

## HAIR CARE

Not everyone will lose their hair during cancer treatment. Some drugs cause no hair loss, some cause hair to thin, while others cause complete hair loss. Certain treatment protocols affect "rapidly dividing" cells such as hair follicles. Hair loss can include body hair, eyebrows, eyelashes, legs and pubic hair. The degree of hair loss depends on the chemotherapy drug, the dosage of chemotherapy or radiation, and how it is given. This condition is almost always temporary, except for cranial radiation.

Generally, hair loss will start approximately 2-3 weeks after your first treatment, and it may continue for several weeks. Hair regrowth may begin while you are on treatment, but it usually occurs about 6-12 weeks after therapy is completed. Be prepared: your "new" hair may have a different color or texture.

Wigs and hairpieces are often covered by insurance and are considered a tax-deductible expense if needed because of cancer treatment. Please ask your nurse for information.

### Suggestions about Hair Loss:

- If your health care provider tells you that you will lose your hair, cut your hair short before the hair loss begins. The short look will help get you used to your new appearance.
- Shop for a wig before treatment begins so you can match hair color and style with your present head of hair.
- If your hair loss is not complete, a shorter hair style will make remaining hair look thicker and fuller.
- Caps, hats, scarves, or turbans are often more comfortable and will help prevent heat loss in cold.
- You may decide not to hide your hair loss.
- Be sure to use a sunscreen if you go outside with your head uncovered.
- Don't use permanent dye on your hair or get a permanent until you have had 3 haircuts with your "new" hair.

### Hair Care during Chemotherapy

- Use mild shampoos and conditioners.
- A dry shampoo or baby powder will keep hair clean looking if it is too difficult to wash (clean hair, although it may be sparse, presents a fuller look than greasy and matted hair).
- Use soft hairbrushes.
- Use low heat when drying your hair.
- Avoid curling irons.
- Hair that is braided or pulled into a ponytail or pigtails is prone to more breakage.
- You **may** use a temporary dye rinse on your hair.
- Don't use permanent dye on your hair.
- Don't use brush rollers to set your hair.
- Use a satin pillow.
- Use shower cap to catch shedding hair.