



Welcome

Tightly Curly Method

Book

Recommended Products

Teri's Hair

Photos

Blog

Ingredients Dictionary

Resources

Answer Bank

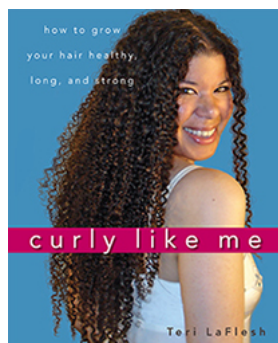
About Us

Media Page

What's New

Available now!

Curly Like Me, the off-the-grid, do-it yourself owner's manual for tightly curly hair, is ready for ordering. Grab your copy today!



Every purchase made from this site (through Amazon) helps support it — and it doesn't cost you anything extra.

Ingredients Starting With M

In the ingredient descriptions: **Good** means that I like to see this in a product's list of ingredients. **Okay** means this product appears safe for a curly person like me to use. **Caution** means that this ingredient may not be good in some hair care products, or for some people. **Avoid** means this ingredient may hurt your hair. If you see this ingredient in a hair product, it's best to put it down and walk away.

Please select a letter to search for ingredients:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Macadamia nut oil (aka Queensland nut oil)

Good

Emollient oil made from the nut of an evergreen tree. Contains magnesium and thiamine [Winter (7th edition) page 334].

Source(s): Winter

Macadamia ternifolia seed oil

Okay

Emollient oils and fats taken from the nut of *Macademia ternifolia*, an evergreen tree native to Australia (of the Proteaceae family for any plan often used as an occlusive (creates a barrier on the skin to prevent moisture evaporation) [Winter (7th edition) page 334].

Source(s): Winter

Macrocystis pyrifera extract (aka Sea kelp extract)

Okay

May have some water binding properties for hair [Begoun (Hair) page 578].

Source(s): Begoun

Madagascar Vanilla (aka Vanilla Planifolia Fruit Extract: Vanilla Extract)

Okay

Extracted from the unripe fruit of a vining orchid that is usually grown in Mexico and the West Indies. Usually used for flavoring food and in perfume, pg 541].

Source(s): Winter

Magnesium aluminum silicate

Avoid

Functions as an absorbent, and therefore drying to the hair.

Source(s): Begoun

Magnesium carbonate

Avoid

Mineral salt that is used as an absorbent, opacifier, coloring, or pH adjusting of product.

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com>

Magnesium chloride

Caution

A type of salt often used in shampoos [Winter (7th edition) page 334 & 335]. Because it's a salt, I would absolutely avoid this in a leave in product if very low down on the ingredients list, and will be rinsed out well.

See also: Salt

Source(s): Winter

Magnesium laureth sulfate

Okay

Gentle cleanser. Pg 1305.

Source(s): Begoun

Magnesium nitrate (aka Nitric acid; magnesium salt)

Caution

Per Hunting, magnesium nitrate is an inert ingredient of a preservative compound (chloromethyl isothiazolinone/ methyl isothiazolinone (but I to find this preservative in any of my books so far--T)). Otherwise, there is little info on it. Gottschalck doesn't have its function listed [Hunting (277-278; Gottschalck pages 1494-1495)].

Source(s): Hunting Gottschalck

Magnesium oleth sulfate

Okay

Mild cleanser.

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com>

Magnesium stearate

Okay

Thickener.

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com>

Magnesium sulfate (aka Epsom Salt)

Avoid

Magnesium sulfate is often used in products to make hair feel thicker. However, it does this by roughing up your cuticles, which damages hair. It's also alkaline, and can swell the hair shaft, making hair drier and brittle [Begoun (Hair) pages 240, 304-305, 331, 443, 562].

A salt often used as a thickener in cosmetics and lotions [Winter (7th edition) pg 337].

See also: Salt

Source(s): Winter Begoun

Maleic anhydride

Caution

Film former/ plasticizing ingredient. Can build up on hair and make it sticky with repeated use.

Source(s): Begoun

Malic acid (aka AHA)**Caution**

Malic acid is a form of AHA (alpha hydroxy acid). In low concentrations (<3%), it functions as a humectant. If the product pH is high, this is a fir acidic pH, it may "exfoliate" hair.

