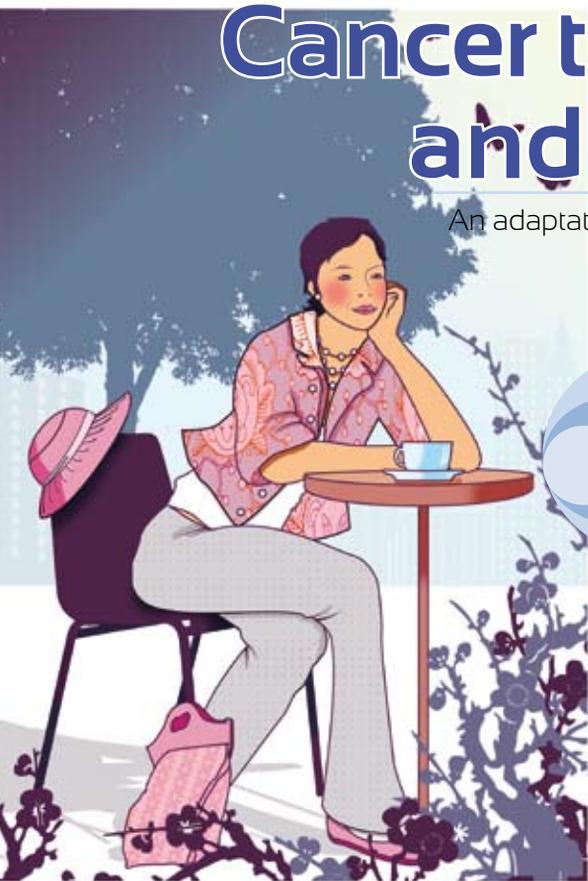


Cancer treatments and loss of hair

An adaptation from the original French, June 2011



CSF

Facts,
answers,
and practical
advice ...

Foreword

In 2010, associations supporting people affected by cancer were invited to become partners with Cancer info and help support their work by ensuring the sharing of all the information resources being made available. This organisation was created by the French National Cancer Institute (INCa, Institut National du Cancer), a national health and science agency responsible for co-ordinating activities in the fight against cancers in France.

Developed with the support of la Ligue nationale contre le cancer, Cancer info works to provide accessible, accurate and up-to-date information about cancer for patients, families and specialists. This information is made available via a dedicated website, printed guides and a telephone helpline.

Cancer Support France is pleased to be actively involved with Cancer info and is the only English-speaking association in partnership. In January 2010 INCa gave CSF the right to translate and adapt the information produced in two of their publications: "Démarches sociales et cancer", and "Traitements du cancer et chute des cheveux". This work is our unique contribution to the partnership and has been warmly welcomed by all concerned. We look forward to its evolution.

The original French document, "Traitements du cancer et chute des cheveux", forms part of the collection "Cancer info Reference Guides" published by the French National Cancer Institute. Cancer Support France would like to thank them for their permission to translate, adapt and circulate this guide.

Linda Shepherd
President Cancer Support France-national
June 2011

Loss of hair, eyelashes and eyebrows is a dreaded and painful occurrence for women who start chemotherapy, given that family and friends do not always think about the distress caused by hair loss, which is often considered simply as a "side effect". Losing your hair means undermining your femininity, showing the outside world that you have the illness and it is also a constant reminder of it. When we ask patients to make a list in order of importance of the many negative effects linked to cancer or its treatments, alopecia often comes at the top.

What is more natural, therefore, than wanting to know if you are inevitably going to lose your hair and under what conditions, whether it's possible to avoid hair loss and what solutions are available when you lose your hair. This booklet has been designed by France's National Institute of Cancer, with the collaboration of professionals, alongside women who have been confronted with this problem, in order to answer all these questions in the most complete, practical and illustrated way possible. It will help every reader to build her own personal strategy to overcome this ordeal.

Finally, even though this guide was originally designed for women, the information and advice contained in it can also be of interest to men confronted with losing their hair as a result of cancer treatments.

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Hair loss the whys and hows



Why does hair fall out ?

Chemotherapy attacks dividing-type cells, as cancerous cells tend to divide up more than others. Hair bulb cells also divide up a lot, which is why they are often destroyed during chemotherapy, leading to hair loss (including eyelashes and eyebrows). This hair loss is called alopecia. However, it is temporary, as hair grows back when treatment is stopped. Radiotherapy can also cause loss of hair in the area of the body affected by the rays.

How does this happen ?

Hair generally starts to fall out about 2-3 weeks after the start of chemotherapy but sometimes this can happen from the very first session. Hair continues to fall out over the period of the successive chemotherapy sessions. This can sometimes be very sudden or happen over a longer period, depending on the type of molecules used and the doses administered. Generally, eyelashes and eyebrows fall out shortly after head hair.

