Braided Hairstyles Can Cause Baldness

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Pulling hair tight in cornrow styles and attaching extensions may lead to hair loss, especially if the hair is chemically straightened, according to research findings published in the *British Journal of Dermatology* and reported by BBC News.

“Traction alopecia [a form of baldness] is common in women and girls and is significantly linked to hairstyles, particularly when relaxed hair has braids, extensions or weaves,” said Nonhlanhla Khumalo, MD, the study’s lead researcher.

For the study, researchers examined 2,000 adults and children to see if braids and other hairstyles, such as the short “brush cut,” could cause skin conditions.

Scientists found that nearly one in seven children and a third of women developed bald patches from hair being under constant tension (traction alopecia).

In addition, one in five children with chemically treated hair experienced hair loss, researchers said.

But the problem also affects men, scientists said. The findings showed that men with very short haircuts risked severe scalp acne caused by hair clippers damaging the scalp.

“The best thing is to try to identify the problem early—if this happens for a long time, the hair follicles may be permanently damaged, and hair will not grow back,” said Andrew McDonagh, MD, a dermatologist at the UK’s Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield.

The bottom line is that these fashionable hairstyles can cause permanent hair loss that’s difficult to hide and is damaging to people’s confidence, added the British Association of Dermatologists.

Click here for tips to counter hair styling damage.

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