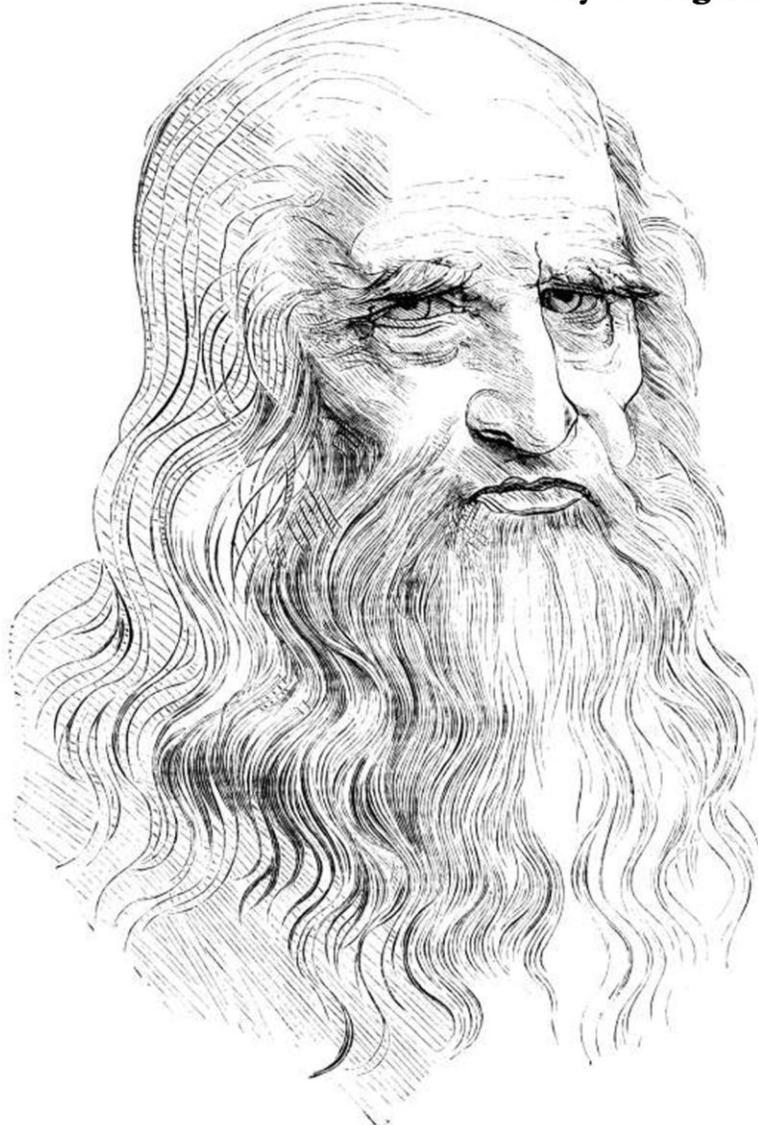


Beard & Moustache Conditioning Manual

by Douglas Smythe



**For The Whiskered Warrior
To The Everyday Gent**

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Beard & Moustache Conditioning Manual

For The Whiskered Warrior To The Everyday Gent

Why condition the facial hair? There are many reasons for doing this. Maybe your significant other is not too keen on the upper lip exfoliation. Maybe, more often than you care to admit, you've been directed by an anonymous Good Samaritan to the nearest shelter or soup kitchen. Maybe you are one of the new breed who compete in regular moustache and beard competitions. These are just a few possibilities. The fact is you are reading this guide now because the concept of facial hair conditioning proves of interest to you. In this guide you will find tips and pointers that will get your beard or moustache in tip top, pristine condition, possibly something to start bragging about. Happy conditioning!

Facial hair is generally much coarser than the hair found on your head. To get the job done, you'll need both the right method, and the right products. It is wise to cleanse your facial hair with a light shampoo made with gentle ingredients to prepare it for the deeper conditioning needed. But, a word of caution; a lot of commercial brand shampoos and conditioners contain sodium lauryl sulfate, a detergent that has been proven to cause skin irritation, beard dandruff, and split bristles. Strangely enough, the same stuff is used to clean up engine oil spills as well. Do not use this on your face. Carefully read the ingredient labels on all the products you have been using and make sure sodium lauryl sulfate is not on the list. Some wonderful shampoos can be found at your local health food store. Good ingredients to look for are aloe vera, green tea, and vitamin E.

Deep conditioning should be done at the very least, once a week. If you are a facial fur athlete you may want to condition a little more often. We will be discussing 3 effective external approaches to conditioning your beard or moustache, and then move into diet, supplements, and herbs you may want to consider adding to your regimen to maintain and promote optimum facial hair growth and sheen.

