

Scalp Cooling

Some chemotherapy medicines can cause hair loss. This side effect depends on the kind of treatment you are given. You are more likely to lose hair from your head than from other parts of your body. This is because scalp hair grows faster than other body hair. **At times, chemotherapy may also cause body and facial hair loss.**

Scalp cooling is a process used to cool your head before, during and after your chemotherapy. A cooling cap is put on your head to try to stop or limit hair loss caused by chemotherapy. Scalp cooling protects the base of the hair shafts, which helps reduce the damage that chemotherapy can cause to your hair follicles. By lowering the temperature of your scalp, the blood flow to the area around the hair follicles is reduced, which may help to prevent or limit hair loss.

I am interested. What do I do next?

If you are interested in scalp cooling, talk to your doctor. Your doctor will talk with you to determine if this treatment is right for you. If you decide to use the cooling process, you will be measured for the correct cap size. Your nurse will send this information to the scalp cooling cap company (Paxman). Scalp cooling is covered by some insurance companies and can be submitted to your insurance for approval by your health care team. If scalp cooling is not covered by your insurance company, you can be placed in contact with a patient assistance fund. If you do not get funding from either of those sources, your health care team will talk to you about the cost for paying for this scalp cooling in-full on your own, if desired. Please ask what your charges may be before you begin scalp cooling.

After you are fitted by a clinic nurse, a kit with the correct size cap will be given to you to take home. This kit includes the following:

- Scalp cooling cap
- Cooling cap cover

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

- Headband
- Spray bottle to dampen your hair before you put on your cap
- Detangling hair brush
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Instructions with specific hair care information
- A towel to dry your hair and to dry the cap after each treatment
- Token to use the cooling system for your treatments

It is important for you to read all information and be comfortable with the scalp cooling process before your first cooling treatment. Paxman has created step-by-step videos based on your hair type to help you understand your part with the cap cooling process. You will need to put the cap on yourself for your scalp cooling treatment. We encourage you to watch each video 3 times before your first treatment. To watch these videos, visit: coldcap.com

Bring all of your scalp cooling supplies with you for each treatment. These items will be needed for each of your scalp cooling sessions.

What to Expect the Day of Treatment

We encourage you to bring someone with you to your scalp cooling treatments to help with this process. The preparation steps are in the videos found on the website mentioned above. When you have completed these steps, your nurse will help you connect to a scalp cooling machine and scan your token that was included in your package. You will be in a semi-private room while receiving scalp cooling.

Phases of Scalp Cooling

- **Phase 1** (pre-cooling) – this period happens before your treatment starts. You must remain connected to the cooling machine for 30 minutes without stopping. Once the pre-cooling phase is completed, you may be disconnected from the machine for no more than 10 minutes at a time. **If you have thick hair, you may need to add an extra 15 minutes to the pre-cooling phase.**
- **Phase 2** – this is a continuous cooling period of your scalp during the remainder of your chemotherapy treatment. During scalp cooling treatment, your scalp will reach a temperature between 61 to 71 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Phase 3** (post-cooling) – this period can last between 20 to 90 minutes, depending on your treatment schedule.

Hair Care Tips

- Only wash your hair once each week. It is okay to wash your hair if the one time is on the day of your treatment.
- Brush your dry hair before you wash it.
- Wash your hair with lukewarm water.
- Use a mild shampoo or the shampoo in your package to wash your hair.
- **Do not** use shampoos with perfumes or preservatives. Avoid dry shampoo or shampoo caps.
- When you wash your hair, keep it out straight. **Do not** pile your hair on the top of your head when you mix in shampoo or conditioner.
- Use conditioner after every time you wash your hair.
- On a regular basis, use a wide-tooth comb or the brush in your package to gently brush your hair.
- **Do not** use permanent or temporary hair coloring or other harsh hair care products.
- **Do not** use hair dryers, straighteners, rollers, curling irons or any excessive heat on your hair.
- Stop going to your hair stylist or hairdresser while you are having scalp cooling.
- **Do not** wear hair ties, headbands or other hair accessories (i.e. hair clips or barrettes). Avoid items that are tight on your head or can get stuck in your hair and pull.
- After your chemotherapy treatments and scalp cooling are completed, you should continue to be gentle when you care for your hair.

What else should I know about scalp cooling?

- You may still have hair loss during or after chemotherapy. However, patients who use scalp cooling have less hair loss.
- Scalp cooling is not for everybody. Other options for hair loss may include wigs, scarves, hats or other head coverings. There are many styles available at many different prices. Check with your health insurance company to find out what coverage you may have for these options. It is important to talk with your health care team to determine the best time for you to select a wig. The James Cancer Hospital has a special store called **Hope's Boutique, located in The Stefanie Spielman Comprehensive Breast Center at 1145 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, OH 43212**. To make an appointment call (614) 293-9393.
- The James Cancer Hospital also offers the program “**Look Good, Feel Better**” sponsored by the American Cancer Society to help patients feel their best during chemotherapy. For more information, call 1-888-227-6446.
- You may get a headache or have mild nausea during your scalp cooling treatment.
- It may help to bring layers of clothes to keep you warm during your treatment.

For more information on scalp cooling, talk with your health care provider to make sure it is the right choice for you.