

# Mane Stay

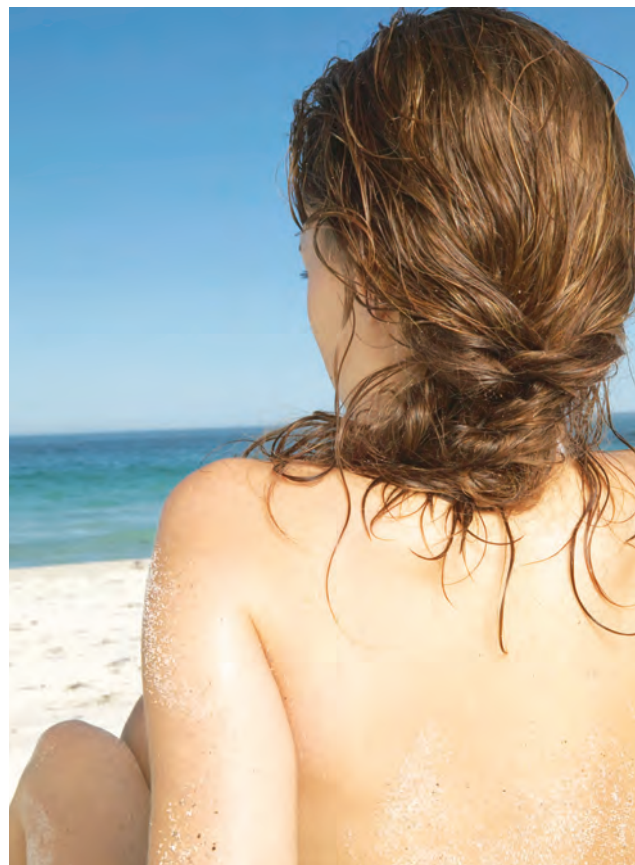
*Keeping hair and scalp healthy in summer* **Laura deCarufel**

**W**hen it comes to the sun and our skin, we know the drill: apply sunscreen and apply it often. But what's not as well known is the damaging effect on hair of the sun's ultraviolet rays. Add in the drying action of chlorine and salt water, and the conditions are ripe for a summer-long bad hair day.

"When you take off your toque after the winter, you need to put on a sun hat," says Dr. Carmel Anderson, a dermatologist and an assistant clinical professor at the University of British Columbia in Kelowna. The powerful UV rays from the sun can hurt both hair and scalp, leading to a weakened cuticle (the hair shaft's outer layer) in the former, and skin cancer in the latter.

"People don't realize that the unprotected skin on the scalp isn't seasoned like the skin on the face," says Anderson. "The scalp can get fried with very little warning." Avoid open-weave straw hats, which have holes. Hold a hat up to the sun. If no light pours in, you've got a keeper that will protect both your hair and your scalp.

"Most people's hair is already under-hydrated," says Peter Ciardulli of Toronto's Calia Hair Design. Moisture-zapping power lurks in chlorine and salt water, which draw out the natural oil from the cuticle. This can cause breakage, leading to split ends and a dulled sheen. To keep the scalp's natural hydrating oils intact, Ciardulli suggests washing your hair only every second or third day. Anderson recommends switching shampoos every few weeks to prevent your hair from becoming too accus-



tomed to one formula. If you spend a lot of time in the pool or sea, buy hair products formulated for swimmers. Apply conditioner before swimming, wear a bathing cap and use a clarifying shampoo afterwards.

Deep-conditioning treatments can also give an extra boost of moisture. But, as Anderson points out, very few molecules are small enough to penetrate the hair shaft's cortex (middle layer), so look for ingredients that can — restorative coconut oil, for example. Some hair products now contain UV filters that protectively coat the hair.

Stick to a routine of gentle maintenance. Pat, don't rub hair dry and avoid heavy styling aids. If you must use the blow-dryer, finish with a blast of cool air to seal the hair cuticle, allowing it to better reflect light and appear shinier. Have a trim every three months to get rid of dry ends and encourage new growth. "If you love your hair, it will show," Ciardulli says.

That hair-loving philosophy extends to our diet, too. Anderson recommends a daily regimen rich in iron, protein and omega-3 fatty acids, one that includes lots of blackberries, walnuts, flaxseed and leafy greens. "All of these help make your hair — and you — healthier," she says. She also recommends both drinking green tea and applying it topically once it's cooled. "It's packed with antioxidants and can also act as a mild sunscreen." It's also good to eat foods rich in lycopene, such as red grapefruit, watermelon and tomatoes. "Start with what you put into your body," says Anderson. "It's your health that determines how you look." 