



The Enhancement Program provides cancer patients with a one-on-one consultation with a licensed cosmetologist to select a wig, hats and accessories at no charge. Request an appointment at 320-229-5100.

Side Effects - **Hair loss (alopecia)**

Some treatments cause the hair on your head and other parts of your body to fall out. Scalp cooling may help reduce hair loss. Your provider or nurse will share strategies that have helped others, including those listed below.

Manage your hair loss:

- **Treat your hair gently.** Use a hairbrush with soft bristles or a wide-tooth comb. Avoid hair dryers, irons or products such as gels or clips that may hurt your scalp. Wash your hair less often with a mild shampoo and pat it dry.
- **You have choices.** Some people choose to cut their hair short to make it easier to deal with or shave their head. If you choose to shave your head, use an electric shaver so you won't cut yourself. If you plan to use a wig, get one while you still have hair so you can match it to the color of your hair. If you find wigs to be itchy and hot, try wearing a scarf or turban.
- **Protect and care for your scalp.** Use sunscreen or wear a hat when you are outside. Choose a comfortable scarf or hat that keeps your head warm. If your scalp itches or feels tender, lotions and conditioners may help.
- **Talk about your feelings.** Many people feel angry, depressed or embarrassed about hair loss. Some people find it helpful to talk with others who have lost their hair. Talking openly and honestly with your children and close family members can also help.

Ways to care for your hair when it grows back:

- **Be gentle.** Avoid too much brushing, curling, washing and blow-drying.
- **After chemotherapy.** Hair often grows back in two to three months after treatment has ended. Your hair will be very fine when it starts to grow back. Sometimes your new hair can be curlier or straighter – or even a different color. In time, it may go back to how it was before treatment.
- **After radiation therapy.** Hair often grows back in three to six months after treatment has ended. If you received a very high dose of radiation your hair may grow back thinner or not at all on the part of your body that received radiation.

Talk with your health care team

- Is treatment likely to cause my hair to fall out?
- How should I care for my head? Are there products that you recommend? Ones I should avoid?
- Where can I get a wig or hairpiece?
- What support groups could I meet with that might help?
- When will my hair grow back?