Did you know that the keratin protein that makes up the skin surface is exactly the same as that which makes up hair and nails? In fact, skin, hair and nails are all produced by the same cells known as keratinocytes. So dermatologists are experts not only in the treatment of skin disease, but of hair and nail problems too.

Many diseases can affect the skin, hair or nails – sometimes all three simultaneously, such as eczema and psoriasis. The general trigger for someone to see a dermatologist is when their condition starts to interfere with their quality of life. Whether it’s something simple like an embarrassing rash on the hands, or something that prevents you doing your job, such as a nurse with a bad hand dermatitis, a dermatologist can help.

Generally speaking, any skin condition can be treated to greatly improve appearance and quality of life using creams, ultraviolet therapy or drugs. Saying this, many conditions cannot be completely cured, so a balance is usually required so the side-effects of treatment don’t outweigh the benefits. Hair and nails both take a long time to grow out, so any abnormalities in appearance or growth pattern will take many months before signs of improvement become visible.

Dr Adam Friedmann is a Consultant Dermatologist who treats conditions such as acne, eczema, allergy, hair loss and psoriasis. www.theharleystreetdermatologyclinic.com

New Silicea Beauty Direct for Hair, Skin and Nails has a delicious red berry taste and contains Silicic Acid to support the formation of collagen, elastin and keratin. £12.95 for 15 sachets from health stores and www.healthy2u.co.uk.