

THE HAIR FORECAST

Whether you live in the country, city or by the coast, nature's elements could be the real reason behind your bad hair day. Acting beauty director Samantha Flowers takes us across Britain to find out more...

ILLUSTRATION: NEIL STEVENS



When you experience a bad hair day, what do you blame? Your genes? The way you slept? Your products? A recent study conducted by Toni&Guy revealed that the average woman spends £130 a year on products in the eternal quest for a good hair day. But unless you're clued up to the real cause of your hair complaints, that money may as well be thrown in the Atlantic.

You may owe your genetic make-up or the contents of your bathroom cabinet an apology because a lot of hair problems can be attributed to your postcode. From the humidity-destroying cool air in the North West to the colour-fading UV hotspots of the South East, the

climates of our country impact on the state of our hair without most of us even realising it.

Although 76% of UK women describe their hair as looking 'damaged', only 5% are aware that the water they use to wash their hair could be the problem*. As anyone from the hard water locales of the South East who has showered in the soft water of Glasgow or Belfast knows, it's like hair emerges from a sloth-like slumber to become a shiny, perky version of its former self, thanks to the fresh water pumped from the lochs and lakes nearby. With this in mind, *Stylist* scoured the country to analyse the geographical causes of your hair concerns so you can target them effectively without having to move house...

HEIGHTENED UV EXPOSURE

EFFECT: Colour fading

WHERE: East and West Sussex

WHY: The south coast of England is the UK's sunniest region. Exposure to UV rays damages proteins on the outer layer of the hair, causing hydrating lipids to escape, leaving hair susceptible to damage from free radicals. "When hair is dry, the layers of proteins that usually lie flat when hydrated become raised, allowing colour pigments to escape," explains Dr Bernhard Irrgang, head of research and

development for Salon Science.

POSTCODE PRESCRIPTION:

Studies in Switzerland show that treatments containing grape seed extract are the best at repairing UV-damaged hair. Try ReCorrect Leave In Treatment, £15, Salon Science – it contains antioxidants which bind together the proteins on the hair's surface. Alternatively, look for a product containing a specialised UV filter, such as Youthful Vitality BB Cream, £6.99, Dove Advanced Hair Series, which you can use pre-blow dry or throughout the day for a moisture boost.

HARD WATER

EFFECT: Dull, lacklustre hair

WHERE: Brighton, Bristol, Hull, Lincoln, London, Norwich, Southampton, York

WHY: When water passes through rocks as it is pumped from underground, it absorbs minerals such as calcium and copper, which deposit onto hair fibres when showering. On exposure to air, "the minerals oxidise in the same way an apple slowly turns brown and rots", explains Dr Jennifer Marsh from the Pantene Hair Research

Alliance. Minerals fracture and erode the lipids and proteins needed for healthy-looking hair. Fractured surfaces don't reflect light very well, so colour looks dull and matte.

POSTCODE PRESCRIPTION:

New antioxidant technology developed by Pantene Pro-V acts as a 'mineral magnet' that targets, captures and deactivates copper. Now infused into the entire existing shampoo range, try Coloured Hair Protect & Smooth Shampoo, £3.69, or use vitamin-enriched Hard Water Sachets, 99p, Malibu C, once a week to draw out impurities.



YOUR HAIR CODE

- HEIGHTENED UV EXPOSURE
- HARD WATER
- HIGH POLLUTION LEVELS
- HIGH WIND SPEED
- EXCESS HUMIDITY

45

INVERNESS

ABERDEEN

EDINBURGH

TYNESIDE

YORK

MANCHESTER

HULL

LINCOLN

NOTTINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM

NORWICH

BRISTOL

LONDON

SOUTHAMPTON

BRIGHTON

ENGLISH CHANNEL

NORTH SEA

HIGH POLLUTION LEVELS

EFFECT: Greying hair

WHERE: Greater London, Greater Manchester, Nottingham, Swansea, Tyneside, West Midlands

WHY: A vein of pollution courses its way from London up the M1, wrapping around Britain's over-populated cities. When toxic pollution builds up on hair, it damages the surface proteins, creating free radicals which fragment the structure of hair cells. Research published by the Federation

of American Societies for Experimental Biology found that pollution-induced oxidative stress (a build-up of hydrogen peroxide) could trigger hair going grey.

POSTCODE PRESCRIPTION:

There is no cure for grey hair but by ensuring pollution doesn't build up, you can stop accelerated ageing. Cleanse grime from the scalp with an antibacterial shampoo like Urban Antidotes Reboot Scalp Shampoo, £11.50, TIGI Bed Head. Follow with Anti-Ageing Hair Care Vitamin Restore, £28, Julien Farel, an antioxidant treatment that neutralises free radicals and renews cells.

HIGH WIND SPEED

EFFECT: Dry, brittle hair

WHERE: Inverness, North Wales, Pembrokeshire, Western Scotland

WHY: Market research company Mintel found that 46% of those living in northern England and Scotland want hydrating hair products. Looking at the geographical nature of the country, it's not surprising. Western Scotland is one of the windiest parts of the UK; high pressure over Scandinavia brings strong, westerly winds and, with it, sea air. "Salty air literally sucks

the hydration out of hair," says hair stylist Adam Reed. "That's why salt sprays are used for a matte finish in styling."

POSTCODE PRESCRIPTION:

Haircare brand Pureology notes that Hydrate Hydra Whip Masque, £21.40, sells best on the Welsh coast, reflecting the drying nature of a sea breeze. By building up hydration levels daily, it's harder for moisture to be zapped. The argan oil in Know Knott Detangling Spray, £19, Original & Mineral, locks moisture into hair while the vitamins in Renewal Hair and Scalp Tonic, £5.50, Tresemmé, soothe wind-battered scalps.

EXCESS HUMIDITY

EFFECT: Frizzy, hard to style hair

WHERE: Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bournemouth, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Shetland

WHY: Hair is hydroscopic, meaning it has the ability to absorb moisture (humidity) from the air. Humidity breaks down the hydrogen bonds responsible for hair's elasticity, meaning styled hair will revert back to its natural state, causing tonged curls to drop, straightened hair to frizz and flyaways to form.

POSTCODE PRESCRIPTION:

Products can act as a barrier to stop humidity from entering the hair's cortex. Use wax-free formulas such as oils to make hair sleek without weighing it down. Try No Oil Oil, £14, Percy & Reed. Tapioca starch in Smooth Infusion, £21.50, Aveda, wraps around individual strands, defending them from moisture, accumulating in effect with continued use. Reed also suggests rinsing hair with freezing water to close the cuticle, locking out moisture. Finish with Flyaway Tamer Smoothing Wand, £10.99, John Frieda, to reduce static.