

myQuestion@beakman.com



Dear Beakman,
When a person
washes her hair,
at what point is it
clean?

Margaret Gammon
Truro, Nova Scotia

Beakman or Jax
P.O. Box 30177
Kansas City, MO 64112
Questions, name & address

Dear Margaret,
Clean is hard to define. When extra oils and dirt are removed, that's usually enough work to call hair clean. But it's not just about getting clean.
The word *shampoo* tells us about the pleasures possible from the work of getting clean. It's based on an old Hindi word from India, *champo*, that means *massage*.
Remember that idea the next time you wash your hair. Create a bit of pleasure for yourself while you're making things clean.

Beakman
Beakman Place

Experiment #1

WHAT YOU NEED: Shampoo - you

WHAT TO DO:

After you wet your hair, put just three drops of shampoo in the wet palm of your hand. Rub your hands together well before rubbing them on your head. Rinse off. Pinch a lock

of hair gently and pull away from your head. If you get a squeak sound, your hair is clean.

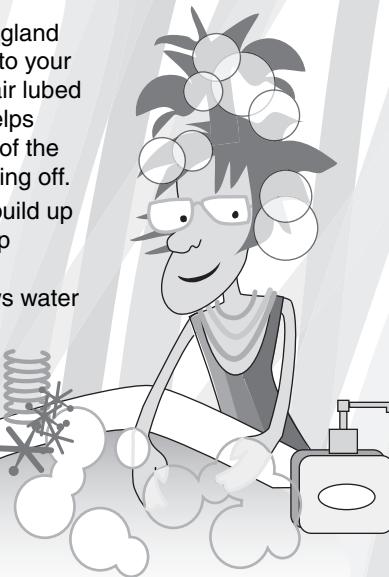
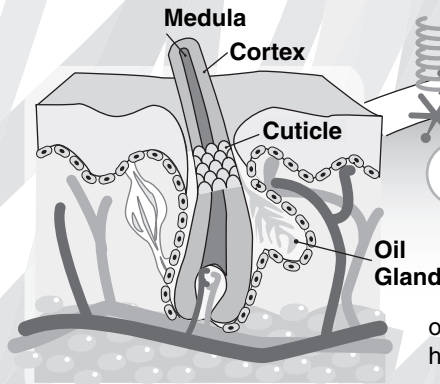
If not, repeat the first step. It usually takes 2 times to get a good squeak.

WHAT IS GOING ON:

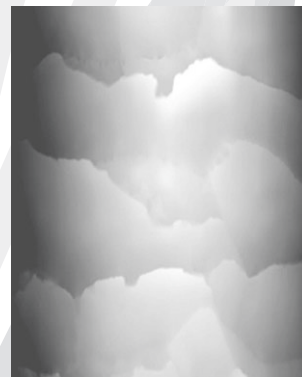
Spreading the shampoo out on your hands lets you use less shampoo. Greasy hair won't squeak because it's just too slippery.

Each hair has its own oil gland that squirts greasy fat onto your hairs. That helps keep hair lubed and shiny. The oil also helps keep those rough edges of the cuticle scales from breaking off. But the oily fat can also build up and make your hair clump together.

Shampoo (or soap) allows water



to rinse away the oils. It can also rinse away plain old dirt and other crud that finds its way to your head of gorgeous hair.



This is a photo of a hair through a microscope. The scales are the cuticle part (KYOO-ta-kool) in the drawing above. You can feel them by rubbing a hair toward your scalp. The scales can hold lots of oil and junk.

P.S. from Jax: Your hairs are made mostly from a protein called keratin. It's the very same thing that bird feathers are made from. Proteins can absorb water and kind of puff up. That can make your hair fragile when wet, which is why you shouldn't comb wet hair.

