



Hair Loss

- You may be surprised by your strong reaction to losing your hair. Perhaps it made cancer real for the first time, or you just weren't prepared for how you look.
- Not all drug therapies cause hair loss. Combination drug regimens that include doxorubicin, docetaxel, paclitaxel, or etoposide are more likely to cause hair loss than single drug therapies.
- High-dose, intravenous (IV) chemo is more likely to cause total hair loss than low-dose or oral drug therapy. Total hair loss includes eyelashes, eyebrows, and hair in the nose, armpit, and pubic area.
- The extent of hair loss may depend on a number of factors: the drug being used, the dose, how it is given, and how frequently it is given.
- Hair loss may begin 2-3 weeks after your first treatment, or it may not begin until after your second cycle.
- Hair loss can be fast or slow, partial, or complete, and hair may fall out in clumps or just thin out.
- Hair may start growing back during treatment or 3-6 months after treatment ends.

What Can You Do?

- ✓ Be proactive and learn all you can ahead of time.
- ✓ Ask your doctor or nurse if your drug therapy causes hair thinning or loss, when you can expect it to begin, and if they expect it to grow back after treatment ends.
- ✓ if you've been told to expect hair loss:
 - Cut your hair short or shave your head.
 - Hats, scarves, and caps may help you feel better about your appearance while preventing heat loss and protecting your scalp from the sun.
 - Get a wig or other head covering. The Resource Center for Patients and Families offers cancer patients one wig and one head covering per year at no cost. Wig stylists are available once or twice a week. You can make an appointment to get your wig styled. The Resource Center is on the first floor of the hospital, in the cafeteria. It is open Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The phone number is **716-845-8659**.