See also: pH

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com/>

Maltodextrin (aka Maltodextrine)**Caution**

A sugar from plant sources made from liquefying (the hydrolysis of) starch. Used as a coating, a conditioner, but also as an absorbent [Winter Gottschalk pg 1505-1507]. *I'm putting this as a caution since it functions as a film-former (which can mean stickiness), and as an absorbent, v worry that it's drying to our hair.*— T

See also: Hydrolyzed

Source(s): Winter Gottschalk

Malva sylvestris (mallow) extract (aka Mallow extract)**Okay**

Tall herbaceous plant with showy rose-colored flowers often growing wild in fields. The extract is pinkish and can be used for coloring or as a : [Winter 7th edition pg 338].

Source(s): Winter https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malva_sylvestris

Mangifera indica extract (aka Mango extract)**Caution**

I'm not sure if when a product says Mangifera indica extract/ mango extract it really means mango butter, or if it's an extract from the pulp of tl plant itself. If it's from the pulp of the plant, this is pretty acidic, and also has some strong enzyme action, so I'd put it as a caution and only use products like shampoo. However, my books only talk about mango butter when I look up mango extract, so maybe they are one and the same extract isn't a thing, or it just means mango butter, which comes from the pits/seed. In which case, that's totally fine in leave in products. --T

See also: Mango seed butter

Source(s): Winter

Mangifera indica seed butter (aka Mango seed butter)**Good**

Mango butter is the fat from the fruit kernels of the mango fruit. It's emollient and used in skin care products, lotions, hair conditioners, among soft solid with a faint sweet scent [Winter (7th edition) page 339; Gottschalk page 1515].

See also: Mango seed butter

Source(s): Winter Gottschalk

Mangifera indica seed oil (aka Mango seed oil)**Good**

Mango seed oil is an non-volatile (non-evaporating) oil from the kernels of the mango fruit, used as a skin conditioning agent that keeps water from the surface [Gottschalk page 1515].

Source(s): Gottschalk

Mango seed butter (aka Mangifera indica seed butter)**Good**

Mango butter comes from the fruit kernels of the mango fruit. It's emollient and used in skin care products, lotions, hair conditioners, among of soft solid with a faint sweet scent [Winter (7th edition) page 339].

Source(s): Winter

Mango seed oil (aka Mangifera indica seed oil)**Good**

Mango seed oil is an non-volatile (non-evaporating) oil from the kernels of the mango fruit, used as a skin conditioning agent that keeps water from the surface [Gottschalk page 1515].

Source(s): Gottschalk

Marigold extract (aka Calendula extract)**Caution**

See Calendula extract

See also: Calendula extract

Source(s): Begoun Winter http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ingredient/725681/MARIGOLD_OIL/

Marigold oil (aka Calendula extract; Calendula oil)**Caution**

See Calendula extract.

See also: Calendula extract

Marjoram**Caution**

May cause skin irritation and/or sun sensitivity. Best not to use on a baby's skin. Pg 94.

See also: Irritant

Source(s): Begoun

Mauritia flexuosa fruit oil**Okay**

This is the oil from the fruit of a plant in the palm family [Winter 7th ed., pg 342].

Source(s): Winter

Meadowfoam seed oil (aka Limnanthes alba seed oil)**Good**

Very good moisturizing plant oil. It can partially penetrate the hair's cortex, so it may make hair a bit stronger. However, it has little effect on th still need a slippery ingredient in the conditioner to comb through hair. And nothing can repair hair once it's been damaged. Beauty Brains boc from an article from the Journal of Cosmetic Science 52, pgs 169-184), 2001).

Per Winter [(7th edition) page 342], meadowfoam oil is used as a moisturizer, especially in cosmetics, and for shampoo and conditioners it's u and to moisturize.

Source(s): Beauty Brains Winter

Medicago sativa leaf extract (aka Alfalfa leaf extract; Lucerne)**Okay**

Gives beverages a maple flavoring. Used in cosmetics for vitamins and proteins. Alfalfa is a commonly grown crop for feeding livestock [Winte 55] and as a "green manure" for organic gardening.

