

Saw Palmetto May Help with Age-Related Baldness



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The berries of saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) have a long history of use in the Americas, dating back to the Mayans who used these berries as a general tonic. In more recent times, saw palmetto is often used in the treatment of benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH), which frequently affects a large number of males in their later years. Saw palmetto is also a very popular herb used to treat symptoms in the male genital and urinary system, ranging from erectile dysfunction to low sperm motility.

Age-related baldness, known as androgenic alopecia, affects a large number of both men and women by their late 40s, but in some cases as early as their 20s. Men typically start losing their hair at the front and lateral sides, eventually losing hair at the vertex of their head while women typically experience thinning in the front, sides and at the vertex. Now, there may be hope for those with thinning hair; current research indicates that saw palmetto may be helpful in treating age-related baldness.

A study was conducted using 48 men and women with age-related baldness. Half of the subjects received a lotion containing saw palmetto while the other half of the group received a lotion without the herb (control group). Subjects were instructed to apply the lotion to their scalp two times a day for 50 weeks. Hair density was measured using a standardized instrument at the beginning of the study and after the 50-week period.

After 50 weeks, subjects using the lotion with saw palmetto had an average 27% increase in hair density in comparison to their density at the beginning of the study. The subjects in the control group showed only a 13% increase in hair density. The researchers concluded that based on the results saw palmetto may be helpful in the treatment of age-related hair loss.