

## Looking Good

### **How your looks can be affected by breast cancer**

We understand how very traumatic breast cancer can be and the effect that this can have on how you look. Surgery can leave you feeling disfigured and unfeminine and losing your hair, eyebrows, eyelashes and pubic hair as a result of chemotherapy can leave you feeling stripped naked. All of these experiences are traumatic to the body, mind and emotions. For some people the impact of breast cancer on how the body looks and feels is the most devastating aspect of the disease.

### **How we can help**

Breast Cancer Haven offers help and advice to help you cope with these difficulties. Here are some answers to commonly asked queries from our Image Consultant.

## Hair and chemotherapy

### **Losing your hair**

#### **I am going to have chemotherapy, if I get my hair cut first, will this help it not to fall out?**

Everyone's hair responds differently to chemotherapy and if you opt to wear a cold cap during the chemotherapy session it may reduce the amount of hair loss, although there are no guarantees and many people find wearing the cold cap an uncomfortable experience. To find out more about the cold cap speak to your Oncologist or Breast Cancer Nurse.

Cutting your hair will not slow or stop your hair from falling out, however many people have found it makes the transition easier to cope with when all your hair does fall out.

#### **If I don't brush my hair, will it stay longer before it falls out as a result of chemotherapy?**

Not brushing your hair will not prevent the loss of hair. However, brushing your hair with a 'Mason Pearson' style brush is always good practice as it promotes circulation to the scalp. You may have concerns if your scalp has become sensitive; in this instance avoiding brushing your hair will not stop the hair from coming out in great quantity. If or when this happens, you may find it easier to cope with if you cut your hair very short to allow new hair to grow back when the time comes.

**I have a wig but I never wear it. How can I make it look better so that I can feel more confident with it?**

The easiest way to give a wig a more natural look is to style it with your fingers to avoid a very set look which is a common mistake. I find even if you can tuck a bit of the wig hair behind your ears it can give the appearance of it being more grounded to your head. As most wigs are constructed to allow the wearer to pile their own hair in the crown, you may want to fill this void with a soft material or opt for a custom made wig.

**Can you advise me on the best type of scarves or hats to wear as I don't want to wear a wig?**

Big square cotton scarves work best as they can be fashioned to fit snugly around the head and allow the wearer to have enough material to create a firm knot at the base of the neck to keep it secure. Silk scarves may be too slippery in texture to secure. Hats are a more versatile option and allow you to play with different styles such as baker boy, sunhat, fedora or beret. Also all these options can be enhanced with the addition of a fringe or ponytail fashioned under the rim of the hat to create the feeling and look of more hair.

**When the hair comes back**

**How long will it take for my hair to grow back after chemotherapy?**

Ones hair grows at a rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (6-13 millimetres) a month, normally it takes six months for ones hair to grow into a short bob style, however I always recommend that you simply let it grow and enjoy the layers that will make it easier to fashion into a style. Great inspiration can be taken from how Kylie Minogue grew her hair out after chemotherapy which always looked feminine. As soon as you can create a parting, ideally not in the centre, you can start to create some style and direction for your hair to continue to evolve into a new style. I always feel this is an opportunity to explore new looks for yourself.

**My hair has come back curly when it is normally straight. How long will it stay like that?**

It is hard to estimate how each individuals hair will return and a curly texture is very common, however in many instances it returns or reverts back to your own texture if not a bit fuller, within six months. It can take up to a year for it to be back to its original texture. As many people process their hair with colour, permanent waving or straightening techniques, it may have been several years since you ever experienced your own natural hair and it can be astonishing to find the hair quality is the best it has ever been.

### **My hair has a burnt texture to it. How long will it stay like this?**

This is another common condition that the initial first growth will exhibit. This will not remain and as your hair continues to grow it will revert back to a more manageable texture. The only issue here is that your best texture will simply take longer to achieve. Always remember that your hair grows from the scalp and not from the ends of your hair. Hence, trimming the ends will ultimately remove the burnt texture as it grows.

### **How long will it be until I can colour my hair again after it has grown back?**

Many medical professionals will recommend that you wait up to 6 months. I agree in principle with this, although one can apply colour off the scalp once enough length has returned (usually about ½ inch/13 mm from the roots) to accomplish this technique. If you want to use a darker shade of hair colour the darker the shade the more deposit is taking place during the procedure, and as the scalp can still be sensitive, one should avoid any unnecessary agitation to the scalp. Lighter colour can be more easily applied away from the base of the scalp, which again is another example of Kylie Minogue's ambition to become a blonde again.

### **Are there particular hair products I should or should not use when my hair grows back?**

Ideally, avoid any products, such as high lift tints involving high volumes of peroxide, permanent waving solutions or chemical straightening products that will agitate the sensitivity that your scalp may still be experiencing.

