superfoods for Thick, Lustrous Hair

Introduction: Lustrous hair can be yours if you use ancient Chinese secrets for thick, luxuriant, richly colored hair. An important bonus is how eating the right foods will improve your overall health and happiness.

Chinese medicine food therapy is documented in written records and case studies dating back to 2000 years. In 200 BCE, scholars included the topic of unhealthy hair, premature graying, and balding in the *Huang Di Nei Jing*, (*The Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic*), noting that these two issues were symptomatic of problems in the Zangfu organ systems.

Foods to avoid

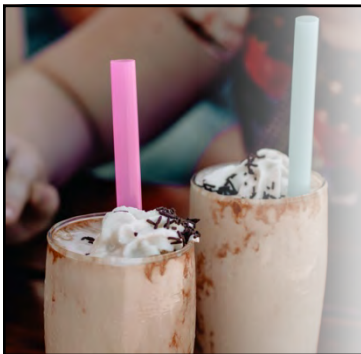
You should strive to avoid eating the foods listed below if you want thick, shiny, healthy hair. You can enjoy them occasionally, but you should limit your consumption.

Eating right treats:

Hair loss, split ends, premature graying, dry hair, greasy hair, and more!



Hair loss and premature graying is tied to high-fat, high protein diets which damage the Kidneys and create acidic blood.

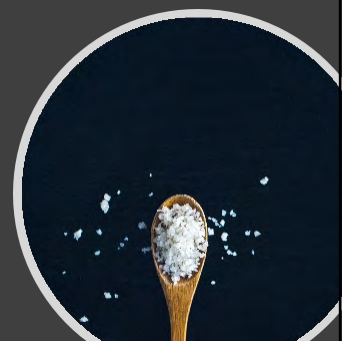


Inner Classic

Too much sweet-flavored food makes head-hair fall out.

Inner Classic

Too much salt damages the blood and therefore the hair.



Recommended Foods with Dosages and Contraindications



The food we eat helps us build acquired essence which is stored in the Kidneys. If you don't eat a wide variety of foods, imbalances result, leading to gray hair and other problems. Balance the six tastes in your diet: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, spicy, and pungent. If you are over 50, cook all food.

The information below describes how to use these foods for healthy hair. The foods also have many other uses.

WALNUTS

- Properties: warm; sweet
- Functions: Reduce inflammation and alleviate pain, nourish Kidneys, adrenals, and brain.
- Contraindications: Do not eat if you have diarrhea, a red face, or strong thirst.

BLACK SESAME SEEDS

- Properties: neutral to cool; bitter, spicy
- Functions: lubricates intestines and Zang (yin) organs. Treats low back pain, stiff joints, dizziness, numbness, and headaches caused by deficient body fluids.
- Contraindications: Do not eat if you have diarrhea. Watch for allergy symptoms, which are rare but can happen. If you have Kidney failure or were told to avoid foods with phosphorous, eat in small amounts. Toast or cook to avoid blocking the intestines.

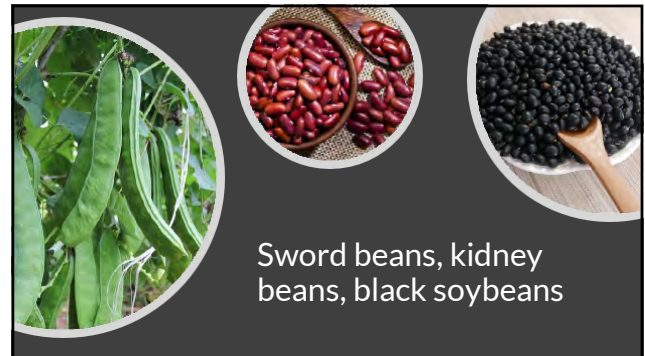


How to eat

- Walnut powder: grind 2 ½ T walnuts halves or pieces into a powder; mix with water and drink daily for 2 months
- Walnut & rice porridge: mix 5 tsp walnut powder, ½ cup rice (soaked for 20 minutes), and 1 ¼ cups water, then cook for 50 minutes to strengthen the kidneys, improve memory, and sharpen mental focus.
- Paste: crush 2 ½ T walnuts and 1 T black sesame seeds. Mix with 1 tsp honey (optional). Take dosage daily in the morning for at least one month for dry hair, spit ends, premature graying

BLACK SOYBEANS

- Properties: Neutral; sweet (soybean and soymilk). Cool; sweet (tofu)
- Functions: Treats rheumatism, Kidney disease, and Kidney related conditions such as low backache, weak bones, and painful knees.
- Contraindications: People with gout or high urine acidity should avoid too much tofu. Do not cook tofu with spinach. Combine with another protein and/or a little sugar to avoid producing too much gas. Make sure edamame (non-dried soybeans) have not been frozen too long. Too much soy can weaken the Kidneys, so eat in moderation.