Does it hurt ?

Some patients have itching sensations and tingling feelings on their scalp just prior to or during hair loss.



Practical advice for managing your hair

Although this advice is not the result of any scientific research, which would no doubt have highlighted its effectiveness, it comes from strategies revealed by some patients as working effectively, without being dangerous.

In order to optimise the effects of the "cool cap", and generally in order to help manage your hair before, during and after chemotherapy, it is advisable to :

- wash your hair the night before the chemotherapy session, then not to wash it for 3-8 days after chemotherapy;
- not wash your hair too frequently;
- use little shampoo;
- use a gentle shampoo but avoid shampoos for babies which make hair greasy;
- use a soft brush;
- avoid heat from hair-dryers, heated curlers or straighteners and blow-drying;
- avoid hair colours, highlights and perms;
- avoid plaits, braiding or straightening.

Why do some people not lose their hair ?

Three facts are taken into account :

- some molecules or those administered in small doses do not lead to so much hair loss
- some people's hair is naturally more resistant than others
- wearing the "cold cap" can sometimes limit the amount of hair loss

Your doctor can advise you on the type of molecule and treatment to be administered and whether it will lead to loss of head hair and other bodily hair.

Does the hair grow back ?

Yes, as hair loss caused by chemotherapy is temporary. Once the chemotherapy treatment has finished, hair will start to grow again, at the rate of about 1cm per month. Various factors may cause this rate of growth to differ, such as taking high doses of corticoids, hormone therapy or even taking Interferon. Also, radiotherapy on the scalp area can cause irreversible alopecia, according to the total dosage of radiation received. However, cases of delayed regrowth or non regrowth are very rare.

How can hair loss be restricted ?



The cold cap (refrigerated helmet in French) *le casque réfrigéré*

According to the type of cancer being treated, the chemotherapy protocol in place and the medical team's practice, a "cold cap" may be offered to the patient as a way of reducing hair loss.

This is in fact more like an iced hat than a helmet. It has the effect of reducing the flow of blood to the scalp and therefore also reducing the amount of "toxic" product that will affect the hair cells.

The effectiveness of the cap depends on several factors :

- the molecules used in the chemotherapy and their combination;
- the method of administering the chemotherapy (number of molecules, length of perfusion/IV drip);
- the patient's hair type and how he/she takes care of it (brushing softly, avoiding blow-drying and aggressive treatments on the hair during chemotherapy);
- the length of the patient's hair (it is advisable to cut hair short prior to chemotherapy);
- how the medical team manage the cap during chemotherapy; ideally, it should be fitted at least 10 minutes prior to perfusion/IV drip, onto wet hair and changed regularly (every quarter of an hour), in order to remain cold throughout

the session and taken off approximately half an hour after its completion. However, not all medical teams are necessarily organised or equipped to carry out such frequent cap changes.

Depending on the combination of these different factors, the "cold cap" could either have no real benefit, could delay or reduce the loss of hair or could even help avoid loss of hair altogether.

Studies carried out on this subject show very varied success rates and also varied care practices across different medical departments.

Its use is sometimes contra-indicated

The use of the cap may not be recommended in the treatment of certain types of cancer (some leukaemias, tumours or secondary cancers on the scalp) and is inappropriate where chemotherapy is carried out continuously by means of a pump or taken orally.

It is therefore only the medical team who can judge whether or not its use is worthwhile. However, patients should be able to take advantage of this method when there are no contra-indications and ask for it to be changed as regularly as possible.

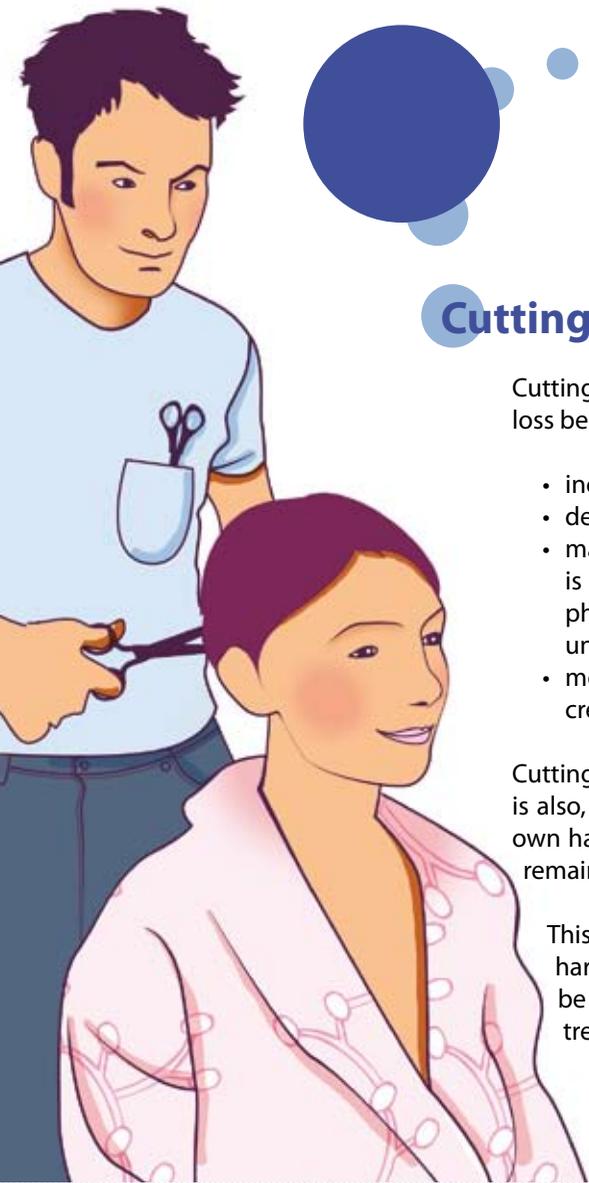
Sensations that are sometimes hard to cope with

