



# What to do about dandruff

By TAKE CARE STAFF • SEP 27, 2015

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JOSEPH TAME FLICKR

While it may not be a health issue, it may be a serious embarrassment. Dandruff can make its way from your scalp to your shoulders in what seems like seconds after you shower. How can you make those flakes go away?

This week on “Take Care,” Dr. Emmy Graber joins us with her recommendations for getting rid of dandruff. Graber ([http://www.grabermd.com/01\\_biography.html](http://www.grabermd.com/01_biography.html)) is director of the Dermatology Institute of Boston.



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4:05

Dandruff (<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dandruff/basics/definition/con-20023690>) is pretty simple. It's skin that isn't normal. Usually it's either dry or oily skin that causes flaking. More often than not, an overgrowth of yeast is what causes dandruff.

"It's a type of yeast that's naturally found in the areas where we have hair, but in some people it can become overgrown and can cause flaking (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3002421/>)," Dr. Graber says.

## Why me?

Because dandruff may appear on a dry scalp, it often seems that washing will do nothing to change the situation – because some shampoos can further dry the scalp. But on the other side of the spectrum, if an oily scalp is causing your dandruff, it can often seem to disappear after washing.

Regardless of cause, dandruff is generally more common in men, and usually in middle age or older people. Dandruff can even be more severe in a specific population of people – those who have had a stroke or have any other neurological conditions.

## Going, going, gone

You can treat dandruff with some shampoos you'll find on store shelves. Graber mentions both Head and Shoulders and Selsun Blue. Other shampoos or products can be prescribed by your dermatologist.

Confirm that your dandruff is in fact dandruff, Graber says, especially if a shampoo isn't working for you, because there are some other conditions that can result in flaking of the scalp or skin.

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