Melia azadirachta seed oil (aka Neem oil)**Caution**

A brownish-yellow liquid oil that smells like garlic. It has been shown to have some anti-bacterial and anti-fungal activity in the lab [Winter (7th 370)]. This can be really irritating to the skin, especially in higher concentrations. Do not use products with this high up on the ingredients list o cannot tell you it is in pain.

Source(s): Winter

Melissa officinalis (aka *Lemon balm*)

Caution

Herb in the mint family with a slight lemon scent. May cause skin irritation and/or sun sensitivity. Best not to use on a baby's skin. Begoun, pg
See also: Irritant

Source(s): Begoun <http://www.psychosomaticmedicine.org/cgi/content/abstract/66/4/607> <http://botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/b/balm--02.html>

Mentha piperita (aka *Mentha piperita leaf extract; Brandy mint*)

Caution

See Peppermint.

See also: Peppermint

Menthol

Caution

Menthol is used in tons of products ranging from perfumes, creams, hair products, after-shave lotions, and body rubs. It gives skin a "cool" feel peppermint, other mint oils, or even synthetically. Though it can numb in small doses, in concentrations higher than 3% it can be irritating, and even cause "changes in all layers of the mucus membranes."

According to Winter [7th ed.,pg 345], the FDA in 1992 said that menthol has not been shown safe for some of the claims it's been given in over-the-counter products (such as treating fever blisters, cold sores, poison ivy and oak, as well as insect bites, and even in astringents [Winter 7th ed., pg 34

Some may find it to be irritating to the scalp. Best not to use on a baby's skin [Begoun (Cosmetics 7th ed.,pg 1123).

See also: Irritant

Source(s): Begoun Winter

Methacrylate copolymer

Caution

Sticky film former. Can build up over time, making hair feel sticky. Pg 200.

Source(s): Begoun

Methanol

Avoid

Drying alcohol.

See also: Alcohol

Methionine

Okay

Amino acid found in hair. This can be a humectant, but it can't repair hair, since hair is dead. Pg 84.

See also: Amino acid

Source(s): Begoun

Methoxypropanediol

Caution

Combination of menthol and propylene glycol that can "enhance" the penetration of menthol into the skin. Not good for a leave-in because it causes increased irritation of the menthol on the scalp. Pg 467.

See also: Irritant

Source(s): Begoun

Methyl 2-octynoate (aka *Methyl heptyne carbonate; Methyl heptyne carbonate*)

Okay

This has a violet-like scent when diluted. It's a synthetic flavoring ingredient used for berry, floral, fruit, liquor, and muscatel flavorings in beverages, baked goods, gelatin desserts, jellies, and chewing gum. No known toxicity.

Source(s): Winter <http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/jecfa-flav/details.html?flavId=4576> http://www.inchem.org/documents/jecfa/jecval/jec_1542.htm
<http://food.oregonstate.edu/glossary/m/methyl2octynoate.html>

Methyl chloro isothiazolinone (aka *Methylchloroisothiazolinone*)

Caution

See Methylchloroisothiazolinone.

See also: Methylchloroisothiazolinone

Source(s): http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ingredient.php?ingred06=703931&refurl=/product.php?prod_id=50905&-hanks=1 http://www.inchem.org/documents/jecfa/jecval/jec_1542.htm
<http://www.cosmetics.com/page.cfm?action=ShowCategory/ShowCatID=1/CatID=314>

Methylchloroisothiazolinone (aka *Kathon CG (When used with methylisothiazolinone)*)

Caution

Most of the information and research on this ingredient is when it's used in combination with Methylisothiazolinone. Please see Methylchloroisothiazolinone.

Widely used preservative found in hair, bath, and skin care products that may irritate sensitive scalps. It was used to replace formaldehyde in hair products [Winter pg 351]. — *This is in many of the conditioners I've been using for years, and I've had no problems.*—T

This is in one of my favorite, go-to conditioners that I've been using for well over ten years, and another I've been using regularly for five (even though it's in there in a very teeny amount). It has not caused any problems as far as conditioning and defining my hair.