The cap can sometimes be hard to cope with by the patient, causing intensely cold sensations, bad headaches as well as ocular or cervical pain, which force some patients to abandon its use.

It is advisable to wear a headscarf or bath towel to cover the neck whilst wearing the cap, as well as warm clothes to reduce the general feeling of cold.



> How to restrict hair loss



Cutting your hair

Cutting your hair short is often advised before hair loss because it can :

- increase the efficiency of the cap, if used;
- delay hair loss by several days;
- make hair loss "easier", as for some people it is easier to lose short hair than long hair, and, physically, losing short hair can appear less unpleasant than losing long hair;
- morally prepare you for losing your hair, creating a kind of "intermediary" stage.

Cutting your hair before hair loss from chemotherapy is also, for some, a way of taking matters into your own hands, of using a positive strategy rather than remaining inactive.

This step, which is not obligatory, is often very hard to come to terms with. It can sometimes be perceived as a negative step in the course of treatment.



Shaving your head or getting your head shaved ?

Some women shave their own heads, others ask their husbands or friends to shave it for them.

It would seem preferable to ask a professional for help with what is psychologically not a trivial occurrence - a hairdresser, or capillary specialist when purchasing a wig (there should be no charge for fitting a wig).

However, not everyone wishes to share this stage of their illness with someone they don't know and some prefer to preserve a certain intimacy.

Shortening the process of losing hair

> Relief or regrets

Some patients let the process of losing hair run its "natural" course right up to the end whereas others try to shorten the process or find a remedy by shaving what is left of their hair when too much of it has fallen out.

Certain women therefore feel relief that they have shortened the process of losing hair and others express regret. Therefore, you need to take time to reflect on what might be easiest for you.

> Restricting the loss of eyelashes, eyebrows and nails



Practical advice for looking after your nails

For the sake of preventing damage, it is advisable to wear gloves when doing the washing up or other housework, or even for gardening, in order to protect your hands and nails. It is also recommended to wear gloves when going out in Winter and to regularly apply handcream to the hands and feet.

Nail varnish does seem to be effective for protecting nails. The night before the chemotherapy session or on the day of the session, apply two layers of silicium varnish and two coats of dark non-pearly nail varnish to your nails. This varnish should be kept on throughout the chemotherapy treatment. If the varnish cracks, you need to remove it with a non-acetone nail varnish remover and then reapply the 4 layers.

There are also other solutions for protecting your nails which are used without varnish and are available in pharmacies.

Ice to protect eyelashes, eyebrows and nails

Some of the products used in chemotherapy damage the nails. You can use refrigerated mittens during chemotherapy to preserve the nails – these mittens are supplied by the hospital.

In the same way, refrigerated socks can be used to protect toe nails. These socks are not always provided by the hospital. You therefore need to take your own ice pack and a pair of socks to put on during the chemotherapy session.

Finally, with a view to protecting eyelashes and eyebrows, you can put a block of ice wrapped in a bath cap over your eyes. As this ice pack is not supplied by the hospital, you need to bring it with you from home in a cool box.

Applying ice causes an extremely cold sensation which can be hard to cope with. Also, the use of mittens and refrigerated socks is not recommended for patients suffering from Raynaud's disease, distal metastasis or distal arteriopathy.

Accessories

Several accessories can help to cover or hide hair loss : headscarves, turbans, hats, caps, berets, wigs or hairpieces.

You need to try them out to see which one looks best or which one you feel most comfortable with. During your treatment it's up to you – either you leave your head bald, just wear a wig or alternate, depending on the situation, between bald head, wig or accessories.

