

The language of hair

Noel Fernandes combs out the basics of a career in the new and exciting specialised world of Trichology

Bal, bal bachgaye! That's what most of us can exclaim now - thanks to Trichology which has opened a new window in the world of hair care. Trichology, which includes detailed hair mineral analysis, can find out the exact reason for hair loss, baldness, scaling of the scalp, itching, hair breakage, dryness, oiliness and even whether you are prone to osteoporosis. In fact forensic experts, with the help of a single hair, are able to pinpoint the cause of a person's death. This itself speaks volumes about the hair, we abuse everyday; more so, by consulting a hair dresser who is actually qualified in making the hair look beautiful as opposed to a trichologist, who, among many other things deals with making hair healthy and beautiful.

Therefore it becomes imperative that people distinguish between a cosmetic and a Trichologists. "A Trichologist can actually reveal details that would help the client overcome the problem much faster," says Dr. [Apoorva Shah](#), India's first certified Trichologist and co-founder of [MET-Rich Feel Institute of Trichology](#). "Today, people are facing a lot of hair problems, because of stress, chemicals and pollution and hence people have become more aware and require proper medical attention for the hair. It has also been seen that earlier there were more of men coming for the treatment but now women are more are also making a beeline," adds Dr. Shah.

Sunrise field

Although there are only a small number of people working in this occupation, there is an increasing potential for employment growth. Explains [David Salinger](#), Director, International Association of Trichologists, Australia and a world-renowned authority on Trichology since 1974: "There's a growing awareness about Trichology, and more people want to be treated for their particular hair condition. Although Trichology - which is the science of hair and scalp in the field of health and disease - is nascent to India, there are only about 400 certified Trichologists all over the world, since the last 100 years."

[Sunil Karve](#) - prominent educationist and Founder Trustee and Vice Chairman of MET League of Colleges said: "Trichology is a sunrise field in India, which offers tremendous scope for growth. The application and use of Trichology is much more than just cosmetic. The field opens specialised career avenues for doctors, beauticians, clinical researchers, science graduates, nurses, paramedics and corporate R&D experts amongst others."

There is immense scope for people who pass out as Trichologist, admits [Dr. Sonal Shah](#), co-founder at the [MET-Richfeel Institute of Trichology](#). Today, you'll find many young people suffering from hair loss, dandruff, baldness, etc. that makes them look older than their actual age. It is noted that pollution and UV rays to be

the main cause of skin disease. Now with increased hair awareness among the general public there is tremendous scope for Trichologist, reiterates Dr. Shah.

It's different!

Generally, Trichologist is not the one who is into styling or cutting hair or for that matter weaving or dying hair, in fact the role of a Trichologist is to diagnose, treat and care for human hair and scalp.

As a Trichologists you may have to perform the following tasks: after discussing the scalp problem with the client, examine the scalp and identify the problem; work out the cause of the problem and decide on appropriate therapy; treat scalp problems such as dandruff, itchiness of the scalp, hair loss, baldness and excessive oiliness; carry out a microscopic examination of the hair; apply ointment or lotion to the scalp, massage, or use electrotherapy machines and/or infra-red lamps; advise on the correct use of hair colouring, permanent waving and straightening products; treat damage sustained by the hair or scalp as a result of the misuse of hair colouring, etc. "Where necessary, a Trichologist may have to refer clients to a medical or paramedical practitioner," says well known Dermatologist & Cutaneous Surgeon, Dr. Satish T. Bhatia.

Dermatologist however deals with skin disease quickly and effectively by noting symptoms and checking skin. Similarly, Dermatologists can also help prevent unnecessary damage to skin, and often perform surgery on the skin to prevent disease, provide early control of disease or improve how the skin looks. "In fact Dermatologists can improve the appearance of skin damaged by aging, sunlight or disease. Some ways they do this include chemical peels (a form of skin rejuvenation), liposuction (a type of fat removal) and removal of skin growths, discoloration or unwanted veins," affirms Dr. Bhatia.

However, hair care experts are of the view that Trichology is far-far way ahead when it comes to diagnosing the root cause of hair. Although hairstyling today includes a complex use of products ranging from simple combs and hairpins to more complicated electrical appliances for drying and grooming the hair and chemical processes to tint, wave, curl, straighten, and condition the hair, Trichology is altogether a different field of study.

Opportunities galore

Trichology offers tremendous opportunities for all! While doctors can pursue a degree in Trichology, others can acquire a diploma qualification. After super specialisation in the field of hair and scalp, doctors can practice as a super specialist. He/she can also offer consultations to beauty salons or take part in clinical research for hair and scalp. As a Trichologist you even play a role as an expert witness in the court of law.

As for others, i.e. beauticians, nurses, para-medicals and multi national employees, Trichology enhances the knowledge level, especially among beauticians and multi-nationals in hair and scalp industry. It also increases the confidence level and adds value to business prospects for multi-national employees. For hair research scientist, it is a great value addition in their knowledge for product development, product explanation and product marketing.

Strictly speaking, there is enough scope for Trichologists in India and abroad. After passing out as a Trichologist, one can work as a consultant, set up his own clinic or work as a guest lecturer. As far as salary is concerned, a Trichologist can start anywhere between Rs. 15,000 to Rs 25,000 plus. Again it depends upon the service a Trichologist offer to his client - sky is the limit!

Trichology - the way to go!

Given the fact that Trichology is still nascent in India, it offers great scope for those who are willing to learn the rope. Also with ever-increasing stress and pollution problem, Trichology is the answer to hair related problems! No wonder Trichology is a great success when it comes to hair and scalp problems.

Programme available at:

[MET-Richfeel Institute of Trichology](#)

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