

# O

THE OPRAH  
MAGAZINE

IVE YOUR BEST LIFE

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# Ask Val

You've got questions? Our beauty director, **VALERIE MONROE**, has answers.



**Q** What's the best way to cope with baby-fine hair? I don't want to color it to add thickness, or use volume-enhancing products.

It's so rare that I hear from someone who doesn't want to color or use any styling products! I can only guess at your motivation (you're a purist?), but I admire your resolve to keep it simple. What you need most of all is the right cut, says hairstylist Mario Russo of the Mario Russo Salons in Boston. Go for a shoulder-length bob with layers, which should give you a little lift and fullness. Use a shampoo made specifically for fine hair (try Biolage Volumatherapie Bodifying Shampoo, \$14), and a light detangler (like Ojon Revitalizing Mist, \$26)—a heavy conditioner will weigh your hair down. When your hair is almost dry, style it with a round brush and a blow-dryer on a low setting. **Bottom line:** Start with a great cut; fine hair requires more maintenance than thick hair, so see your stylist regularly (every six weeks or so) for trims.

**Q** Every time I get an upper lip wax, I break out for about two weeks. I've tried different kinds of wax, but nothing works. Any ideas? If you wax once a month or even every two and you break out for two weeks afterward, that's a lot of time feeling unattractive. It sounds like you have either an irritant dermatitis or an allergic contact dermatitis, says Paradi Mirmirani, MD, a dermatologist for Kaiser Permanente in Vallejo, California. The former starts almost immediately after exposure and typically doesn't last more than 24 to 48 hours. The latter starts 24 to 48 hours after the exposure and may continue for several days. You may have a combination. An ice pack on your lip after the waxing might be helpful, as well as an over-the-counter hydrocortisone ointment used twice a day. You may want to consider a different

solution, such as a cream depilatory; be sure to test it on a small area of your inner arm before you use it on your lip. The prescription cream Vaniqa reduces hair growth by interfering with an enzyme in the follicle; you'll still have to wax, but less often. Or you could see a dermatologist to determine whether laser treatments, which can significantly reduce facial hair, would work for you. **Bottom line:** If the irritation isn't reduced by ice or a hydrocortisone cream, try another defuzzing treatment.

**Q** Help! I have turkey neck. Short of surgery, is there anything I can do? Another reader recently wrote to me complaining of chicken legs; we seem to be having a moment of poultry-related beauty issues. The problem with turkey neck is that you can't

get dramatically improved results without taking dramatic action. Think of your neck as a skirt that needs hemming, suggests (the metaphorically gifted) Alan Matarasso, MD, clinical professor of plastic surgery at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in New York City. You can iron the skirt (meaning treat it with various lasers, which can help smooth the skin) and reinforce the fabric of the skirt (meaning apply creams like retinoids that will encourage production of collagen and elastin), but unless you hem the skirt, you won't lose the excess fabric. You follow? And what does "hemming" entail? An incision behind the earlobes, suctioned fat, lifted and tightened muscles, and a small scar from behind the ears into the hairline. (Not to mention a recovery time of ten to 14 days, and a cost of about \$10,000.) **Bottom line:** If your turkey neck is in full swing, neither lasers nor creams will make an appreciable difference. But before you send your neck to the tailor, think long and hard about what people see when they look at you. Your magnificent eyes and delicious smile may render your neck way less noticeable than you think. **Q**

*If you have a question about makeup, skincare, or haircare, go to [oprah.com/omagazine\\_talk](http://oprah.com/omagazine_talk). For details see Shop Guide.*