

THE COMMON- SENSE GUIDE TO COLD CAP HAIRCARE

PAXMAN[®]

CHANGING THE FACE OF CANCER



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Don't wash your hair more than twice a week or less than once every 10 days

For some people this may be very daunting, particularly if you are a daily washer. Keep in mind though that a common side effect of chemo is a drying effect on your hair and scalp skin, and washing very frequently will contribute to and exacerbate this. Even if you currently wash your hair every day, your scalp adapts quickly and you shouldn't find your hair to be too greasy once your treatment is in full swing. It is however important to keep washing your hair regularly, even if it's once a week and especially if you are shedding heavily - keeping your hair and scalp clean and manageable is crucial.

Washing has the added benefit of liberating hairs that are in the process of shedding, which can be terrifying, particularly if you are shedding quite a lot and you find the shower drain full of hair. But it's really important to remember that washing will not cause hairs to fall out that weren't already in the process of shedding. In conclusion, you know your hair best - be open minded and follow your instincts, you'll find out what works for you.

Use color, perfume and sulfate free shampoo and conditioner - it doesn't matter which brand you use if it fits this criteria

They are all ingredients that can act as irritants, even if you were perfectly fine with them before you started treatment. Chemo will most likely cause your scalp to become very sensitive and sometimes itchy, and your hair to become dry, so these ingredients are best avoided. Also avoid baby shampoo as it is very alkaline, and not gentle enough for a sensitive scalp. It's often suggested as an option, but we know that it has caused people problems in the past. Try to avoid parabens too, as they are believed to disrupt hormone function by mimicking oestrogen.

Smooth shampoo and conditioner into your hair, don't rub

Piling hair on top of your head and massaging in shampoo is all very well and good in adverts, but it's a one-way street to tangled, matted hair while cold capping. Smooth shampoo and conditioner in and run your fingers through your hair, but avoid at all costs the circular rubbing motions you may be used to.

Brush your hair everyday

This may seem counter intuitive, especially if you are experiencing heavy shedding, but it is SO important to liberate any shedding hairs. Brushing morning and night will not pull out any hairs that weren't already shed, but will ensure that loose strands, and hairs that are in the process of dropping will be removed, making it significantly less likely to tangle and even matt. It will also help to brush before you wash your hair too.

Avoid heated styling

Using straighteners, flat irons or a curling wand, can have a further drying effect on already dry hair, not to mention the tension that it can put on the roots of your hair. It is fine to use your hairdryer on a cool setting, but use your hands and fingers rather than a brush, again to avoid tension at the roots.

Feel free to use clips, headbands, hats, scarves etc

Accessorize to your hearts content! You can be creative to hide patchy baldness, or thinning with whatever works for you, just avoid tension at the roots, so no tight ponytails etc. For those with long hair a braid or low bun can be a good solution, for those with shorter hair, pin back front sections of hair, or a soft head band can be great.

Dry shampoo and coloured root sprays are fine

Always test first to be sure of no scalp sensitivity, but using dry shampoo if you are having a bad hair day, or coloured fibres or root spray to cover patchy hair loss is just fine. Though try to avoid using so much that there is a build-up in your hair.

But most importantly...

"BE KIND TO YOUR HAIR AND YOURSELF."

Try not to worry too much. If you follow the above guidelines, and your own instincts you will be just fine. This is a tough road, but know that you are doing everything you can to retain your hair.

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