See also: Preservative Methylchloroisothiazolinone/ Methylisothiazolinone

Source(s): Begoun Hunting Winter

Methylchloroisothiazolinone/ Methylisothiazolinone (aka *Kathon CG*)

Caution

Most research that's been done on these two preservatives have been done on how Methylchloroisothiazolinone (and) Methylisothiazolinone

These preservatives are known to be corrosive to skin, irritating to eyes, and toxic to fish. However, in the low doses of it used in cosmetics, it's found to be irritating so long as it isn't used in concentrations above 0.12 percent.

The reason these two ingredients are so often found together is because when they are combined, they kill off nearly all microbes, and not much else is needed to do so. They also work over a wide range of product pHs.

When these two ingredients are sold as a ready-made mixture, Magnesium nitrate (as well as a little Magnesium chloride) is often added to them, usually listed in ingredient lists as being there) [Hunting (Conditioning) pgs 276-277].

The recommended proportions of these ingredients is about 1/4 Methylisothiazolinone and about 3/4 Methylchloroisothiazolinone [Begoun pg

See also: Preservative Magnesium nitrate Magnesium chloride Methylchloroisothiazolinone (and) Methylisothiazolinone Methylisothiazolinone

Source(s): Hunting Winter

Methyldibromo glutaronitrile

Avoid

This is a preservative. It's known to cause allergic reactions with skin contact, and even cause eczema. This ingredient is "activated" by sunlight.

negate any sun-blocking abilities when it's used in sunscreen [Winter 7th ed.,pg 349-350].

See also: Preservative

Source(s): Winter

Methylene glycol (aka *Dipropylene glycol methyl ether*, *PPG 2 Methyl ether*)

Okay

See PPG 2 methyl ether.

See also: PPG 2 methyl ether

Methyleugenyl PEG 8 dimethicone

Okay

Silicone. Functions as a hair and skin conditioner, and it provides slip.

Methyl Gluceth-20

Okay

Methyl Gluceth-20 is used as a humectant and conditioner, often in lotions. It's found naturally in corn sugar, and is sweeter than table sugar [257].

See also: Glucose Glutamate

Source(s): Winter http://www.cosmeticscop.com/dictionary_term.aspx?tid=1589&lid=520&term=methyl+gluceth-20 <http://docs.google.com/gvica=v&q=cache:3IKmUD0ac4UJ:ec.europa.eu/enterprise/cosmetics/cosing/index.cfm%3Ffuseaction%3Dsearch.detailsPDF%26id%3D35291+M20&hl=en&gl=us&sig=AFQjCNH5X47y1MrNPwTp1C7-K1zJdHdZWQ>

Methyl Gluceth-20 Benzoate

Okay

Used mainly as a skin conditioner and emollient. This is made from Methyl Gluceth-20 and Benzoic Acid.

See also: Benzoic acid Methyl Gluceth-20

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ingredient.php?ingred06=703895>

Methylheptyl isostearate (aka *Octyl ester*, *Isooctadecanoic acid*, *Octyl ester isooctadecanoic acid*)

Okay

Used as a conditioner. It works by preventing water loss from the surface it's applied to so that it doesn't dry out. This has a dry feel, and is oft the kinds of silicones that evaporate.

See also: Preservative

Source(s): http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ingredient.php?ingred06=703931&refurl=/product.php?prod_id=50905&-hanks=1 <http://www.icosmetics.com/page.cfm?action=ShowCategory/ShowCatID=1/CatID=314>

Methyl isothiazolinone (aka *Methylisothiazolinone*)

Caution

See Methylisothiazolinone.

See also: Methylisothiazolinone

Source(s): http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/ingredient.php?ingred06=703931&refurl=/product.php?prod_id=50905&-hanks=1 <http://www.icosmetics.com/page.cfm?action=ShowCategory/ShowCatID=1/CatID=314>

Methylisothiazolinone (aka *Kathon CG (when used with methylchloroisothiazolinone)*)

Caution

Most of the information and research on this ingredient is when it's used in combination with Methylchloroisothiazolinone. Please see Methylchloroisothiazolinone/ Methylisothiazolinone.

