

The Truth About Natural Curly, Coily, Kinky Hair

Let us begin with a few basics about natural, aka Nappatural, hair. Natural hair is hair that has not had its physical properties altered by chemical processes, including, but not limited to hair relaxers, texturizers, silkeners and jherri curls.

These products alter the natural texture of the hair by breaking down disulfide bonds, which hold together the keratins (proteins) in hair. We won't discuss the ins and outs of permanent chemical processes, rather this article will discuss natural hair and the myths associated with it.

Natural hair comes in many textures. Some natural hair is very tightly coiled; some is more loosely coiled or curled. Some textures have no curl pattern and no definition. Some textures have very visible definition. One head of natural hair alone can have more than one texture. These are all things to consider when talking about natural hair because actual textures vary just as much as the faces that proudly smile beneath it.

MYTH #1: Natural hair is hard to manage.

This myth probably really is number one. There is a huge misconception that naturally curly or coily hair is hard to manage. Simply, it is not. What many people do not understand is that highly-textured hair is very unique, even from looser, naturally curly textures. Any type of hair is hard to manage if it is being 'managed' in such a way that works against its natural texture. Those who embrace the natural texture of their hair often wear styles that compliment that texture, and are not trying to force their hair to do something it will not naturally do. Extreme manipulation of the hair is stressful not only to the hair, but also to the person who is doing the manipulation. Not understanding the natural hair texture is one of the main reasons many people return to relaxers.

MYTH #2: Natural hair is rough and tough.

Natural hair, contrary to obviously popular belief, is neither rough nor tough. Upon looking at a head of luscious nappaturalness, some believe that it is rough to the touch. However, actually touching the hair (which is not recommended without consent) may reveal something entirely different. Most, in fact all, natural hair is very soft if properly moisturized and conditioned. African-American hair tends to be dry, but a good moisturizing and conditioning routine will keep the hair moist and soft. Any texture of hair that is denied proper moisture will be dry.

Because natural hair is very full and thick, people often assume that it is super strong and tough. This is false. Each and every little bend in the shaft of the hair is a potential breaking point. When handling natural hair, you must be sure to be gentle because it is very delicate. In an Essence magazine article, Rodney Barnett, a trichologist, states, "Think of your hair as a delicate piece of thread, not as a rope that can be knotted and twisted ([30-Day Hair Repair](#))."

MYTH #3: Natural hair is trendy.

No doubt many people choose to be natural for a myriad of reasons, including to be stylish or trendy. But in no way should anyone believe that the only reason to be natural is to be trendy or hip. For those of us who have made the decision not to conform to European standards of beauty, this natural is far from a trend. Many naturals have made a very conscientious resolution to love who they are entirely. Giving up caustic and carcinogenic relaxers is, surprisingly, not something that is favored amongst the African-American community. Enduring comments of disgust and disapproval are oftentimes an accepted part of being natural, and there is nothing trendy about that.

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http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/240771/seven_myths_about_highlytextured_natural.html

MYTH #4: Natural hair grows slowly and does not get long.

This is one of my favorites because it allows me to explain the wonder of highly-textured hair. Natural hair neither grows more slowly nor more quickly than relaxed hair. What naturals must take into account is what is known as shrinkage. Like a telephone cord, natural hair coils up tightly, more or less, thus increasing the surface area within a given length of hair. For example, six inches of relaxed hair is six inches, period. Six inches of tightly coiled hair could be up to twelve inches long when stretched. Natural hair, because of its density and volume, tends to grow big or out, as opposed to lengthy or down, depending on the actual texture of the hair. It is also a myth that the only way natural hair can be long is by locking the hair or wearing twists. This is very untrue.

MYTH #5: Most naturals wear twists and these twists are unattractive because they show the parts in the scalp.

Eeeeeehhhnnnn. Wrong answer. As with all freshly twisted or braided hair, the parts show the scalp. The beauty and magic of natural hair is that, within a day or even a few hours, the hair swells and gets a little fuzzy, creating a very beautiful and unique style. The only way for relaxed heads to achieve this look is with synthetic kinky twists. Another beautiful thing about twisting or braiding natural hair is that no product is needed. Using relaxed and synthetic hair, the hair must be spritzed with holding spray or burned at the ends to keep it from unraveling. Although companies manufacture loc and twist gels, many napturals opt out of using any product other than water to twist or braid the hair. The natural coiliness of the hair keeps the hair from completely unraveling, and the style can last for days or even weeks. Twists are only one of many styles that showcase the versatility of naptural hair.

MYTH #6: Natural hair is not accepted in the work place.

While there have been instances of discrimination against those who choose to wear their natural hair, there are more examples of women who are working in all kinds of positions with their naturals. There are doctors, teachers, cashiers, social workers, writers, lawyers, artists, etc. who are proudly wearing their hair and bringing home checks. This is a completely bogus reason for thinking natural hair is unacceptable. Discrimination against natural hair is wrong and should not be tolerated.

MYTH #7 Natural hair makes one an exhibit or a spectacle of some sort; your intelligence will be overlooked.

False and false. If anything, natural hair entails a sense of self-awareness. Naturals are not societal anomalies. While a person may choose to express herself through her hair, no one should feel that natural hair will make her an exhibit. Any natural would find this belief to be highly offensive, not to mention downright incorrect.

Now, why, again, are you still relaxing?

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