

What is scalp cooling?

It is a method of cooling the scalp which can be used with some (but not all) forms of chemotherapy to try and help reduce hair loss. It is used for lowering the temperature of the scalp and has been in use in different forms for over 25 years. Reducing the scalp temperature by a few degrees creates a restriction in the amount of blood reaching the hair follicles protecting them from the effects of the concentrated chemotherapy drugs carried in the blood stream.

What method of scalp cooling should you use?

There are two methods currently in use:
Both methods require a cap to be worn prior to, during, and post drug infusion.

1- The original method uses ice caps of frozen gel at -25 degrees Celsius. These are removed from the freezer and are placed on the patient's head. The caps have to be changed at regular intervals due to the fact that they warm up during use. They are heavy and extremely cold when placed on the head.

2- The alternative method such as the cold cap consists of a lightweight silicone cap which is connected to a small refrigeration system. This cold cap is placed onto your head over your hair roots. It is attached to a scalp cooling machine that pumps a liquid solution around the cold cap that will dramatically reduce the temperature at your hair roots. The scalp cooling technique can help to reduce hair loss by shrinking the hair follicle (root), thus helping to prevent circulation of the chemotherapy drug to the hair follicle and so the natural function can continue. When effective this helps to reduce hair loss. The cap continues to maintain the scalp at a constant and controlled temperature throughout the treatment cycle and importantly does not have to be changed.

How long will it take?

The cap is normally worn for approximately **1 hour 30 minutes before starting chemotherapy**, continues to be worn during administration of the drugs and then for a calculated time afterwards, which is dependent on the types of drugs being administered.

Times do vary; your nurse will be able to provide you with the estimated time for your particular chemotherapy drug.

How the cold cap feels when on?

It fits very firmly on the head with a chin strap to ensure a tight fit. You may feel uncomfortable at start but **1-15 minutes** later usually you will not get used to it as reported by most of the users. The coldness can cause a headache and nausea.



Will scalp cooling work for me?

Thousands of patients have been successfully treated. The scalp cooling process does not guarantee that your hair will be saved; very little hair loss may be noted even if the cooler is working well, while others may have a fair amount of hair fall but can manage their style and therefore are able to keep their own hair throughout treatment. A number of factors can affect the outcome and these include: **age, hair type, hair condition**, the type of cancer being treated, and how a patient looks after their hair treatment.

On most drug regimens research and studies using the scalp cooling system have shown success rate of patients who have not required a wig an average of 60%.

Caring for your hair.

Chemotherapy can cause your hair to be dry and brittle, therefore, whatever method of treatment you are receiving pay special attention in caring for your hair and treat it as gently as possible. Use good quality neutral **PH** or herbal/vegetable-based hair products and **avoid applying any heat, pressure, or stress to your hair.**

When can I obtain scalp cooling treatment?

You will need to wear a cold cap for each and every chemotherapy treatment (where the treatment causes hair loss). For most people this is applicable every treatment.



How scalp cooling could save your hair during chemotherapy

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