Hot Oil and Honey Conditioning Treatment

The Ingredients:

The honey and hot oil treatment consists of, honey and, uh, hot oil! Specifically, we are talking about sesame and jojoba oil. And back to the honey, "Honey?" yes honey. Honey is great nourishment for the hair thanks to the many vitamins, minerals, and antibacterial properties it naturally contains. It also acts as an excellent humectant i.e. it attracts moisture, which is exactly what coarse bristles need.

Sesame and jojoba are used for this treatment as they are chemically similar to oils produced by our sebaceous glands. Because of this, these oils absorb much easier than others into facial hair. Similar to honey, these oils also have anti-inflammatory properties, and when used in combination provide a synergistic power house of conditioning, while at the same time end that itching and irritation that many bearded men experience.

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You'll also need some cider vinegar. The vinegar will remove the natural oils and build up from your bristles allowing the hot oil and honey direct access to the follicle.

The Method:

In a small saucepan, combine 2 tablespoons of jojoba oil, 2 tablespoons of sesame oil, and 4 tablespoons of honey, preferably local. Whisk the ingredients together over low heat on the stove. Do not over heat the mixture. Remove when serum is completely blended and not too hot to the touch.

Allow the mixture to cool for 1 minute. In this time prepare the facial hair with cider vinegar. Massage the cider vinegar into the beard or moustache and brush through with a comb. This procedure can also be done before you prepare the treatment in order to give it time to dry. You do not need to rinse the vinegar out before applying the mix.

Now you are ready to apply the serum. Use a small toothbrush or comb to apply to the facial hair. Work into the hair until each bristle is coated thoroughly. Allow it to work its magic for 30 minutes before you rinse out with warm water. Any excess mixture can be put in a mason jar and saved for next time. For best results, this conditioning treatment should ideally be done once a week, but at least twice a month.

****For a vegan version of this treatment simply leave out the honey**

Overnight Leave-in Treatment

In this next treatment we will again be using natural oils. There are a few to choose from and everyone will have their favorite. We recommend you try all 4 in different combinations and see what works best for you. Oils that work well as a leave in conditioner are: Jojoba, Sesame, Argan, and Sweet Almond Oil.

Mix equal parts of two oils from the list in a jar and apply an hour or two before bed. Over the sink, massage the oils into your hair with the tips of your fingers. No need to pretreat hair with cider vinegar since the concoction will have hours to work its way into your facial hair. Next, run a comb or toothbrush through your beard or mustache to remove excess oils. Left over mixture can be stored in a mason jar for up to 6 months. Before putting your head to pillow, as a precaution, run your fingers through your facial hair to see if is still oily, if it is dab up excess oil with a paper towel. Chances are it will already be absorbed and at work. The next morning, rinse in the shower but do not shampoo. This treatment should be done once a week or more if you are competing.

Leave-in Daytime Conditioner

The next treatment is a strengthening yet conditioning infusion. You will need a half cup of dried rosemary, 4 ounces of grape seed oil, a candy/cooking thermometer, a Pyrex glass bowl, and a pot that the bowl can rest in without touching the bottom. We are building a poor man's double boiler, but if you happen to have a double boiler even better.

Combine the rosemary and the oil in the glass bowl and stir until all the herb is under the oil. In the pot, add about an inch of water. Put on the stove and adjust the heat to very low, just under simmer. Put the

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thermometer in and do not let the temp rise above 100 degrees. Keep an eye on this for every stove is different, and this may take a little bit of tweaking in order to find the sweet spot on the dial that will keep your infusion at a steady temp. Leave on the stove for 2 days. A cold infusion can also be done by combining the ingredients in a mason jar and leaving them to sit for a month, shaking the jar once a day for about a minute. I personally find the hot process to be easier and more potent in its released properties.

Rosemary in traditional medicine is believed to stimulate hair follicles and promote hair growth. It is also believed to slow and prevent graying whiskers. Rosemary has been seen to clear dandruff while at the same time deeply condition. Grape seed oil like the previous oils mentioned mimics the hairs natural oil and is absorbed quickly into the follicles. It strengthens hair, adds shine, and a soft feel.

Brush mixture sparingly into your facial hair in the morning. This leave-in treatment will leave your fur feeling soft, smooth, and non-greasy all day long. Keep in a mason jar, in a cool dark place in between use.

Supplements & Herbs

Vitamin Deficiency is one of the major causes of dry, damaged, and brittle whiskers, so pay attention in the next section, and maybe put some of these items on the shopping list for the next time you're at the market. Vitamins can naturally be attained through a proper diet of quality food, but thanks to our monster of a food industry, a lot of stuff that makes it to our table is so depleted in vitamins and nutrients that it's no better than filler. So eat well and supplement in combination and you will see an improvement in all aspects of your life...especially in the gain of facial fur gold!