How to eat

- Simmer one cup of beans in five cups of water for an hour. Remove and save the juice and continue cooking the beans. Take ½ cup juice ½ hours before meals as a remedy for muscle spasms and cramps, inflammation, and chronic cough, which result from weak Kidneys.

KIDNEY BEANS

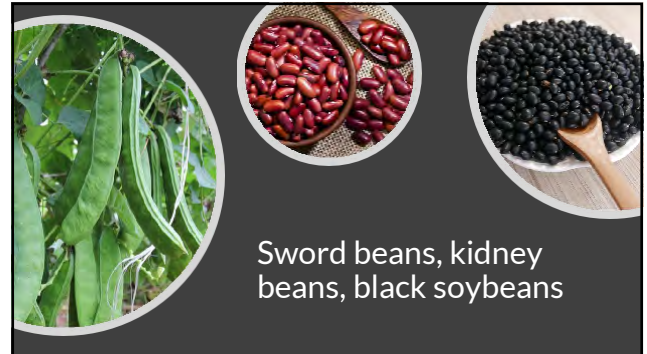
- Properties: Cooling; sweet.
- Functions: Increases yin fluids, treats edema and swelling. Increase yin fluids which helps the Kidneys.
- Contraindications: People who are generally thin, frail, or very dry in nature should limit their consumption.

How to eat

- Soak for 12 hours or overnight in four parts water to one part legume. For best results, change the water once or twice. Soaking softens the skin and begins the sprouting process, which reduces or eliminates phytic acid. This makes the beans more digestible.
- Discard soaking water and add new water and beans to a pot (again four parts to one).
- Bring to a boil and discard foam on top.
- Boil for 20 minutes with lid off. Enzymes that make digestion difficult will disperse with the steam.
- Now the beans are ready to bake in a recipe. You can also drink the juice, ½ cup before a meal.

SWORD BEANS

- Properties: Warm; sweet.
- Functions: Warm the Kidneys and stimulate yang; reduce aches in the sides of the abdomen; decrease gas; stop yang weakness associated with hiccups.
- Contraindications: Must not be eaten raw and must be cooked long enough. Avoid if you have stomach heat have a burning sensation or hunger pains in the stomach.



How to eat

- Eat up to 1 ½ cups of sword beans per day. Add to your diet up to 2 times per week.
- Cook thoroughly at 212 degrees Fahrenheit to kill toxins. Cook until the beans are soft.
- Stir-fry: Wash and thoroughly cook sword beans with diced or shredded potatoes.

CHESNUTS

- Properties: Warm; sweet.
- Functions: Tonify the Kidneys; strengthen the Spleen; strengthen tendons and brain functioning; nourish the Stomach; resolve swelling; stop bleeding
- Contraindications: Do not eat too much. Safe overall.



How to eat

- Eat up to ½ cup of chestnuts per day. Okay to add to your diet 3-4 times per week.
- Roasted: Cut an T shape on the shells with a paring knife. Arrange on a baking rack or baking sheet. Roast until the shells pull back from the cuts and the nuts are soft, at least 15-20 minutes. Peel off the shell and eat.

PISTACHIOS

- Properties: Neutral; bitter, sour, sweet.
- Functions: Tonifies Qi. Nourishes Liver and Kidney yin. Lubricates the Large Intestine. Promotes blood circulation.
- Contraindications: Avoid if you have a damp constitution.

How to eat

- Eat up to ½ cup of pistachios maximum per day. Okay to add to your diet 3-4 times per week. Alternate with other nuts.
- Roasted nuts are recommended.

Citations: Zhang, Y. & Yao, Y. (2012). *Your guide to health with foods & herbs: Using the wisdom of traditional Chinese medicine*. Shanghai: Better Link. Pitchford, P. (2002). *Healing with whole foods: Asian traditions and modern nutrition 3rd ed*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.