> Headscarves

How to wear a headscarf

There are many ways of wearing a headscarf and here are a few of them :

Catogan style:



Place the headscarf on the head, keeping one side long and one side short.



The longest side is then rolled around the head ; both sides are now the same length.



Gather the two sides together fold them over each other and tie them together with an elastic band or bobble.

Turban style:



Place the headscarf on the head and tie a knot at the back of the neck.



Roll each of the united lengths and bring them to the front, making a knot with the rolled lengths.

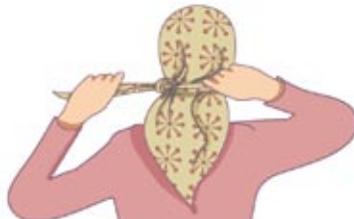


Insert the two ends of the rolled lengths underneath the knot at the back of the neck.

Peasant style:



Fold the headscarf in two diagonally and place it on the head.



Tie the two ends to one side of the head.

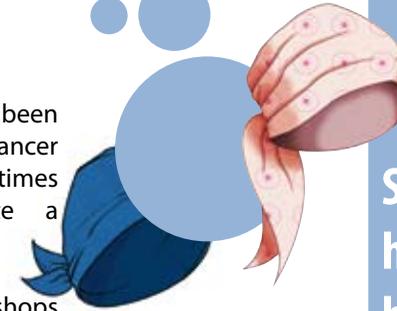


Make a second knot to secure in place.

Pre-knotted headscarves

For women who have been through a breast cancer operation, it is sometimes painful to manipulate a headscarf.

Numerous specialist shops offer pre-knotted headscarves, which are therefore easier to put in place.



Some advice to help you choose a headscarf

- The minimum size you will need is approximately 1.8m long by 1m wide; the longer the piece of material, the more volume can be created around the face.
- Cotton, lycra or linen are preferred materials; you should avoid slippery materials such as silk or synthetics.
- It is easy to find inexpensive headscarves in all the big stores and in markets. The choice is a question of personal taste.

Accessories to attach to headscarves

Specialist shops offer a range of products to use as an alternative to a wig :

- a crown of hair enables you to have some hair showing from underneath the headscarf; the accessory has a silicon band, which sticks to the scalp; you can therefore either have hair showing at the front or at the back of the head;
- a fringe, which is attached to Velcro; the Velcro can therefore be sewn to one or several headscarves;
- some shops also propose "hair headscarves"; these are headscarves with hair attached at the nape of the neck.

Hats

- Specialist shops also offer large lightweight hats made of either straw or linen, which can be worn with or without a headscarf underneath.



At night time

If you don't want to leave your head bare at night time, you could choose to wear either the turban-style headscarf or a small, sponge cap.

> Accessories



> Wigs

Sometimes poorly portrayed

Some women do not think highly of wigs, particularly those made of synthetic hair. These sentiments are often due to the fact that they have a lack of up-to-date knowledge of the product, which has come a long way in recent years. Today there is a very wide range of wigs both in synthetic and natural hair.

A hairpiece, a wig or a hairstyle ?

Several terms are used by patients, others involved in their care and medical professionals to describe wigs. They use the term "hairpiece" or "hair replacement". Some patients say "my hairstyle" when talking about their wig.



Do you try and maintain your original look or change it?

Is it best to find a wig style that looks most like your original hairstyle to "hide" your illness as much as possible, to provide an element of stability in your otherwise personal upheaval, or to try out new hairstyles and allow yourself to "change heads"?

This is of course a personal decision, which needs to be taken carefully, thinking about how important it is to you that other people may realise that you are ill, and remembering that when your hair grows back it may have changed texture, be curlier or straighter, darker or lighter in colour, white or no longer white. These changes are often temporary – with the hair returning to how it was originally after a few months – but sometimes the change is permanent: for example, hair could have whitened naturally over the course of several months of treatment.

Certain women will never feel they have found their original look with a wig however much care and attention they place in choosing one.

When should you buy it ?

> Before losing your hair

You could choose to buy your wig before the chemotherapy treatment starts, in order to :

- make this choice when you are still feeling fit;
- make the choice while you still have your own hair, to choose something that resembles your own hair colour or style;
- be able to wear it as soon as you feel the need.

> When you have lost your hair

Some women feel they should not make such a purchase which can be costly before having lost their hair. However, this doesn't mean you cannot make your choice before losing your hair, find out about the different products available and make sure the one you've chosen is readily available as soon as you feel the need for it.

Over and above the risk of not making use of a wig if your hair doesn't fall out, it may not fit as well with a bare head as it did when you tried it on with your own hair.

It is important to note that most wigs are available in different head sizes and can be adjusted by such things as elastic bands which can be tightened or loosened to get the right fit.