Below you will find additional information on herbs and nutrients that can have a positive effect on hair health. Some of these items are easily obtained from food, while others are best taken in the form of a dietary supplement.

Herbs

Gotu Kola: Gotu Kola is an herb that has thousands of years of recorded use in both Traditional Medicine from India (Ayurveda), and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Most famously, it is known to help with cognitive function and memory improvement, but it has been used to treat a wide variety of ailments including hair loss. The plant is part of the parsley family, and contains a host of nutrients and amino acids. These include thiamine, riboflavin, pyridoxine, vitamin K, serine, threonine, alanine, lysine, magnesium, calcium and sodium. It is typically consumed as a powdered herb in tea or capsule form.

Nettle Root: Nettle root helps to prevent hair loss brought on by hormonal imbalances. It can effectively block cell receptor sites that would otherwise bind with hormones that are responsible for male pattern baldness and general hair loss in both men and women. On a side note, nettle is an excellent herb to preserve overall hormone health in men, especially as they age.

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Aloe Vera Juice: Aloe contains a complex carbohydrate called acemannan with properties that work by enhancing immune cell function. The juice may also kill yeast and parasites, as well as promote the growth of new, healthy cells. Healthy immune system = healthy hair. It can also be applied topically to the facial hair as yet another moisturizing conditioner.

Mix aloe in a cup with water, equal parts and add a squirt of lemon for taste. This is actually quite a refreshing drink. You can purchase Aloe Juice by the gallon or half gallon at any health food store. It's not that costly and well worth its weight in gold.

Horsetail: This herb is a kind of grass that is very rich in silica, potassium, manganese, and selenium. It also contains saponins and flavonoids that promote elasticity of both skin and hair. Silica in particular is a very beneficial nutrient for hair growth as it helps to strengthen, nourish, and vitalize hair through its action in forming collagen. Horsetail contains the most silica of any known member of the plant kingdom. It is typically consumed as a tea or in supplement form.

Parsley: I know what you're thinking, parsley? Yes, parsley for hair growth. It is high in fatty acids and vitamins that hasten hair growth. It can be used both externally as a hair "mask" to help balance the sebaceous glands, and internally as a dietary aid.

To use externally, boil fresh parsley in water for 20 minutes, drain and then put in a blender and puree into a paste to be applied to the hair. Leave on for 30 minutes, then rinse.

Fo-Ti: Also known in Traditional Chinese Medicine as he shou wu, it has been used for millennia to reverse the greying of hair, and improve shine and elasticity. Popular in many formulas for longevity, fo ti is an herb that is considered a tonic in Chinese Medicine. Tonic herbs are used to promote longevity and to improve the function of organs and glands in the body. Fo Ti specifically is a kidney tonic and therefore is typically used by people who are showing signs of aging which can include hair changes such as baldness, dry brittle hair, and greying. Many people in the West take fo ti as a standalone herb but historically it is used in combination with other herbs to synergistically treat the indicated issues. A great Chinese formula for hair health that includes fo ti is called shou wu pian. It will not work overnight but with consistent use can be very effective at reversing greying of hair.

Dong Quai: This is another herb that has a long history of use in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Often thought of as an herb for women, dong quai, or dang gui (as many Chinese Medicine practitioners call it) is actually a beneficial herb for men. It supports hair growth by promoting healthy blood cell formation and encouraging the regulation of hormones.

Vitamins & Nutrients

Zinc: Aids the body to properly utilize protein. Hair is a protein based filament made up of keratin. When you have enough zinc in your body more keratin will speedily be produced. Zinc also helps in maintaining a healthy immune system. Illness and other maladies cause stress to the system which in turn may cause hair loss or damage. Make sure to add more chickpeas to your diet for they are loaded with Zinc and Vitamin B6!

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Vitamin E: Is a hair growing machine! This vitamin encourages capillary formation and regulation which increases circulation and speeds healthy hair growth. Vitamin E is fat soluble so make sure to take this with a meal containing fats. It can be found in green leafy vegetables, nuts, and eggs.

Vitamin B-12: Is actually part of the structure that makes up your hair, so keeping sufficient levels of B12 will increase overall hair health. I personally recommend taking a B-complex, for each of the B vitamins play a crucial role in hair growth and keratin production.

Vitamin B6: People deficient in vitamin B6 often will lose their hair. B6, as with many other B vitamins, is key component in many important bodily processes including hair growth. In addition, B6 will help with digestion, mood, and energy levels so it's hard to find a reason not to want to make sure you are getting enough of this important player. It can also thwart hair loss through its ability to inhibit the formation of certain hormones responsible for male baldness.