Widely used preservative found in all kinds of products including moisturizers, hair products, baby products, and cleansers that may irritate se otherwise hasn't been found to irritate skin when used in recommended doses [Winter pg 352]. — *This is in many of the conditioners I've been and I've had no problems.—T*

See also: Preservative Methylchloroisothiazolinone/ Methylisothiazolinone

Source(s): Begoun Hunting

Methylparaben (aka *Methyl paraben*)

Okay

A widely used preservatives in cosmetics. It wipes out a wide array of microbes including molds yeast and bacteria over a wide pH range. It's mild. It's a white, odorless powder which somewhat dissolves in water. According to Hunting, it is the most water soluble paraben, but has the activity. Therefore, it's often combined with propylparaben, and the two work well together. It's deactivated by nonionic surfactants (such as de lauryl glucoside, or octyl glucoside, among others) [Hunting (Conditioning) page 277-278; Winter (7th edition) page 351].

See also: Propylparaben

Source(s): Hunting Winter

Mica

Okay

Earth mineral that adds shimmer or sparkle [Begoun (Cosmetics) page 1308]. Per Winter [(7th edition) page 354], mica is any group of minerals, thin, crystallized sheets, such as pearls. They can vary in color from black, brown, pale green, or even colorless. They are ground up and often lubricant, for coloring, or to create a glow in cosmetics.

Source(s): Begoun Winter

Microcrystalline wax

Okay

Plastic-like wax from petroleum. Used to thicken products to be semi-solid.

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com>

Milk conditioner (aka *Milk protein*; *Casein*)

Okay

Milk has been believed to be conditioning since the time of Cleopatra. Casein is the protein that's found in milk. Actually, cow's milk only has a bit, which is extracted by acidifying cow's milk. Often the casein is sold as a white powder or grainy solid that's really difficult to dissolve in water.

Since casein doesn't dissolve easily in water, it isn't absorbed into the hair, so it can't be used for conditioning. This means it's mostly put in to opaque, as well as for its marketing appeal. However, if the casein is broken down through hydrolysis, turning it into hydrolyzed milk protein, that's a good conditioning ingredient. Often, when a product says it has milk in it, the product may really have hydrolyzed milk protein in there to do (Conditioning) pg 280].

Source(s): Hunting

Milk protein (aka *Casein*; *Milk conditioners*)

Okay

Casein is the protein that's found in milk. Actually, cow's milk only has about 3% casein in it, which is extracted by acidifying cow's milk. Often as a white powder or grainy solid that's really difficult to dissolve in water.

Since casein doesn't dissolve easily in water, it isn't absorbed into the hair, so it can't be used for conditioning. This means it's mostly put in to opaque, as well as for its marketing appeal. However, if the casein is broken down through hydrolysis, turning it into hydrolyzed milk protein, that's a good conditioning ingredient. Often, when a product says it has milk in it, the product may really have hydrolyzed milk protein in there to do (Conditioning) pg 280].

Source(s): Hunting

Mineral oil (aka *Paraffinum liquidum*; *Huile Minérale*; *Liquid Petrolatum*; *Paraffin oil*; *White oil*)

Okay

Used as a lubricant in cosmetics, made from Petroleum. It's transparent, colorless, tasteless and odorless. When applied, it stays on top of the shiny and protective layer. One of the most common ingredients in creams, makeup, baby products, facial creams, aftershave lotions. However, it can cause breakouts in skin [Winter 7th ed., pg 356].

Considered non-toxic and non-irritating. Oily liquid which is not water-soluble. It's used so often in products because it's inexpensive, stable, a fragrance. Creates a barrier on skin or hair to protect from water loss, so this keeps whatever it is put on from drying out [Hunting (Conditioning) pg 283].

Considered a very mild and harmless ingredient. A good conditioning ingredient, providing slip so the comb glides through hair more easily. It's gotten an undeserved reputation for being harmful. For more information, see mineral oil.

See also: Petroleum

Source(s): Begoun Winter Hunting

Mink oil

Good

An emollient oil from the mink. Mostly used in products because it sounds exotic, natural, and luxurious. Not known to be irritating to skin. This nearly odorless liquid which isn't water soluble. The oil is quickly absorbed in the skin without feeling too oily, and it doesn't go bad very quickly (Conditioning) pg 283].

Not known to be any more effective than any other type of oil [Winter 7th ed., pg 356-357].