> Accessories

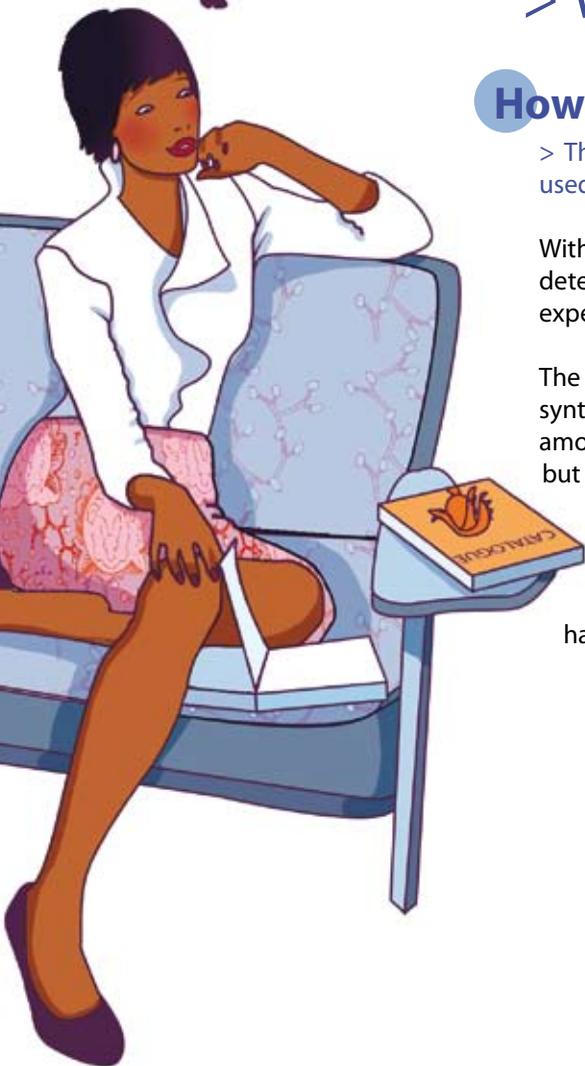
> Wigs

How much do they cost ?

> The price varies depending on the type of hair used to make the wig

With regards to price, the type of hair used determines the cost and natural hair wigs are more expensive than those made of synthetic hair.

The least expensive "ready to wear" wigs made of synthetic hair start at around 125 Euros, which is the amount reimbursed by the French social security, but they can be as much as 600 Euros (depending on whether they are machine or hand-made). Natural hair wig prices start at around 700 Euros and can be as much as several thousands of Euros, for a made-to-measure, hand-made wig.



Reimbursement by the French social security

The doctor provides a prescription for the wig (which can be renewed, if necessary) and therefore the French social security reimburse costs up to a maximum of 125 Euros (the wig salesman will complete a medical expenses form in this respect). You may be able to receive an additional reimbursement from your top-up health insurance, if you have one. This additional reimbursement can vary enormously according to the type of top-up cover you have, and can be from as little as double to as much as six times the amount reimbursed by social security. It would therefore be worth contacting your top-up insurance agent to check what level of reimbursement they offer before purchasing your wig.

Warning : not all wig salesmen are accredited for they have not carried out all the necessary steps in order to be covered by French social security; it is better to check before entering the shop whether you will be able to receive a reimbursement.

People covered by the Universal Health Insurance Cover (CMU) or the State Medical Aid (AME)

Those who are either affiliated to the CMU or who are covered by the AME have the right to benefit from the French social security share of the cost without having to pay in advance. They simply need to show their Carte Vitale with proof of their CMU cover or their valid AME certificate.

How to put your wig on

- Shake the wig to air it and to give it some volume.
- Firstly, put it on from the front to the back, putting the bottom of it on your forehead and then placing it 4 fingers' height above your eyebrows.



- Position the support straps on your temples and flatten them down.



- Use your fingers to put the hair into the style you want.



> Accessories



Where can you buy your wig ?

> At the hairdresser's

We often ask our hairdresser for advice. He can usually show you a range of styles from a catalogue and order a few of the ones you like from which you may choose, or he could recommend a specialist shop.

> In specialist shops

There are specialist shops where you can find a wide range of wigs, as well as specialist institutions which are similar to salons and which offer a large range of complementary services.

It is also possible to get wigs in some of the large department stores, by post directly from some of the manufacturers, at the chemist or on the internet.

Some institutions offer sale of wigs at home or at hospital for people who cannot get out to make their purchase.

Do you need to make an appointment ?

It takes some time to choose a wig - you need to leave about an hour to make your choice and time for trying it on. It is therefore best to make an appointment, so that you do not have to wait too long in the shop and in order to get the best advice possible.

Alone or accompanied ?

You can choose to take someone with you to help you choose your wig: your partner, a friend, your child, etc. However, sometimes people's opinions differ and this can make your choice even harder.

