

# Alopecia (hair loss)

## What is alopecia?

Alopecia (a-lo-PEE-shee-ah) is another word for hair loss or thinning of the hair. It is a common, yet temporary, side effect of some cancer medicines. Alopecia can occur anywhere on the body and may happen after a few treatments. Currently, there are no medicines that can prevent hair loss during treatment.

## How can I prepare for the changes that may occur?

- Before treatment starts, have your hair cut short. It will help you prepare mentally for the change in your appearance
  - If your hair is long enough, consider having a wig made from your own hair
  - Shop for a wig, toupee, or turban soon after your diagnosis
- Talk to family and friends about how you feel, or join a support group with people who are going through or have gone through the same experience

## What are some steps I can take to care for my scalp?

- Keep your scalp clean with a moisturizing shampoo and conditioner
- Use gentle lotions or creams on your scalp when needed; and use a sunscreen, hat, scarf, or wig to protect your scalp

## Will my hair grow back?

- If you do lose your hair, it will usually grow back after the treatments are over
- It may grow back while you are still having treatments
- Your hair may grow back a different color or texture

## When my hair grows back, how should I take care of it?

- If you usually wash your hair daily, limit the number of times to twice a week
- If you usually blow-dry your hair at a high temperature, use a lower heat setting
- Gently style your hair with soft brushes and wide-tooth combs

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Institution/Group: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Talk to your doctor or nurse to find out if the medicines you are taking may cause alopecia, and the appropriate ways to deal with it.*

**The information contained herein is not comprehensive and is intended only as a guide.**