

Tips for Hair Loss After Weight Loss Surgery (WLS)

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Not everyone talks about it... but hair loss after weight loss surgery can be common and for some, very stressful. It does not happen for everyone, but if you are one of the few that are affected, you likely are looking for solutions. Join us as we share tips that can make all the difference!

The hair loss associated with weight loss surgery is called telogen effluvium and has to do with the normal hair growth cycle. It usually starts abruptly, and very seldom lasts longer than six months.

Those who notice this as an issue, usually notice around the 3-6-month mark. Then, slowly decreases over the next 3-6 months. At one year, most have lots of new regrowth. Sometimes the texture or growth pattern will even change. So, likely, most who do notice, will only have hair loss as a temporary issue.

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Common Reasons for Hair Loss After Bariatric Surgery

- **Stress** of the body from the weight loss surgery.
- **Hormonal changes** (including the thyroid) as your body adjusts to a new body.
- **Vitamin and mineral deficiencies** (specifically B-6, B-12, iron, zinc, biotic, folate, and essential fatty acids).
- **Effects from anesthesia.** Limited research suggests that because anesthesia can slow down cell division, those cells which rely on fast cell division, such as hair follicles, are pushed into their resting phase.
- **Medications post-surgery.** (Literally hundreds of drugs may affect the growth of hair including some of which are necessary for surgical procedures. These can be direct effects or indirect effects (e.g. allergic reaction to a medication).
- **Change in diet, especially initially after surgery.** Low amounts of protein can affect hair follicles. Which makes sense because your hair follicles are made mostly of protein. A lack in protein has shown to promote hair loss.

So, with many new changes that the body is undergoing, what you have here is a recipe that can adversely affect the hair. How can you prepare your body for the changes and potentially prevent or decrease your risk?



Tips to prevent hair loss

1. **Vitamins are key!** Start your vitamins just as soon as possible after surgery. Pre-loading your body with the essential nutrients it needs helps keep you from any known deficiency and keeps your cells in tip top shape! Also, eat vitamin rich foods that help sustain the body's energy. Foods high in zinc, iron, fatty acids, folic acid, B12, and Vitamin C. [Check out ProCare Health Multivitamins here!](#)
2. **Protein, protein, protein baby!** Protein is the building block of the cells in your body. Keep protein as the staple of your diet. This includes protein shakes (just after surgery), and then (depending on your individual diet) adding in real food sources such as legumes, beans, quinoa, soy, skinless chicken, lean red meat, grilled/baked, fish, low-fat string cheese, greek yogurt, and cottage cheese. If you are going to use a protein powder to meet your protein goals, make sure you are using a good quality one that is also low in sugar so you do not sabotage your weight loss journey! If you are not sure what a good quality protein is, we talked all about that in our past live events with a registered dietitian, Katie Chapmon. Click here to watch "[Protein Power – What's the Best Protein Supplements](#)".
3. **Take care of your body.** Rest when your body needs rest. The stress of surgery can leave the body physically weakened after surgery. Allow yourself the rest and healing it needs as it changes. Invest in self-care; massages, long baths, walks, or whatever it is that places you in a more relaxed and state of ease. This allows your body to heal more quickly and for nature to take its course. It can be hard sometimes to stay calm and relax, especially when you are seeing weight loss results, but you feel like you are losing your hair in the process too. Just try your best to stay calm and find peace in knowing that as long as you are staying on top of your vitamins, blood work, and staying in touch with your doctor, so they can monitor any deficiencies, this hair loss is not permanent and will likely stop after 6 months.
4. **Extra biotin to accelerate hair growth and prevent loss.** Biotin helps strengthen the hair follicles. Adequate intake is: 30-100 mcg daily. Even at high levels, Biotin appears to be safe. Researchers show that consumption of levels up to 2.5mg (2,500 mcg) have been established as safe without observed adverse effects. Many bariatric multivitamins contain 150-600mcg daily. Wanting extra Biotin: [Check out ProCare Health Biotin Here.](#)
5. **Shampoos specifically formulated to stimulate hair growth.** Some shampoos can help to stimulate circulation alongside hair follicles to help with hair growth. Check with your hairdresser or bariatric program for suggestions. [Sally Beauty Nutri-ox Hair Thinning Shampoo and Condition: Click here!](#)
6. **Hair thickeners:** A colored hair spray which is not very expensive. Males and Females can use it too!
7. [Toppik - hair thickening and color: Click here!](#)
[Toppik – hairline optimizer: Click here!](#)
[Jojoba Oil –Click here!](#)
[Castor Oil – Click here!](#)



8. **Hair Masks:** You don't have to spend a fortune on salon quality products! There are many hair masks that promote growth and thickening that you can do at your house and probably have the ingredients on hand already! If you don't they are super easy to get too. Here are some masks that we've tried that really help hair feel even better!
- a. Mask #1: Cinnamon and Coconut Oil- The spice helps stimulate blood circulation, while the coconut oil is very hydrating for the hair and helps with repairing any damage/breakage. 1 teaspoon of cinnamon/1 teaspoon coconut oil. Apply the mask to your roots and massage into your scalp. Leave for 30-45 minutes, then rinse out.
 - b. Mask #2: Coconut Oil, Honey, Egg, and plain yogurt- This sounds crazy I know, but trust me there are so many benefits. Honey alone has vitamins and minerals that can help with frizzy hair and breakage. Mix 1 teaspoon of coconut oil, ½ cup of plain yogurt, 1 teaspoon of 100% pure honey, and 1 egg. Apply to hair and leave for 15-20 minutes. This one you will rinse out with warm water and want to shampoo after. Conditioning is optional (even though we would not recommend it). This mask is really good for frizzy, dry, damaged hair.

Products mentioned in our video event:

[Amika - to build body for your hair: Click here!](#)

[Strictly curls \(big yellow bottle\): Click here!](#)

If you find yourself with thinning hair – some quick fixes include:

1. Find some new ways to style your hair.

- **Females:** A quick updo into a bun, a braid, twisting the hair into a ponytail or a roll, wearing hair accessories (scarf or scrunchie) or a hat, cutting the hair to add body, use of hair extensions, and/or a real-hair wig.

Products mentioned in our video event:

[Hair extensions – Click here!](#)

[Wet brush - click here!](#)

[Scalp massager – click here!](#)

- **Males:** A shortened cut, temporarily shaving your head, use of a hat.

Note: ProCare is only affiliated with ProCare Health Products mentioned. ProCare is not associated with other links in this event. They are only mentioned as product suggestions.



References:

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