

How to cope with hair loss as a result of cancer treatment?

There are so many challenges to overcome when you go through cancer treatment, but hair loss is one that can hit patients particularly hard. The right support and information, however, can make all of the difference. Let's take a closer look.

Why do cancer patients tend to experience hair loss?

Chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal treatments for cancer can all change the appearance of a patient's hair or [cause it to fall out](#) entirely. Different patients experience different results and there are various new treatments that can help to reduce the risk of hair loss, such as scalp cooling. Each patient's doctor will talk to them about the treatments they are undertaking and the side effects. Losing hair can be upsetting and traumatic, but there are so many different avenues available where individuals can find support.

Ways to cope with cancer-related hair loss

Every patient will deal with cancer-related hair loss in a different way. Here are some tips that can be useful:

1. **Give yourself enough time** to get used to the idea of losing your hair and adjusting to your appearance. It's perfectly natural to feel upset, but also good to remember that cancer hair loss is usually temporary.
2. Remember that your **changing appearance doesn't change who you are** inside – focus on your qualities and attributes.
3. Prepare ahead by **speaking to your doctor** and/or hairdresser. Consider whether you will use hair coverings such as hats, scarves or wigs. It's good to get these in advance. You might also want to cut your hair short before the treatment begins.
4. **Nurture your scalp and hair** with limited washing, gentle shampoos and soft bristle brushes. Look for scalp moisturising products and try not to overuse clips and bands that pull on your hair. It's also important to avoid chemicals and heat where possible.
5. **Pamper yourself** to emphasise your other assets. Perhaps you can treat yourself to some new clothes or makeup, or have a manicure. Watch a film, listen to your favourite music or enjoy a massage. Deep breathing, meditation and relaxation techniques are also very useful.

6. **Maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle** by drinking enough water, eating nutritious food, sleeping and exercising. A dietician can help with your food and a personal trainer may be available to help create a personalised exercise plan.

7. **Build a support system** of friends, family and understanding people through a [cancer support group](#). This can be a great way to meet other people who can relate to what you are going through.

How to support someone dealing with cancer hair loss

There are some excellent guides and information sources that can help friends and family to support their loved ones with cancer hair loss. The key lies in [understanding the psychological effects](#) and understanding the ways in which you can offer support.

Hair loss during cancer can be a difficult thing to experience, but with preparation, information and support, you can feel like yourself again and meet this challenge.