Can you take advantage of aid or loans ?

Some women find it hard to finance the cost of their wig. Nurses or social workers are often aware of the different types of aid or loans available and may even be able to help you find a wig salesman whose prices are fully reimbursed by the French social security.

Hospitals sometimes have wigs or other accessories available that have been donated by former patients. Patient associations also sometimes provide aid or redistribute wigs.

Finally, sometimes patients exchange wigs amongst themselves, using cancer-dedicated site forums on the internet.

In particular, have a look at the following sites :

les Essentielles: www.essentielles.net;

les Impatientes: www.lesimpatientes.com;

la Ligue contre le Cancer: www.ligue-cancer.net;

Jeunes Solidarité Cancer (JSC): www.jscforum.net.

Shops committed to the cause

The French National Cancer institute (INCa) has drawn up a charter highlighting the wig seller's obligations (see pages 24-25). The shops who subscribe to the charter are committed to respect its principles, with regards not only to the welcome they give to patients but also to the presentation of their products and their after-sales service.

L'INCa recommends that you use the shops on their list, which is available on their website or by telephone on 0810 810 821*. The following sticker shown in the shop window will confirm that they subscribe to the charter.



*Cancer info : Monday to Saturday 9am to 7pm, cost of a local call.

> Accessories



Looking after your wig

- A wig made of synthetic fibres can be washed whenever you like but it is advisable to wash it once or twice a month. It needs to be washed with special shampoo in a basin and rinsed thoroughly with clear water. You may apply a conditioner or hair balm if you wish, depending on the type of wig, and then rinse the wig out again. It should be dried in a sponge towel but not ringed, folded or styled whilst wet, just placed on a plastic support (sometimes supplied with the wig). Avoid using polystyrene heads as these can get mouldy.
- For wigs made from natural hair, it is best to take them back to the salesman to be cleaned / reconditioned (at a cost of around 30-40 Euros).
- Not only do you need to wash your wig but you also need to wash your head regularly with a soft shampoo and then apply a non-greasy cream or soft almond oil and allow it to soak in to help hydrate the scalp, which will help reduce itching.

What to avoid when wearing a wig

Avoid :

- going swimming in a pool or at the beach (unless you have a very particular type of wig);
- wearing your wig at night;
- going near any source of intense heat (cigarette lighters, candles, barbecues, ovens, boiling steam, etc) which could damage the wig;
- applying hairspray, as this will make it dirty;
- using a hairdryer, heated curlers or crimpers.

In the summer, some people have difficulty in coping with their wig because of the heat and itching caused by perspiration. They choose to wear a headscarf or a cotton turban.

You can continue to wear your wig, headscarf, or other accessory when your hair grows back as it doesn't stop it from growing. You can then remove your wig or any other accessory when you are satisfied with the length of your hair.

When hair grows back ...



Once you've stopped your treatment, it can take several weeks and more rarely several months for your hair to grow back. The new growth can cause itching. The texture and colour of the hair may change but it will often return to normal.

It is best to avoid treatments that are likely to damage the hair during the first six months of new growth. Therefore, it is best to avoid : tinting, perms, blow-drying, straightening, plaiting, etc.

Some shops offer to give their support right up to the first cut.

When body hair grows back

Body hair, such as eyelashes and eyebrows, grows back in the same way that head hair does, several weeks to several months after the treatment has stopped.

Some pre-menopausal women who are under hormonal treatment may notice soft downy hair appearing on their face, arms, and other places when the treatment stops. Normally, this downy hair disappears after about six months to a year and should not be shaved. You can seek advice from your GP or a specialist consultant in a hospital if this causes embarrassment or inconvenience.



Putting on make-up*

Good to know

Avoid using false eyelashes or false eyebrows as the glue can cause skin irritation. There are eyebrow make-up kits in large perfume stores.

If you find it hard putting make-up on yourself, there are some specialised clinics within hospitals. You can also seek advice from a beautician.

Treatments can have several effects on the appearance of the face. Chemotherapy brings about a change in skin colour and often leads to loss of eyelashes and eyebrows. It can also cause weight loss, whereas taking corticoids causes weight gain. As for fatigue, this often leads to rings under the eyes.

Make-up can help you look healthier and more rested. You need to remove all make-up first, then apply a day cream and a liquid foundation adapted to your own skin colour.

Then, powder your face for a make-up that will last longer. Finally, apply blusher to your cheeks, eyelids, forehead, nose and chin.

To reduce the presence of rings under your eyes, apply a yellow-colour correcting tint (or a lighter foundation) under the foundation, under the lower eyelid and in the interior angle of the eye, then apply powder.

You can pencil in your eyelashes and eyebrows to restructure your face.

