

Registered Charity No SC013682

ACCORD
Hospice

Wig & Scalp Care



**Information for Patients and
Relatives**



Your Feelings

Many but not all people face the prospect of losing their hair as a side effect of some of the treatments for cancer. Hair loss can be one the most distressing side effects of cancer treatment. Hair can also have particular significance across different cultures.

The way we feel about ourselves and how we look is closely linked to our feelings of self esteem and self confidence.

Hair loss can be a constant reminder of your treatment for cancer. Whether hair loss is as a result of cancer treatment or is a longer term condition such as alopecia, it can make people feel more vulnerable.

Whether you are wearing a wig, head covering or are beautifully bare it is important to take good care of your scalp. This will help improve both the way your scalp looks and feels and can help to promote a healthy situation to encourage new hair growth. If you are missing your routine of washing and styling your hair why not take on a different ritual to cleanse and treat your scalp instead.

Daily scalp care tips - Bare Scalp

Ensure good scalp care with these daily tips

- Wash your scalp regularly. Unless you have a specific scalp problem you are best advised to wash your scalp in the morning and at night. Use a natural or organic shampoo or face wash.
- Provided you have no scalp problems massage your scalp on a regular basis by using the tips of your fingers in a circular movement.
- Keep some fresh wipes in your bag for freshening up your scalp when out all day.
- Use a light natural or organic oil to seal in moisture. Organic virgin olive oil is a great kitchen cupboard option (this oil is so pure it is often recommended for baby's skin as it is so mild yet traps a light moisture layer). You can also use almond oil.
- Wash any head covering (wigs and head coverings) regularly. A good tip is to use a warm (but not hot) damp flannel to wipe out the interior of any head coverings after wearing and allow to dry. This will keep your head covering clean and fresh, and support scalp care.
- Keep out of the sun by covering up. If you are bare then wear a minimum of factor SPF30. A good idea is to use sun lotions designed for the face as these tend to be less greasy and thus more comfortable on the scalp.
- Using a baby brush will help to exfoliate your scalp, before apply your oil of choice. I would apply the oil at night, if you are wearing a wig it may make the wig slide.



The Scalp and Hair Re-Growth

Healthy hair requires a healthy scalp. Hair needs the correct amount of nutrients which are supplied through the network of vessels and nerves in the scalp and which stimulate growth.

Your scalp can be very dry, sensitive and scaly following chemotherapy. There are special treatments available for scalps.

These treatments deliver nutrients to the scalp and protect it from harmful environmental influences. They can also help to repair and moisturise your scalp, reducing irritation and inflammation. Some ingredients used in such scalp treatments include:

- **Biotin, Folic Acid, Niacin, Thiamine HCL, Pantothenic Acid (Panthenol)**
- **B vitamins, required for healthy skin, hair and nails**
- **Chamomile, Aloe Vera, Geranium, Rosemary extracts**
- **Anti-inflammatory, anti-septic and soothing agents. Fennel, Green Tea and Tocopherol (vitamin E)**

Until such time that your hair is long enough to shampoo, an aqueous cream may be suitable for cleansing and moisturising the hair and scalp. Once your hair is long enough, you can begin to use a gentle shampoo and conditioner.

Modacrylic Wigs and Hairpieces

This type of wig/hairpiece is acrylic and can be washed regularly at home. Directions are usually on the label and maintenance is simple.

At all times avoid exposure to direct heat . No heat application from hair dryer, tongs etc.

Please note that rubbing hair on clothing may cause the fibres to fray.

To wash:

- **Comb the hair from tips to root and turn the unit inside out**
- **Add the wig shampoo to cold water in a basin**
- **Immerse the unit and gently press it up and down, no harsh rubbing as this will loosen off the fibres**
- **Repeat if necessary with fresh shampoo and tepid water.**
- **Rinse the unit in clean, cold water and add wig conditioner (some conditioners may not need to be rinsed out - check label)**
- **Carefully blot the unit with a towel to remove excess water**
- **Turn the unit the right way and gently shake it**
- **Allow it to dry naturally- never use direct heat**

The original style of the hairpiece should return after it is fully dried.



Wig Care Acrylic

If you wear your synthetic wig every day, wash it every 3 weeks.
(smoke free environment otherwise more often)



1. De-tangle

- Before you wash, be sure to carefully detangle the hair using a wide tooth comb.
- Lightly brush through and gently remove any tangles using a wide tooth comb/brush. Do not pull or drag the fibre....be gentle!



2. Wash

- Fill a bowl with COLD water (never hot, as heat damages fibres).
- Mix a capful of shampoo suitable for wigs into the water.
- Immerse your wig and allow it to soak for few minutes



3. Rinse

- Immerse your wig in a fresh bowl of cold water to remove shampoo
- Do NOT squeeze or wring your wig.



4. Condition

- Apply conditioner directly to your wig, stroking downwards from roots to ends.
- Leave in 4—5 minutes
- Rinse by immersing wig once more in fresh cold water



5. Towel dry

- Place the wig between a folded towel and pat dry.
- Never squeeze, rub or wring your wig while drying.
- Remove from towel.



6. Style and hair dry

- Gently shake the wig to regain its style. Alternatively, lightly style it with a wig comb or your fingers.
- Place wig on a folding wig stand or over the mouth of a large jar or vase to dry naturally. Never use a hair dryer, tongs hot brushed etc, as heat damages synthetic fibres.

**Please remember to follow manufacturers Instructions

We hope this leaflet will be helpful to you and any feedback on content is welcome.



Participation

We value our patients and families participation in developing the services we provide, listening to what you have to say and taking the appropriate action as required.

If you wish to participate please visit the participation section within our website www.accordhospice.org.uk

If you do not have access to the internet please request a leaflet.

Suggestions, Comments & Complaints

If you have any suggestions, comments or complaints about how the service can be improved, please speak to a member of staff.

If you are not satisfied with the response, please discuss your concerns directly with the Chief Executive at ACCORD Hospice:

Jacki Smart
0141 581 2000

Should you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by ACCORD Hospice, you may contact Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) directly, at any stage:

Edinburgh Office:
Gyle Square
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB
0131 623 4300

Glasgow Office:
Delta House
50 West Nile Street
Glasgow G1 2NP
0141 225 6999

Email: hcis.complaints@nhs.net

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

If required this leaflet is available in other languages & formats
