

MANE GOAL

Strength

TRESS TEST Pluck out a dry hair and tug it from both ends. If it breaks easily or doesn't bounce back to shape, read on.

FLEX AND FORTIFY...

In the shower Overdoing anything (coloring, washing, styling) strips the hair's outer layer, causing weakness. Upgrade to a protein-rich shampoo made with wheat or amino acids (one we like: John Barrett Be Cleansed Daily Shampoo, \$28); nutrients cling to hair and fill in structural gaps. Alas, these shampoos are not usually made with lubricating ingredients, so they can leave strands feeling stiff. Compensate by following up with a softening or smoothing conditioner (they have the most moisturizing ingredients). Or stick with your regular shampoo and get your extra dose of protein by using a weekly mask, such as Jonathan IB Infuser Anti-Aging Restorative Conditioner, \$28.

While you style Choose a paddle brush as your blow-dryer's partner. "The bristles are spaced out and often on a cushioned surface that gives, so hair is less likely to tear," Howse says. Also use a top-quality dryer; a cheap motor means high heat has to compensate for low air output. Look for label terms like *maximum speed* and *professional motor*. "The best cost about \$100, but will last at least five years," Howse notes. Keep that dryer and brush moving; settling on one spot fries hair.



◀ **Phyto Phytonecstar oil treatment**, \$30, is rich in egg proteins. Coat dry hair and wash 15 minutes later.



◀ **Sunsilk Captivating Curis Gel & Cream Twist**, \$4, protects curly hair from heat styling and helps it hold its shape.



◀ **Surprise:** Paddle brushes (like Goody Ouchless Gel, \$10) are gentler on strands than combs.

▶ **Logics Age Revitalize Nutrient Radiance Shampoo**, \$24, is the first step to strength. Proteins build strands; fatty acids nourish.



Your scalp type may not be the same as your face's skin type. Part your hair to see your scalp's state.

WHAT'S UNDERNEATH IT ALL?

Excess oil, a sprinkling of flakes, patches of irritation: all scalp issues that can affect hair's look, says Paul McAndrews, M.D., a dermatologist in Los Angeles. Find out if your scalp needs special care.

• **Your scalp is oily** if The day after a shampoo, your roots look oil-slicked or your fingertips are left filmy after a scalp rub. **Scalp solution** Apply a gel shampoo (it dissolves more oil than a cream) directly onto dry hair and scalp before showering. "If hair and scalp are wet, oil and skin cells stick together and don't come off," Edris Nicholls, owner of Edris Salon in NYC, says. Rub it gently into oilier zones, then suds and rinse under the shower.

• **Your scalp is dry** if It sheds tiny flakes or feels tight. **Scalp solution** Use a moisturizing scalp exfoliator weekly, such as Oscar Blandi Trattamento D'Alternanza Exfoliating Treatment, \$26. Part wet hair in various places to apply, rinse well and shampoo. If your scalp is itchy (an indicator of irritation), skip the granules and choose one made with gentler fruit enzymes.

• **Your scalp has dandruff** if You spot inflamed patches of skin when you part your hair, or find large flakes on your clothes. **Scalp solution** Shampoos with zinc beat dandruff's fungus. And the companion conditioner does more to fight flakes. Try Head & Shoulders new line of zinc-rich conditioners, \$5 each.



Distribute shampoo with Babylist Scalp Brush, \$2, to loosen oil and flaky skin.