- **For eyelashes** : apply a very fine line of eyeliner on the line of the eyelashes across the whole of the upper eyelid and in the external corner of the eyelid and powder this line with brown or black eyeshadow.
- **For eyebrows** : to know where to start your make-up, draw an imaginary vertical line from the bottom side of the nose to the internal corner of the eye (1). To work out where to stop the line of make-up, draw an imaginary line from the bottom side of the nose to the external corner of the eye (2). The highest point of the eyebrow's curve is given by a third line which leaves the bottom side of the nose and passes the external edge of the pupil (3). Once you have defined these limits, you can draw your eyebrows with a brown or black eyebrow liner to give a natural-looking line.



(1) Where to start your make-up

(2) Where to stop the line

(3) Highest point of the eyebrow

* Taken from the book "Soigner son image pour mieux vivre son cancer" = "Taking care of your image to cope with your cancer better" by Marie-Laure Allouis.

The wig seller's charter of clients' rights and sellers' obligations



In this charter, your professional consultant is committed to :

> Conditions of reception

- Welcome any person interested in information on wigs (or "hair pieces") attentively and respectfully.
- See clients by appointment, if they wish.
- Put aside enough time (of around an hour) per appointment.
- Welcome the clients in a discreet and confidential environment.
- Allow the clients to be accompanied by the person of their choice during the whole appointment

> Presentation of the range of products and fitting

- Present the clients with a variety from the range of products available (either immediately or within a few days)
- Inform the clients of the full range of prices available.
- Show the prices of the models in the catalogues and publicity brochures.
- Offer the clients the possibility of trying on several models so that they can make their own choice.
- Teach the clients how to put their wig on.
- Advise the clients on how to look after their wig.
- Sell wigs that fit the clients' measurements.
- Give the clients the references relating to the different models of wigs they have selected, so that they may come back to buy it as soon as they feel it is necessary.

> Conditions of purchase

- Have an identification number available which has been attributed by the French healthcare service, or be registered, and draw up a purchase invoice on a medical expenses sheet ("feuille de soins") if clients present a medical prescription for the purchase of a hair piece, so that they can take advantage of the reimbursement from the French social security and eventually their top-up medical insurance.
- Use the legal third party payer service with clients who are affiliated to the universal health cover (CMU) and the medical aid (AME).
- Give administrative assistance with regards to documents to be supplied to the French healthcare service and the top-up medical insurance company, for the reimbursement of the financial cost of the wig.

> After-sales services

- Fit the wig free of charge (including hairstyling and cutting, if necessary), especially if it was bought before some or all of the hair fell out.
- Advise clients, once they've purchased their wig, if they cannot seem to put it on or look after it properly.
- Offer clients the possibility of returning their wig – if it has never been worn or modified – within 7 days of purchase, in its original packaging, together with the invoice. Clients will then be able to exchange it for a second wig or obtain a credit note to use in the shop.

These obligations are also valid for sales at home or in hospitals and are renewed annually.

If, however, you should notice that one or several of these obligations are not being respected by the wig seller, please report your findings to the INCa : Institut National du Cancer – Vie des malades, 52 avenue André-Morizet – 92513 BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT Cedex.

Addresses, websites and useful telephone numbers

www.e-cancer.fr

The French National Cancer Institute (INCa) website. You will find a list of wig sellers on the site and those who have subscribed to the INCa charter have a badge against their name, as well as other information on cancer and its treatment.

Cancer info : 0 810 810 821 (cost of a local call)

This telephone service, which is offered by INCa in partnership with la Ligue nationale contre le cancer, is available from 9am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday. A team specialised in information, listening or legal queries answers in confidence any questions from those worried about cancer.

Cancer info can advise on your nearest wig seller and tell you if he has subscribed to the INCa charter.

www.ligue-cancer.net

La Ligue contre le Cancer (The League against Cancer) website. The Ligue is a federation of over 100 committees spread across the whole of France, including the departments and overseas territories. In order to respond to problems of alopecia, the Ligue can offer financial and psychological help to people in difficulty. The Ligue's departmental committees also have a list of contact details for professionals working on this issue (including shop keepers).

To contact the Ligue anywhere in France : 0 810 111 101.

www.apima.fr

Apima is an association whose goal is to help patients rebuild a positive image around their sick body.

www.association-essentielles.fr and www.lesimpatientes.com

Websites offering informative support to women affected by breast cancer; they also organise discussion forums.

www.etincelle.asso.fr

Etincelle centres are places which offer a welcome and well-being space for women affected by breast cancer. A list of addresses, opening hours and activities offered are available on the website.

Les ateliers de l'Embellie (Beauty workshops)

Association of self-help and support to women affected by cancer, which organises make-up, yoga, art therapy, relaxation therapy and various other workshops – 24 rue de Charenton, 75011 PARIS.