Biotin: Also known as vitamin B7, Vitamin H, and Coenzyme R, biotin has a well established reputation as, "The hair growth vitamin." It has been widely used to promote both growth and elasticity of hair, as well as protecting against dryness, could we really ask for anything more? In fact, one symptom of a biotin deficiency is hair loss. It is a water soluble vitamin that can be easily obtained through many dietary sources including: beans, cauliflower, nuts, peanut butter, whole grains, and swiss chard.

Folic Acid or Folate: Technically, folic acid the synthetic version of folate, also known as vitamin B9. It is essential for the healthy growth of hair, skin, and nails, as well as possessing a multitude of other health promoting factors. It aids in rapid cell growth, the formation of red blood cells, and has been studied to evaluate its effectiveness in treating hair loss extensively, with very positive results. It is found in high concentrations in dark leafy greens, citrus, and beans.

Vitamin A: It does 2 main things: it helps with overall hair and cellular health, and it's a powerful antioxidant. It works by getting younger cells to mature faster so your body can regenerate and repair damaged whiskers quickly. Vitamin A is fat soluble so take with a meal containing fats. You will find this super vitamin naturally in paprika, cayenne, chili powder, and red pepper, so time to stock up on your seasonings! Also, you will find Vitamin A in sweet potatoes, carrots, dark leafy greens, cantaloupe, and dried apricots.

Magnesium: Actually, a deficiency or overabundance of magnesium can cause hair loss. But the truth is that most people are somewhat deficient in this mineral and would benefit in many ways by adding more of it into their diet. Magnesium can be easily obtained through food but is also available in supplement form. In addition to promoting healthy hair growth, magnesium can be useful for stress, sleep issues, fatigue, muscle cramps, and constipation. Magnesium tends to work pretty quickly so you'll know fast if it is right for you.

L-Lysine: L-lysine is being studied for its apparent helpfulness in certain kinds of genetic hair loss. Many people suffering from this type of hair loss issue have reported amazing results by taking L-lysine. It is necessary for both iron and zinc absorption and thus contributes to healthy blood circulation and protein formation.

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Herbs, vitamins, and nutrients, like anything else out there, vary in quality, so be weary and don't go cheap, you get what you pay for! That being said, keep in mind it is the same thing with the food you eat, garbage in, garbage out, as the old saying goes. Eat organic when at all possible and try eating 5 or 6 smaller meals during the course of the day, every 3 hours; a balance of protein and carbs with a little fat thrown in. Keep a pill box on you with all your vitamins during the day, and mix up what you're taking. The human body is very tricky and we can't exactly pin point when absorption is happening so switch up what you're taking and when. The only supplements taken at the same time should be magnesium, calcium and vitamin c. They work together to aid each other in absorption. Multi vitamins are a scam, so don't even go there. A lot of the vitamins contained in a multi cancel each other out when taken in combination making them ineffective. Also be sure to drink lots of water, the body needs to stay hydrated in order for the hair to grow.

You want great whiskers? Well, you gotta work for them. I'm not saying you need to make major changes all at once, but slowly introduce something new from this guide to your everyday life, and you will be on the road to facial fur rock stardom!

Good luck on your quest and enjoy the conditioning recipes I have shared with you. I personally use all of the recipes and cannot begin to tell you how powerful they are in their conditioning and healing ability. If you take away nothing more than the recipes from this guide you will see a noticeable difference in your facial hair within a week. If you apply everything set out here, you will gain a certain edge and new confidence in the next whisker comp you participate in! Please drop us a line and keep us posted on your results.

Recommended Products

[Jenulence Natural Beard Shampoo](#) - Helps to keep the beard clean and soft. It is gentle enough to be used daily as a mustache, beard and facial wash. It's made with all natural ingredients and it doesn't contain any synthetic surfactants, like sodium lauryl sulfate or sodium dodecyl sulfate, that most shampoos on the market have.

[Beardition Really Good Beard Shampoo](#) - Is an all natural product that works wonders on all hair! The Beard Shampoo uses organic aloe leaf extract, vitamin E and other essential oils to create an ultra moisturizing beard wash that is comfortable and reduces beard itch! The scent is light and fresh with notes of cucumber and mint.

[Wicked Cookie Duster Moustache Wax Remover & Conditioner](#) - A time tested formula containing organic oils, essential oils, conditioning herbs and whisker rinsing goodness. This stuff can be left in overnight for amazing deep conditioning.

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Beardsley Ultra Shampoo for Beards - Specially formulated for facial hair.

Leaves your beard and moustache clean and fresh. Clean, fresh smelling wild berry scent.