

When Hollywood Manes Start to Wane

Thanks to new, pain-free laser treatments and customized extracts that help promote growth — plus hairline ‘toppers’ from L.A.’s premier wigmakers — achieving lush-looking locks without surgery is easier than ever *By Elycia Rubin*

Full, healthy hair is seen as a sign of beauty,” says **Miriam Bloch**, celebrity wig designer and founder of The Wig Addiction hair care products.

But what if that mane is starting to wane?

While hair loss is often thought to primarily affect men, according to the American Hair Loss Association, nearly 40 percent of those experiencing it are women.

The fault lies with a variety of factors. “Hormonal changes, genetics, stressors, diet, environment, disease, illness and medications can all contribute to hair loss and thinning,” says dermatologist and hair surgeon **Craig Ziering**. “And for those who engage in tension-creating hairstyles, excessive use of heated tools, color and chemicals, this can lead over time to follicle damage and destruction, leading to thin, weak hair.”

Time is of the essence though when dealing with the problem. “Many effective interventions exist, but these treatments work better in the earlier stages of loss with a multi-pronged approach, and for those without underlying medical conditions such as anemia and hypothyroidism,” says dermatologist **Tess Mauricio**. For those who want to avoid going the route of hair transplant surgery — which can easily cost \$15,000 and up — here are alternative ways to stem (or hide) the loss.

LASER TREATMENTS Ava MD and Skin Five’s Dr. **Ava Shamban** is seeing impressive results with the Fotona HAIRestart stimulation program. During each 30- to 40-minute session (around \$250 and up per treatment), a handheld laser

unit delivers energy to targeted hair follicles. “This controlled laser energy triggers follicle function and has helped to slow the loss of hair and regenerate new hair growth for both women and men without any pain or downtime,” she says. Results may vary as each client is unique, with four to six visits suggested for optimal results.

Another pain-free option causing a stir is KeraLase Ultra. During each 30-minute treatment (\$4,500 for a suggested package of three, which includes at-home products), a laser applied to the scalp creates microchannels in the epidermis in order to infuse a serum of five growth factors and proteins. The process, says Ziering, “will solidify and strengthen growth as well as support slowing the loss process.”

WIGS AND TOPPERS Wigs offer instantly thicker locks — along with substantial ease and versatility — especially under the expertise of L.A.’s most revered artisans, whose natural-looking, customized work has dramatically elevated the craft. “There are a significant number of people wearing wigs now; it’s so common,” says Bloch. Adds wigmaker and extensions

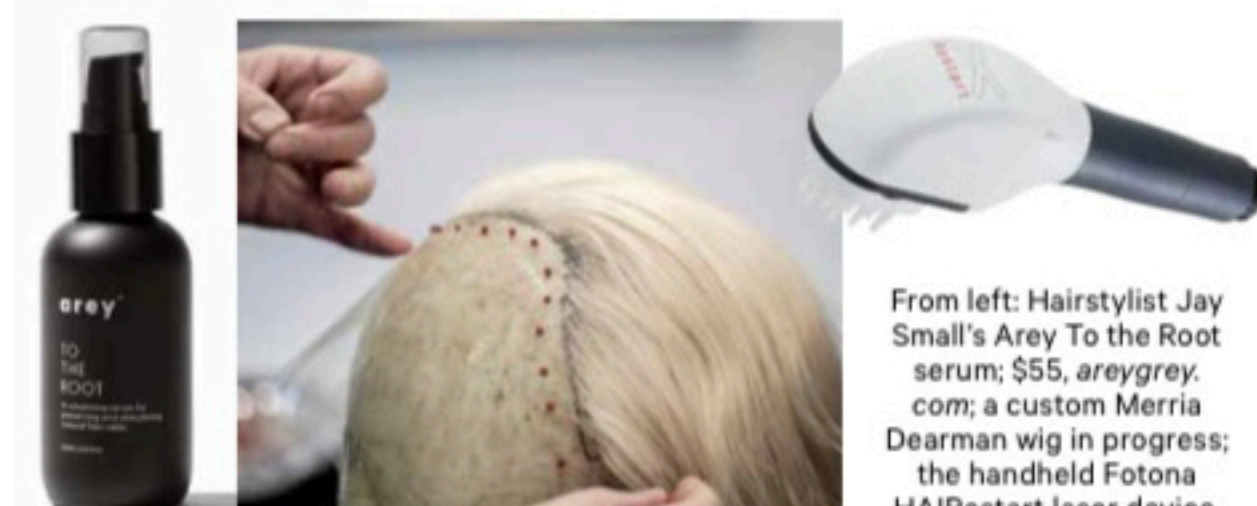
specialist **Merria Dearman**, whose clients include **Gisele Bündchen** and **Madonna**, “When the work is really good, you can’t tell — it’s like great plastic surgery.”

Both Bloch and Dearman, who work with only ethically sourced, 100 percent human hair, are sought after by women suffering from thinning hair, genetic hair loss, alopecia and cancer, along with clients who simply want a new look. One of their most popular items is a topper (think of it like a mini wig), which fits right behind the hairline for a dose of volume and fullness on top of the head. Prices for their designs begin at \$2,000 and can take anywhere from two weeks to six months depending on the work involved.

TOPICAL TREATMENTS While minoxidil, the well-known FDA-approved topical treatment for pattern hair loss, recently garnered headlines for prompting hair growth when taken orally as an off-label medication, some hair doctors, including Century City-based **Marc Dauer**, are not prescribing it orally due to concerns over side effects including drops in blood pressure. Other docs say they continue to find success with serums applied directly to the scalp. Dermatologist **Macrene Alexiades**, whose overall client list includes writer-director **Christopher McQuarrie** and **Sienna Miller**, can barely keep her topical hair growth prescription product in stock. “It’s a combination of FDA-approved finasteride [the generic term for propecia] and minoxidil that doesn’t leave a residue, and it works.” Ziering offers his own minoxidil- and antioxidant-fueled topical, ZMin: “This is a customized prescription solution that requires a consistent 20 drops daily, and results will be seen in three months.”

Nonprescription products that can help keep hair healthy include Beverly Hills hair clinic Harklinikken’s customized Extract (\$88) with burdock root and cow’s milk derivatives, and cult beauty brand Agent Nateur’s Holi (Locks) treatment oil (\$88) with milk-based bioactive ingredients. Celebrity hairstylist **Jay Small (Matt Damon, Noah Centineo)** has created his own serum, To the Root by Arey. “It combines antioxidants and peptides with a volumizing ingredient, and

we’ve excluded fragrance, oil and fillers to provide the scalp with what it needs to assist hair follicle growth,” he says. The patent-pending formula is billed as a triple threat as it’s also designed to slow and reverse gray hair growth. **THRILL**



From left: Hairstylist Jay Small’s Arey To the Root serum; \$55, areygrey.com; a custom Merria Dearman wig in progress; the handheld Fotona HAIRestart laser device.

Illustration by **Jaime Hayde**