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**Stress really does turn your hair grey – 26th January, 2020**

## Level 4

Scientists found that stress turns hair grey in mice. Stem cell biologists from Harvard tested mice to find how stress affected them. The scientists injected the mice with the heat-giving ingredient in chili peppers. This caused a hair-colouring chemical in the mice to overwork in reaction to the stress. It used up all colour-regenerating cells. The mice's hair quickly turned white. A researcher said this was, "beyond what I imagined".

People have always believed that stress turns hair grey. France's Queen Marie Antoinette's hair supposedly turned white before she was beheaded. More recently, the hair of presidents have quickly lost colour. The strains of leadership have gone to the roots and follicles. The researcher said the loss of the colour-regenerating cells cannot be reversed. She said: "The damage is permanent." She thinks stress could also accelerate the aging process.

## Level 5

Scientists have found that stress turns our hair grey, white or silver in mice. Stem cell biologists from Harvard University did a series of tests on mice to find the effects of stress on them. The scientists injected the mice with the ingredient in chili peppers that gives them their heat. This made the mice stressed. It caused a hair-colouring pigment in the mice to overwork as a reaction to the stress. It used up all colour-regenerating stem cells and the mice's hair rapidly turned white. A researcher said: "The detrimental impact of stress that we discovered was beyond what I imagined."

For centuries, people have believed that stress turns hair grey. France's Queen Marie Antoinette's hair supposedly turned white the night before she was beheaded during the French Revolution. More recently, the hair of presidents and other world leaders have quickly lost colour. The strains of leadership have gone to the roots of things, especially hair follicles. The researcher said the loss of the pigment-regenerating stem cells cannot be reversed. She said: "You can't regenerate pigment any more. The damage is permanent." She thinks stress could accelerate the aging process.

## Level 6

Scientists have discovered that stress is one factor in turning our hair grey, white or silver - at least, in mice. Stem cell biologists from Harvard University in the USA conducted a series of tests on mice to ascertain the effects of stress on the rodents. The scientists injected the mice with an ingredient found in chili peppers that gives them their heat. The compound made the mice stressed. This caused a hair-colouring pigment in the mice to go into overdrive as a reaction to the stress and deplete colour-regenerating stem cells. This caused the mice's hair to rapidly turn white. Lead researcher, Professor Ya-Chieh Hsu, said: "The detrimental impact of stress that we discovered was beyond what I imagined."

People have wondered for centuries about the link between stress and greying hair. It is believed that France's Queen Marie Antoinette's hair turned white the night before she was beheaded during the French Revolution in the late-eighteenth century. More recently, we have witnessed the locks of presidents and other world leaders quickly lose color. The strains of leadership seem to go to the roots of things, especially hair follicles. Professor Hsu said the loss of the pigment-regenerating stem cells cannot be reversed. She said: "Once they're gone, you can't regenerate pigment any more. The damage is permanent." Worryingly, she hypothesised that stress could be responsible for accelerating the aging process.