



WRITING SAMPLE

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Why Asian Women Have Been Rinsing Their Hair with Fermented Rice Water

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We've written about rinsing the hair with rice milk. Well, it appears that rinsing with rice water is a thing, too. A very ancient thing, in fact, that women in China, Japan, and Southeast Asia have practiced for centuries in pursuit of healthy, long, and beautiful hair.

Fermented rice water is rich in antioxidants, minerals such as calcium, magnesium, and iron, and vitamins E, niacin, riboflavin, and thiamine.

Studies showing conclusive proof of the impact of fermented rice water on hair are elusive. But anecdotal evidence from not only centuries of Asian women who have used the rinse, but also from legions of contemporary women who swear by the technique point to numerous benefits for both hair and skin.

Many women say application of rice water to skin helps heal scars and reduces wrinkles, fine lines and inflammation. Some say it firms the skin and reduces the size of pores. In terms of hair, a study published in the International Journal of Cosmetic Science found that rice water reduced surface friction and increased hair elasticity.

Yao women of southern China claim that using fermented rice water rinses on their hair makes their hair grow faster and retains their natural color well into old age, with many of these lovely ladies not seeing a single grey hair until they're about 80 years old.

As we mentioned above, we were hard-pressed to find anything other than anecdotal evidence of the wonders of fermented rice rinses, but, hey, if so many women swear by this treatment, it's worth a shot, right?

[CurlTalk's](#) BeinDeb, for example, uses it for her hair and skin. "My hair and my winter eczema-prone skin are loving it!," she says. "It's helped my eczema tremendously, which is really amazing as we've been having sub-zero dewpoints!"

CurlTalker adthomas likes it, too. "I love how this made my hair feel soft and strong at the same time. It was hairgasmic," she says. "I was a little apprehensive because I'm protein sensitive, but I had no issues."

"When I tried using the rice water for washing, my hair felt amazing!" says CurlTalker Meechl.

How to use fermented rice water for hair

There are many methods for creating fermented rice water. Here's how BeinDeb creates and applies hers:

1. I boiled some rice and kept the water I drained off of it.
2. I poured the water in a jar and let it set out for a couple of days to ferment. (Most sources say to allow the water to ferment at room temperature).
3. I have a squirt bottle that I put it in when I'm ready to use it. You're supposed to dilute it, so I use half rice water and half distilled water.
4. After I wash and condition my hair, I saturate my scalp and hair with it. I let it sit for a couple of minutes and then rinse it out.
5. I then just style using whatever.

If you can't use the fermented water right away, store it in the fridge after a couple days of room-temperature fermenting. You'll definitely want to use it within a week.

"It makes my hair very smooth and tangles are non-existent," BeinDeb says. "It really seems to be helping me hold the moisture in, or at least longer than my highly porous hair normally does."

Some textured women add drops of lavender or tea tree oil to their rice water mixture. And, instead of using a spray bottle, some curlies simply pour the mixture over their heads, collecting it in a bowl so they can repeat the pour a few times to fully wet the scalp and saturate the hair.

Have you tried a fermented rice water rinse? Are you inspired to? Tell us about it in the comments section, below!