



Constantly
Flaky?
Flaky flaky

Many consumers automatically assume they have dandruff when they see a scaly condition on their scalp. The term "dandruff" is a rather loose term that consumers give to all scaly conditions of the scalp.

Everyone has microorganisms on the skin and scalp, which are the normal skin flora. In some cases, these microorganisms multiply at a more rapid rate, further affecting the skin and scalp regeneration process, showing thicker scales on the eyebrows, inside and outside of the ears, forehead and scalp. Furthermore, some of the

scaly conditions are combined with inflammation, erythema, scalp discoloration, and excessive itchiness.

IS ALL DANDRUFF ALIKE?

It is possible for a person to have a scaly scalp disorder and not have knowledge of it. Some may assume they have dry scalp, or that a scaly scalp is something they inherited from their parents, thus trying numerous over-the-counter

products with no results. In many cases, the lack of results occurs because two or more scaly scalp conditions are present and the over-the-counter product is only effective in treating one of the scaly conditions, while the other scaly conditions require different treatments.

A dry scalp condition is not the same as dandruff. A dry scalp does not result in scales that you can lift or move on the scalp. Most important, it is best corrected

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with moisture, not heavy oils or pomades applied to the scalp. Heavy oils or pomades can clog the pores of the scalp, also resulting in slow hair growth.

SCALP CONDITIONS

There are actually several types of unattractive scaly scalp conditions:

Psoriasis is a common scaly scalp disorder that affects people of all ages. There is usually inflammation on the scalp and bleeding when the scales are scratched.

Neurodermatitis is a disorder that usually occurs in women. It is a scaly condition combined with inflammation, redness and severe itching.

Seborrheic dermatitis can be either dry or oily scaling on the scalp. It's usually caused by overactive sebaceous glands and can be itchy and flaky.

Sodium accumulation is a scaly condition that occurs due to perspiration.

Scaly scalp conditions can range from mild to severe and can be listed as pityriasis capitis, pityriasis amiantacea, atopic eczema, pyrogenic granuloma, or seborrheic eczema. Please *do not* attempt to make a self-diagnosis. Instead,

seek the professional experience of a doctor of trichology, the study and treatment of hair and its diseases.

OTHER

SCALP DISORDER FACTORS

You may also want to consider that the following can contribute to scalp disorders as well: a poor diet, medications, health conditions, fluid retention and stiff hair designs (worn for two weeks or longer). These are the culprits that cause many severe scaly scalp conditions.

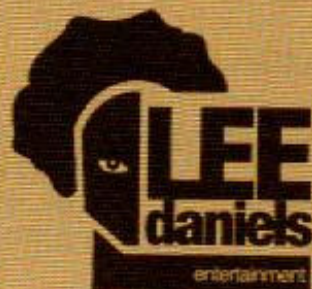
Actually, 98 percent of Americans are nutritionally deficient, which also affects scalp health. Two examples include a deficiency of vitamin A, which can contribute to progressive hair thinning, excessive scalp dryness and itchy and scaly scalp and skin. On the other hand, an overdose of vitamin A could result in alopecia and dry skin. A zinc deficiency can contribute to diffused alopecia and scaling of the scalp and eyebrows.

It is important to know that you should never comb to lift the scales

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from your scalp before shampooing your hair and scalp at home: you could cause further irritation to your scalp if there is inflammation, bleeding, lesions, etc. Many scaly scalp conditions require treatment prior to the hair and scalp being shampooed.

In conclusion, try to avoid feelings of embarrassment or shame when scales appear on your scalp, shoulders, eyebrows, forehead, ear area or neckline area. Help is available. S

Dr. Linda Amerson is a Doctor of Trichology—a specialist in alopecia and scalp disorders—and the owner of LA Hair & Scalp clinic located in Arlington, TX. Dr. Amerson has 25 years of experience in solving scalp disorders. If you would like to ask her a question, email her at dliindaamerson@yahoo.com or call the office at 888-265-8854.