

Changing Hair from Straight to Afro

Changing Hair from Straight to a Natural Afro Hair Style

Should you cut your permed hair when going natural?

Ease of transitioning relaxed hair to its natural state depends on hair type. Curly or kinky hair that has tight curls when not relaxed tends to draw toward the scalp in its natural state. This hair type may require a more radical transition process than hair that is less compact.

African American hair tends to fall into the kinky or nappy category wherein natural hair draws to the scalp. Even if pressed with hot combs or flat irons, all it takes is a swim or a shower or finding oneself caught in rain with no umbrella to return kinky hair to its natural state. The return is as obvious as Cinderella's carriage returning to a pumpkin, her horses to mice, and her beautiful princess gown to rags. To those who do not have kinky hair—this is no exaggeration.

Although natural hair—or Afros—look distinct and attractive when cut and groomed properly, women often find that wearing kinky hair in its natural state makes for too much work and that the style itself does not coincide with current fashion sense. Aside from this, women with hair that would normally grow into Afros think the same as women with straight or less curly hair. Women, no matter what their hair type or color, tend to want their hair to look some other way. This is the nature of female outlook!

So what do women do when they tire of relaxing their hair and

decide to get away from chemicals that can damage their beautiful tresses? Here are a few tips for transitioning back to natural hair.

Tip # 1

When transitioning to natural hair, women—or girls—may have to cut most of their hair. In fact, it is virtually inevitable. Perming or processing hair with hair altering chemicals truly does permanently straighten the hair. The thing is—only the permed hair becomes straight. As new hair grows, women and girls with permed hair must get another perm to straighten the new growth. For this reason, returning hair to its natural state may require cutting away permed hair up to the length of the new growth.

Tip #2

Prepare for a drastic change in appearance. Depending on how much hair one must cut in order to get rid of chemically straightened hair, the remaining hair length could be as short as an inch. Persons undergoing this process will see themselves differently when looking in the mirror and others—especially those with different hair types who do not understand kinky hair care—may wonder what happened to so-and-so's hair!

Tip # 3

Use a good hair conditioner following each hair wash. Try to find a conditioner that leaves your hair feeling soft after you wash it. Beauty supply stores have lots of products for African American hair these days providing more hair problem solving choices than in the past when Afros were more common in American society. A good hair conditioner will make combing and picking the hair easier and cause less stress to the hair. Bear in mind that hair, permed, straight, or curly, is more fragile when wet. Handle wet hair with care and handle it as little as possible.

Tip # 4

Use a good hair lubricant. Hair creams, oils, and greases are not treated equally. Some of these hair treatments may leave hair feeling too greasy and others may not lubricate hair enough. Kinky hair does not mean one hair type. It only means hair draws to the scalp. Natural hair on one person's head may be more course than natural hair on another person's head. It may also be drier or more porous and a slew of other distinct differences. Wearing hair in its natural state requires finding hair products that complement each individual's hair type. Applying the right lubricating conditioner after natural hair has been washed and dried keeps hair from drying out and becoming brittle.

Tip # 5

When hair starts to grow out (and for hair that did not require drastic haircuts) really tight curls benefit from braiding before styling. The best thing to do is braid the hair at night before bed and then unbraid and pick out the hair in the morning. Braiding hair every night may seem like a pain at first, but when all is said and done, routine braiding, unbraiding, and careful picking may have something on regular perming, blow-drying, and flat ironing because the hair undergoes less stress and becomes healthier.

Tip # 6

Buy good hair combs and picks. Thick combs with wide spaced teeth and hair picks with long prongs work best for lifting Afros without over-stressing the hair. No one likes combing their hair when their hair continuously gets caught in the combing apparatus. Avoid this problem by purchasing the right tools for individual hair types.

Tip # 7

Wrap hair after braiding it at night. Wrapping hair in a good

nylon caps or scarves keeps braids from coming loose during a person's sleep. Wrapping hair also protects it from sleep-smashing hair undergoes when heads move about on pillows and mattresses.

Transitioning hair to its natural state may call for a few drastic changes, depending on the natural hair grade, but in the end persons making this transition get to enjoy their hair the way nature intended them to enjoy it. They get to rejoice in their natural appearance. In addition, they often come to realize that natural curly hair is just as good as straight hair—and for most—a lot better than a bald head!