

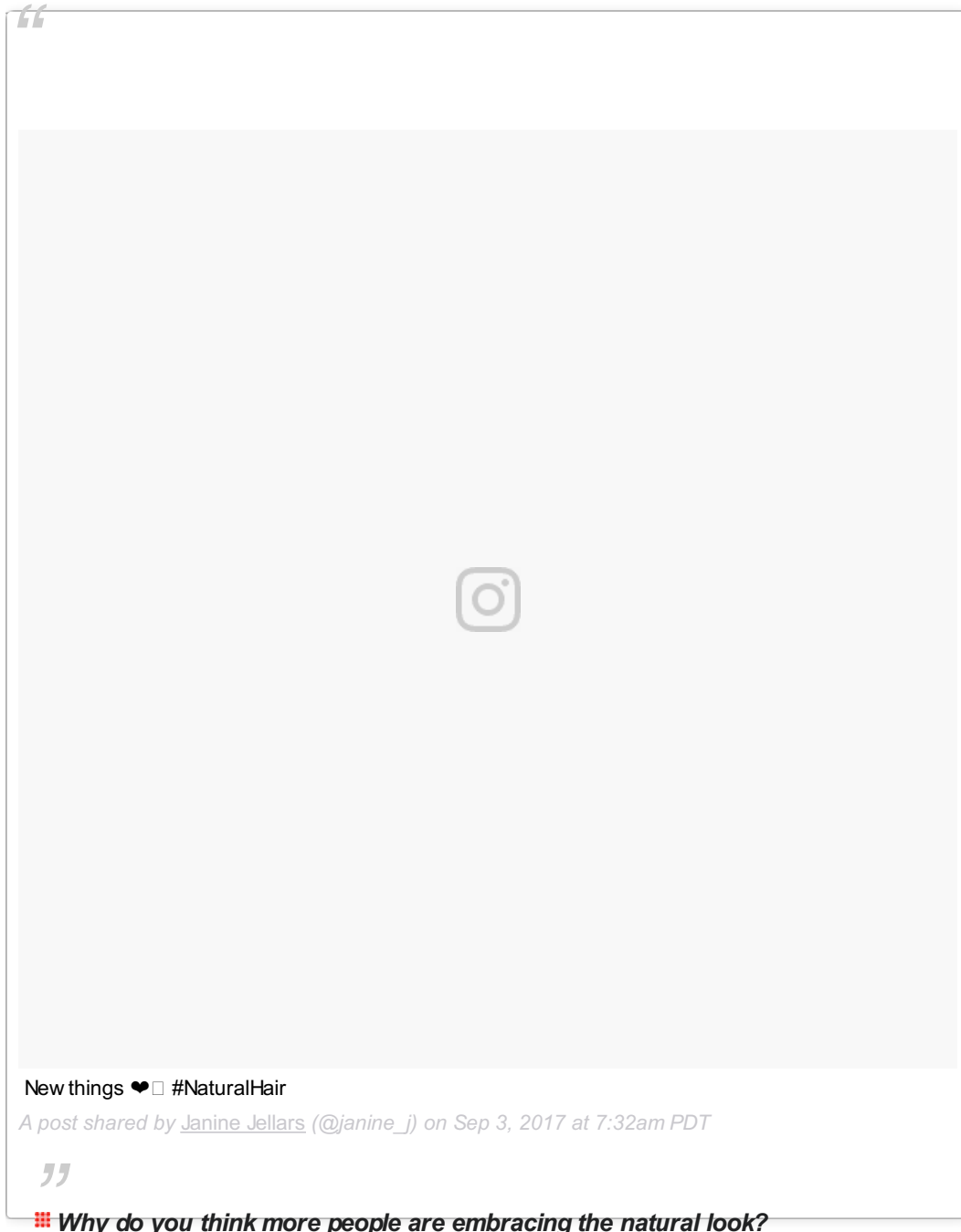
Natural hair 101 with Janine Jellars

By  Maroefah Smith

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More and more women are saying 'no' to electronic straighteners, 'bye-bye' to relaxers and bidding farewell to Eurocentric beauty ideals by going natural with their hair.

Digital content creator, content marketing specialist and naturalista Janine Jellars is the author of a natural hair guide for newbies and we spoke to her about transitions, big chops, and which products to avoid when going natural.



I think the move towards natural hair is due to a few big trends. Firstly, there's the rise of chemical-free consumption, in which consumers are more conscious of the chemicals they put on and in their bodies. Organic food, skin- and haircare is on the rise, and you see more women rejecting chemically treating their hair.

Secondly, it'd be short-sighted to separate the natural hair movement from African consciousness, as more people are embracing an Afrocentric point of view on beauty and life in general.

Thirdly, there's been an increase in education on natural hair and more variety in terms of product availability, which makes natural hair more accessible to more people.

■ ***What is the difference between the 'big chop' and the 'transition'?***

Both the big chop and transitioning are methods by which people 'leave behind' chemically treated/relaxed hair to embrace their natural hair. Big chop is when someone has grown out a few centimetres of their natural hair and then chops off the remaining chemically treated strands. Transitioning is a longer-term method where someone grows their natural hair out over months, without chopping off huge pieces of relaxed or chemically treated hair.

■ ***What are some of the products that you should avoid when going natural?***

Instead of talking about products to avoid, I prefer talking about ingredients that people need to be conscious about. The top three ingredients to avoid (look at the ingredients list on the back of the product) are sulphates, mineral oil, and alcohol. Sulphates are detergents found in many products that are meant for cleaning, including shampoos. Avoid this as sulphates can be harsh and strip our already dry hair of much-needed moisture. Similarly, products with alcohol listed as an ingredient can also dry your hair and scalp. Mineral oils can leave build up on your scalp and can cause irritation.

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Dear Hair, I've missed you 💎💎💎💎💎💎💎💎💎 #NaturalHair

A post shared by Janine Jellars (@janine_j) on Oct 30, 2016 at 4:46am PDT

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❏ **Which ones should you embrace more?**

Similarly, there are ingredients that people should definitely embrace. The first ingredient on any product you want to use should be water/aqua as this is the most moisturising ingredient for our hair. Then, look for natural butters and essential oils that can seal in moisture – think, shea butter, coconut oil, extra virgin olive oil, castor oil, jojoba oil.

❏ **What are some of your tips for maintaining a natural hairstyle?**

Natural hair can be as low- or high-maintenance as you want it to be! The biggest tip is to keep your hair moisturised as textured, curly and coily hair tends to be naturally more dry than straight hair. This is because it takes our natural oils longer to travel down the hair shaft. So always keep your hair moisturised, change to silk or satin pillowcases as cotton can drain out moisture from your hair and wear a scarf at night.

To find out more, check out Jellars’ [The Natural Newbie Guide](#).

ABOUT MAROEFAH SMITH

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