Source(s): Hunting Winter

Monoethanolamine (aka *MEA*, *Ethanolamine*)

Caution

pH adjuster most often found in permanent hair coloring products This is often used in the place of ammonia to reduce the odor when coloring hair. This is an amine, and when combined with formaldehyde-releasing preservatives, may create nitrosamines. This has not been directly linked to health issues. Begoun, pg 1282.

See also: Amines Formaldehyde-releasing preservative Nitrosamine Preservative

Source(s): Begoun(Cosmetics) #Zviak <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/household/brands?tbl=chem&id=144>

Montmorillonite

Avoid

This is a type clay. Clay is drying.

Source(s): Begoun

Mucopolysaccharides

Okay

Okay humectant.

Source(s): Begoun

Myristic acid

Avoid

Cleanser that creates foam, and can be drying.

Source(s): <http://www.cosmeticscop.com/>

Myristoyl glutamic acid

Okay

Mild cleanser. Pg 233.

Source(s): Nnanna

Myristyl alcohol

Okay

"Lubricant and emollient, often less oily or greasy than plant or mineral oils and, therefore, give the hair a soft, velvety feel without making it feel greasy."

See also: Fatty alcohol

Source(s): Begoun

Myroxylon Pereirae (aka *Balsam of Peru*)

Okay

A naturally derived fragrance made from tree resin. A study done by the Mayo clinic lists this as #7 of the top ten ingredients that can cause irritation. Brains pg 156. *I'm putting this as an Avoid, because not only is it irritating, but it's also a resin, which are known to build up in the hair and make it sticky.*—T

See also: Irritant

Source(s): Beauty Brains

References:

Applewhite, Thomas H., ed. *Proceedings of the World Conference on Lauric Oils: Sources, Processing, and Applications*. AOCS Publishing, 1994.

Barel, André O., Marc Paye, and Howard I. Maibach., eds. *Handbook of Cosmetic Science and Technology, Second Edition*. Marcel Dekker, Inc., 2001.

Begoun, Paula. *Don't Go Shopping for Hair-Care Products Without Me. 3rd Edition*. Renton: Beginning Press, 2005.

Begoun, Paula. *The Beauty Bible*. Renton: Beginning Press, 2002.

Begoun, Paula. *Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me*. Renton: Beginning Press, 2003.

Bellum, Sarah, ed. *The Beauty Brains: Real Scientists Answer Your Beauty Questions*. New York: Brains Publishing, 2008.

Gottschalk, Tari E. and McEwen, Gerald N, Jr. PhD, eds. *International Cosmetic Ingredient Dictionary and Handbook, Tenth Edition 2004, Volumes 1-4*. Washington D. C.: The Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association, 2004.

Halal, John *Hair Structure and Chemistry Simplified, Fifth Edition*
Albany: Milady, 2002.

Hunting, Anthony L.L. *Encyclopedia of Conditioning Rinse Ingredients*.
Cranford, NJ: Micelle Press, Inc., 1987.

Hunting, Anthony L.L. *Encyclopedia of Shampoo Ingredients*.
Cranford, NJ: Micelle Press, Inc., 1983.

Johnson, Dale H. (Ed.). *Hair and Hair Care, Cosmetic Science and Technology Series. Vol. 17*.
New York: Marcel Dekker, 1997. Print.

Nnanna, Ifendu A. and Jiding Xia., eds. *Protein-Based Surfactants: Synthesis: Physicochemical Properties, and Applications (Surfactant Science)*
Madison Heights: CRC, 2001.

Quadflieg, Jutta Maria. *Fundamental properties of Afro-American hair as related to their straightening/relaxing behaviour*.
Diss. U of Rheinisch-Westfälischen Technischen Hochschule Aachen, 2003.

Schueller, Randy and Perry Romanowski, eds. *Conditioning Agents for Hair and Skin*.
New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1999.

Winter, Ruth M.S. *A Consumer's Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients: Complete Information About the Harmful and Desirable Ingredients Found in Cosmetics and Cosmeceuticals*
New York: Three Rivers Press, 2005.

Zviak, Charles., ed. *The Science of Hair Care (Dermatology)*
New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1986.

[Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright © 2023 TightlyCurly.com. All Rights Reserved.