Galen’s Simples for Hair

In the De simplicium medicamentorum [temperamentis ac] facultatibus (books 6 to 8), Galen describes several remedies for head and body hair. Using the “Lexique pileux” by P. Brulé, Le sens du poil (grec), Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2015, p. 485-511 and the De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos by Galen himself as starting points, in the first section of our contribution we will analyse the words designating hair and hair disorders in the treatise on simples drugs. In the second section, we will present the remedies for hair and the routes of administration. In the last section, we will see how Galen walks along the thin rope separating therapy and cosmetics from the art of embellishment (ἡ κομμωτική τέχνη): in fact, some hair products have an ambiguous status.