How to Treat (or Camouflage) Thinning Hair

- **Rogaine** This topical over-the-counter product ($25, at drugstores) contains minoxidil, an FDA-approved drug that “absolutely causes hair to get thicker and longer,” says McAndrews, who recommends women use the 5 percent men’s formula instead of the 2 percent women’s version. The downside: It may cause some growth on the face, and you must keep up with daily applications to see results.

- **Propecia** Though effective for regrowing hair, this prescription pill (FDA-approved for men) may cause birth defects. Another drawback? It only works as long as you continue using it.

- **Hairmax** This FDA-approved device shines red LEDs on the scalp to reverse thinning. Like the other treatments, it only works as long as you use it.

- **Supplements** Biotin (5,000 mg daily) increases hair strength, says N.Y.C. dermatologist Neil Sadick. If you’re anemic, taking iron can help.

- **Hair color or glaze** Hair dye coats the cuticle so it looks fuller, says N.Y.C. salon owner Eva Scrivo.

Expert Help for Serious Hair Loss

**HAIR TRANSPLANTS** Single follicles (as opposed to clumps) are surgically transplanted to avoid the “plug” look. Cost: $10,000 and up, depending on the number of follicles. **THE LOWDOWN** No downtime, but you have to wear a hat or scarf for a week to hide the stitches. Transplants start growing after three months, with full results visible after a year—but you need to use another treatment (Propecia, Rogaine) to prevent thinning around them.

**LED THERAPY** This light-based treatment stimulates growth, says Miami dermatologist Fredric Brandt. He recommends treatments three times a week for at least five weeks to see results. Cost: $100-$150 per 35-second treatment. **THE LOWDOWN** The more therapy you get, the more hair grows in—but if you stop, new hair falls out.

**STEM-CELL RESEARCH** Cornell University is using stem cells to clone hair follicles, says Sadick. **THE LOWDOWN** This new treatment is still in the testing phase, so only mice can try it right now.