Tel : 01 42 74 36 33.

Consultations and workshops dedicated to questions about beauty are organised by associations (CEW, www.cew.asso.fr; La vie de plus belle, www.lavieplusbelle.org; Prendre Soins de Soi, www.prendresoindesoioi.org; Maison du Bien être, <http://institutdebeaute.blogspot.com>), socio-beauticians or nurses and some Information Meeting Points – Espaces Rencontres Informations. We suggest you make enquiries.

For more information on all questions about beauty linked to cancer "Soigner son image pour mieux vivre son cancer" (Taking care of your image to cope with your cancer better) – by Marie-Laure Allouis (15 Euros). To place an order : www.apima.fr/bon-commande.htm

To find your nearest wig seller :

www.e-cancer.fr or 0 810 810 821 from Monday to Saturday, from 9am to 7pm (cost of a local call).

This original French document has been produced with the co-operation of : Marie-Laure Allouis, president of the association Apima; Isabelle Anglade, Elite Santé; Françoise Bettevy, national League against cancer; Aury D. Caltagirone, personal image advisor and socio-beautician at the Institute Gustave Roussy; Philippe Dalivoust, oncologist at the Ambroise Paré hospital in Marseilles; Marianne Duperray and Anne Festa of the Institute Gustave Roussy; Claudia Galati, "WILLY" wigs, hair and beauty salon; Anne Matalon, "Les ateliers de l'Embellie"; Isabelle Pugno, director of the Etincelle association; Béatrice Zinsou, Any d'Avray.

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Cancer info guides

> **Cancer info guides** use simple and clear words to describe what we currently know about cancer, its treatment and its consequences. They aim to :

- make valid and comprehensive up-to-date information accessible;
- improve understanding of the different aspects of the illness and its repercussions, not only from a medical point of view but also socially, psychologically and from the point of view of the patient's family;
- facilitate dialogue between patients, their loved ones, the doctor and the medical team;
- enable patients to participate better in choosing their treatments.

> **These guides are written using a multi-disciplinary methodology**, bringing together health professionals and patients, former patients and loved ones. The medical information contained in them comes from recommendations of treatment and follow-ups which has been given to health professionals. The Cancer info guides are regularly updated as medical knowledge advances.

> **The French National Cancer Institute (INCa)** also makes the following services available to those looking for information on cancer :

- a telephone information and listening service Cancer info, 0810 810 821, price of a local call;
- Cancer info knowledge bank, on its website www.e-cancer.fr.

Guides currently available

> **Relating to different types of cancer**

- Cervical cancer treatments (2011)
- Ovarian cancer treatments (2010)
- Prostate cancer treatments (2010)
- Skin cancer treatments (2010)
- Bowel cancer treatments (2010)
- Brain tumours (2010)
- Lung cancer treatments (2010)
- Colorectal cancer treatments (2010)
- My child has cancer (2009)
- Understanding breast cancer (2007)

> **Cancer treatments**

- Understanding radiotherapy (2009)
- Understanding chemotherapy (2009)
- Clinical trials in oncology : answers to your questions (2008)

> **Living with cancer**

- Social processes and cancer (2004)
- Cancer treatments and loss of hair (2009)
- Pain and cancer (2007)
- Life during and after cancer (2007)
- Enteral nutrition (2007)
- Living with someone who has cancer (2006)
- Fatigue and cancer (2005)

These documents are free and can be ordered online or downloaded on www.e-cancer.fr

Advice about research

> **The patient has the right to receive information** : You should never hesitate to ask your doctor or other members of the medical team for explanations. For any additional research for quality information on cancer and how it's taken care of, it is recommended to use documents where authors are named and who state the manner in which they were written. On the internet, it is best to use sites which have the label HAS/HON code. If you need advice in identifying these quality sites, please consult the chief health authority's website (Haute Autorité de santé) on www.has-sante.fr.

Cancer Support France

Cancer Support France (CSF) is an association set up according to the 1901 French Law. It is made up of a growing number of affiliated associations across France, supported by the umbrella organisation CSF-National. The associations exist to support English speaking people who live in France and who are affected by cancer. Support is provided in a number of ways, but those volunteers working in a listening role are fully trained "Active Listeners". Full details of the association can be found on the website : www.cancersupportfrance.info. National helpline number is 05 45 89 30 05. Calls are picked up every day and a response normally made within 24 hours. There is a fully moderated Forum where questions can be posed and support found : www.csf-forum.org.

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CSF Charente Plus is one of the affiliated associations supporting those affected by cancer in departments 16, 17, 86 and 87. Contact us at:

Cancer Support France (CSF) Charente Plus

Association No W163000553

csf.charenteplus@gmail.com

website: www.cancersupportfrance.info

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CSF's website address :
www.cancersupportfrance.info

