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THE FINE LINE —

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Castor Oil: Your New Favorite Beauty Trick



Move over, coconut oil, there's a new sheriff in town. An elixir for generations — some date the plant's history back 6,000 years — castor oil has slid from the back of the medicine cabinet to the forefront of our beauty regimen, enhancing skin, hair, nails, and even eyelashes.

Ancient civilizations were onto something as they harvested the seeds of the *Ricinus communis* plant, native to tropical areas of Africa and Asia, for castor seed oil teeming with monounsaturated fatty acids. They introduced us to the oil's medicinal remedies — thanks to its antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties — but the seed wasn't planted for strong beauty benefits until the influx of oils years ago. Though castor oil is not an **essential oil**, there's no stopping its power.

Word of advice: Choose cold-pressed or cold-processed oil to ensure purity.

CASTOR OIL FOR EYELASHES AND EYEBROWS

Cold-pressed castor oil is rich with essential fatty acids, proteins, and **vitamin E**, making it an inexpensive, nontoxic solution to trigger hair growth for both eyelashes and eyebrows. When you sweep oil over lashes or brows nightly, hair follicles take in nutrition, which helps reverse the damage that made them dormant. We like **Kate Blanc castor oil** for just this purpose.

FOR SKIN AND NAILS

Castor oil's viscosity enables it to stay put, while highly concentrated fatty acids penetrate deeply, nourishing skin. On the face or body, castor oil may feel sticky at first, but it is quickly absorbed, leaving no oily feel or residue. And the beauty of castor oil? A little goes a long way.

Dr. Rachel Nazarian from **Schweiger Dermatology Group** in New York City concurs. "It's an incredible emollient and moisturizer ... and decreases epidermal water loss when compared to other topicals, so skin stays **hydrated longer**." Dr. Nazarian recommends adding castor oil to enhance penetration of your favorite products. "I will typically apply my own moisturizer followed by a very thin layer of castor oil. This allows for even better absorption of [my] cream."

Castor oil is commonly incorporated into lipsticks and lip balms. **Stila** and **Caudalie** use it a lot, but you can skip the color and go straight with the source. Just use sparingly or mix with an essential oil, as the taste is unpleasant.

Using castor oil on nails and cuticles several times a week can lead to stronger nails that grow faster.

AND HAIR

With antifungal and antibacterial properties, castor oil can aid dandruff, scalp issues, and dry ends.

Director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at New York City's Mount Sinai Hospital, Dr. Joshua Zeichner is a big proponent of castor oil for hair. "Its rich and fatty acids coat the hair shaft to enhance shine and make hair look thicker. By reducing levels of yeast along the hair follicles, it can help reduce inflammation and subsequently allow hair follicles to function optimally."

Try **FineVine Organics castor oil** for hair. A couple of options for use: Make a mask of 1 tablespoon castor oil, 1 tablespoon olive oil, and the juice of half a lemon. Apply the mask to the roots of your hair and let sit for about 30 minutes before washing it out with shampoo. Or just warm a little castor oil in your hands, massage into your scalp and then through the length of your hair to the tips. Leave in for an hour to overnight.

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