For more detailed information about hair loss go to:

[http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/docs/bcc08\\_hairloss\\_web\\_0.pdf](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/docs/bcc08_hairloss_web_0.pdf)

### **Wigs**

Blackcare (UK) Ltd [www.blackcareuk.com](http://www.blackcareuk.com) 020 8279 0335

Afro-Caribbean Wigs from £45

Bloomsbury of London [www.bloomsburywigs.com](http://www.bloomsburywigs.com) 020 7404 6040

Synthetic and Human Hair Wigs

Trendco <http://www.trendco.co.uk/> 01273 774977

Wigs suppliers

Salons in London, Brighton, Birmingham and Manchester

**Breast Cancer Haven, London 020 7384 0099 Hereford 01432 361 061 Leeds 0113 284 7829**

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My New Hair

[www.mynewhair.org](http://www.mynewhair.org)

01798 812547

Set up by Trevor Sorbie offering advice on wig purchases and styling wigs

Some salons offer this service free of charge; others may charge the cost of a cut and blow dry

### **Hats, scarves and bandanas**

4myhead

[www.4myhead.com](http://www.4myhead.com)

07505 028099

Hats, scarves and headbands

Bandana shop

[www.bandanashop.com](http://www.bandanashop.com)

0800 231 6332

Hats4Heads

[www.hatsforheads.co.uk](http://www.hatsforheads.co.uk)

0161 941 6748

Specialist hats for hair loss

NHC Necessity Headwear Collection

[www.necessityheadwear.com](http://www.necessityheadwear.com) 01992 47410

Specialist headwear for hair loss

Suburban Turban

[www.suburbanturban.co.uk](http://www.suburbanturban.co.uk) 0845 003 2800

### **Makeup**

#### **I have lost my eyebrows as a result of chemotherapy; can you show me the best way to draw on eyebrows?**

To create a natural looking brow follow this technique.

- Use a magnifying mirror and good light so you can see exactly what you are trying to accomplish, and remember that after you have finished step back three feet, as this is a normal distance that one would engage with you so you should not have to think that what you are about to do will be that noticeable.
- Place a pencil aligning the side of your nose and the inside corner of your eye. Above this, where your eyebrows would normal begin, using a stiff slanted eyebrow brush and apply with short strokes a small amount of brow shadow in a colour that is one shade lighter than your natural hair colour.
- Place the pencil on an angle from the inside corner of your nose, through the outside of your iris and place a point just above your brow area and again using short feathery

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strokes, create a soft but distinguishable line, emulating lash strokes to connect these two points.

- Finally, take the pencil and line it up with the outside base of your nose through to the outside your eye and create a point on your brow area that will become the finish point to your brow. Again using small short strokes feather the brow line to create a finish to the brow and then duplicate this procedure to the other eye.

Remember, your face is not symmetrical, so it is not necessary for the eyebrows to be absolute identical shapes. If you feel the brows still look a bit too bold, gently blend the brow line with your finger pads to soften the effect.

### **I have lost my eyelashes as a result of chemotherapy, can you tell me the best way to apply eyeliner.**

The most natural way to create a stronger lash line is to colour the inside of the lash line with a warm brown pencil. Ideally, colour the entire eye, both upper and lower lash lines with this pencil. As your tear fluids will soften the line it will create a more natural illusion to having a lash. Alternately, using a liquid liner on the top lash line will strengthen the lash line and also allow you to place a false lash on the upper lash line for special occasions. The lashes seem to grow back fairly quickly.

### **Hair and makeup workshops at Breast Cancer Haven**

Looking Good, Feeling Better is held monthly in London

Patrick Swan, Image Consultant conducts workshops on hair, makeup and fashion tips in London.

### **Lingerie and Clothing**

#### **Bras**

It is important to always wear a well fitting and supportive bra. After breast surgery a specialist bra fitter should be your first port of call.

Body shapes can change over time, especially if you are large breasted so do get yourself re-measured every 6 months.

There is much controversy regarding underwire bras and breast cancer. For comfort following breast cancer surgery I advise wearing them in moderation.

For more detailed information on prosthesis fitting, bra's and mastectomy wear go to:

[http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/docs/bcc\\_prosthesis\\_web\\_0.pdf](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/docs/bcc_prosthesis_web_0.pdf)

### **Bra Fitting**

At Breast Cancer Haven in London we hold regular monthly bra fitting sessions.

Breast Cancer Care holds prosthesis fitting consultations around London, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

[http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/content.php?page\\_id=3677](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/content.php?page_id=3677)

### **Specialist Lingerie Suppliers**

Amoena (UK) Ltd	<a href="http://www.amoena.co.uk">http://www.amoena.co.uk</a>	0800 072 8866
Anita (UK) Ltd	<a href="http://www.anita.com">http://www.anita.com</a>	020 7435 2258
Contura Belle	<a href="http://conturabelle.co.uk">http://conturabelle.co.uk</a>	01295 257422
Eloise Lingerie	<a href="http://www.eloise.co.uk/?gclid=CP3r8a74gZgCFQsh3godjQW4DA">http://www.eloise.co.uk/?gclid=CP3r8a74gZgCFQsh3godjQW4DA</a>	0845 22 55 080
Nicola Jane	<a href="http://www.nicolajane.com/">http://www.nicolajane.com/</a>	0845 095 2121
Royce Lingerie	<a href="http://www.royce-lingerie.co.uk">http://www.royce-lingerie.co.uk</a>	01295 265557
Trulife	<a href="http://www.trulife.co.uk">http://www.trulife.co.uk</a>	0800 716770
Vicki Lingerie	<a href="http://www.vickilingerie.co.uk">http://www.vickilingerie.co.uk</a>	01992 509200

### **Clothing**

Square or slash necklines can be more flattering if you are small breasted.

Ruching can be useful to draw attention away from any unevenness or to help elongate the body.

Having a well-cut jacket is an essential to everyone's wardrobe.

Soft cowl necklines can be more flattering if you are large breasted.

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