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## Hooray for BB, the Brazilian Blowout!

By EVE MARX

On day four I woke up and didn't wash my hair. That's because it still looked pretty perfect after undergoing the latest thing in smoothing and conditioning treatments, the Brazilian Blowout. BB, as I call it, is a brand-new quasi-straightening treatment that leaves your hair with plenty of volume, but smooth, soft and shiny. If you air dry it after washing, you even retain your old waves and curls. But they'll be smooth, not frizzy.

About a year and a half ago, I had the Keratin Conditioning Treatment. In fact, I had it twice, and it was grand. It did much the same thing as this new BB, but you couldn't wash your hair for three days after the treatment or get it wet (rain!) or wear a hat or a headband or a hair clip or even push it behind your ears for that entire period because you'd crease it or otherwise ruin it. When I got it, I worried how I would sleep or wash my face because in bed I am a tosser and turner. To wash my face, I wore a shower cap. A fashionista acquaintance who was all set to do her Keratin treatment canceled at the last minute — in the chair — when the stylist doing the treatment informed her she couldn't push her sunglasses up on her head for three days if she did it. "That was enough for me," she said. "I'd rather get my twice weekly wash and regular blow out."

The big news about BB is that it's a "no wait" process. It's good for people who are impatient. Instead of 2 1/2 hours in the chair, which is true of the Keratin process (even longer for the Japanese), BB takes

about 90 minutes. And if you insist, you can wash your hair the very next day and there are no rules about hats or sunglasses. Although your hair will look and feel so glam and sexy when you exit the salon, I can't imagine why you'd be in any rush to wash it.

In the USA smooth, straight hair is still what's in, although in Europe it's all frizz and curls. Have you noticed those Prada ads featuring models with frizzy, crimped hair? Hair that looks like Brillo? All I'd have to do to achieve that look is stop using conditioner. I see there is still a

### View from the PORCH

major market in Bedford for long, straight blond hair, mostly on teenagers and bossy gals in their mid-40s. My chic and adorable stylist, Cecilia Ibanez, at Paulo's Atelier has the kind of hair I've always wanted myself: naturally straight and dark, nearly black, brown. She told me she has done every conceivable thing to her hair, which is just what I'd do too if I worked in a salon. She told me she has many clients who can't break away from the long blond straight hair habit, which doesn't surprise me, because a friend of mine who is in the beauty business told me that once, she tried to change her long blond straight hair, and her husband objected. "I like you as a blonde," he said. She got the message.

If your hair is processed to be long, straight and blond, you'll love the BB treatment because it's actually good for colored hair. And long hair, which tends to be dry and brittle. BB is good for all hair types — thick, thin, dry, chemi-

cally damaged, blondes, brunettes, straight and curly. How it works is that a protective protein layer is flat-ironed (heat applied) around the hair shaft, which is a long-term way of eliminating frizz and smoothing the cuticle. What exactly this protein is I don't know. Seaweed? Denatured cod liver oil? I'm just guessing. In any case, it's related to whatever is used in the formula of the traditional three-day Keratin process. I was relieved to learn BB contains no formaldehyde, which forever and always will be associated, to me, with embalming fluid. A woman I know who gets Botox and the formaldehyde-including Japanese hair-straightening process told me she didn't care about the chemicals or possible carcinogens in these products at all, but I know she also smokes cigarettes.

My own experience with BB since prancing out of the salon 10 days ago is that I've washed it exactly twice, stuffed it a half-dozen times under a riding helmet, and barely combed. And it looks terrific. I am getting endless compliments on it. I also think BB is transformational. I know for a fact that some people have not recognized me walking past them down the street, and that at a reading I did last week at Via Vanti restaurant, where I read from my short story, "Can't Take My Eyes Off of You," published in the Westchester Review, quite a few people said I look younger. I can't think of a better reason to keep having this process done, over and over. They say it lasts about 12 weeks. I kept my Keratin Conditioning treatment alive for 10 months. Since everyone knows I love to talk about hair, let's just say I'll keep you posted.