



*Chemotherapy
and Hair Loss*

*A Woman's Personal Guide
to the Hair Loss Process*



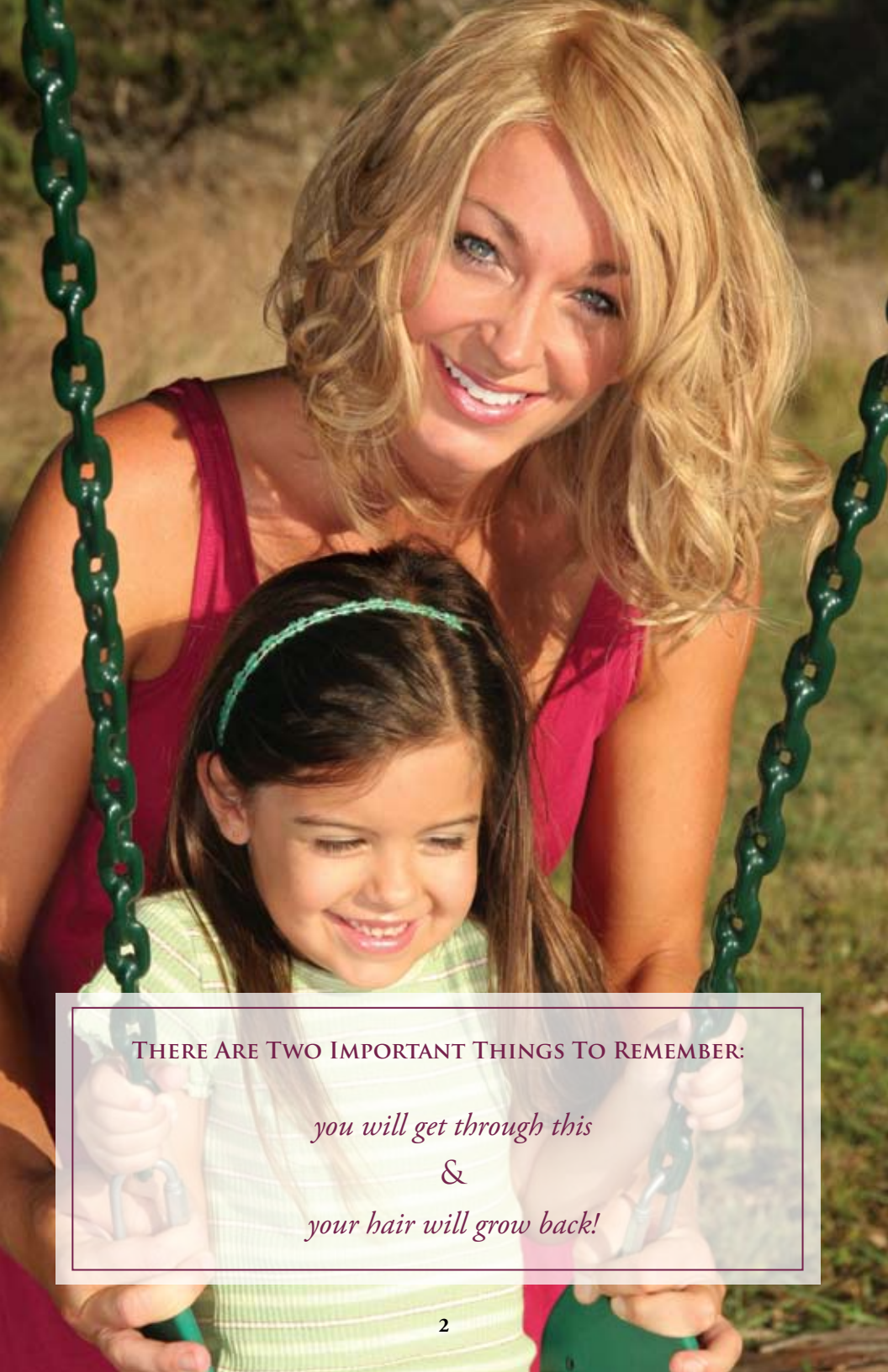
Hair, Beautiful Hair!

Hair is a crowning glory and an important part of a woman's identity. Hairstyles have no boundaries - they can be long, short, straight, wavy, or curly with highlights, lowlights or other gorgeous hues; they can be beautiful, sexy, sassy or elegant and showcase unique personal style. A great cut and style can make a woman feel beautiful!

For most females, dealing with hair loss can be one of the most difficult aspects of cancer and its treatments.

If you are dealing with hair loss due to cancer-fighting drugs, you may face a long and stressful process that can have a profound impact on your life. It's normal to feel distressed about hair loss, and you may find it difficult to look in the mirror. Baldness can be a reminder that you have a life-threatening illness. Because the thought of losing their hair is too overwhelming, some women actually refuse chemotherapy treatment and put their lives in danger.

Hair loss is difficult to predict for chemotherapy patients. Even when taking the same drugs, different women may or may not lose their hair. In addition to the hair on their heads, women may lose eyebrows, eyelashes, and facial, pubic, underarm and leg hair. If hair loss does occur, it most often begins within two weeks after the first chemotherapy infusion.



THERE ARE TWO IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

*you will get through this
&
your hair will grow back!*

FINDING YOUR PERSONAL SOLUTION TO HAIR LOSS

A woman who has just been diagnosed with cancer faces making serious health decisions in a short period of time. The good news is that more women are surviving cancer, treatments have come a long way and many options are available to women. Survivors are able to continue their daily activities, scheduling work and play around their treatments.

During treatment, women may suffer from added stress and sleep deprivation, and their bodies may ache with pain from side effects from medicines and treatments. Physical comfort becomes a very high priority during cancer treatment, so finding the right head covering can eliminate added stress.

THINGS TO KNOW WHEN YOU LOSE YOUR HAIR

Before buying a wig, it's important to realize that you have several options and there are many things you should know. We are here to help guide you through the hair loss process.

- The scalp becomes sensitive to washing, combing or brushing.
- Hair loss varies – some women lose hair quickly in clumps, others lose it slowly.
- Cutting your hair will make hair loss less traumatic. If you plan to wear a wig, you may consider getting a pixie cut to give your wig as much cushion as possible, especially at the beginning when the scalp is sensitive.



Now it's time to decide what you will do after you lose your hair.

Do you purchase a wig?

Will you wear colorful scarves?

Do you prefer baseball caps and hats?

*Or are you comfortable with being
"bald and beautiful?"*

There are many questions to ask yourself before you shop.



WHAT KIND OF LIFE DO YOU LEAD

Lifestyle is an important consideration when choosing head coverings. Many cancer patients long to achieve a sense of normalcy in their lives – they don't want the focus on themselves or the fact that they're sick. Before spending a dime on head coverings, ask yourself the following questions about your lifestyle:

- How comfortable are you about being bald in public?
- Have you worn scarves or hats in the past?
- Will you continue working?
- How many hours each day will you keep your head covered?
- How many months will you wear your wig? Chances are you will wear it an additional *six months* or more after the last chemotherapy infusion – it will take that long until you have enough hair for a short pixie cut.
- Do you exercise, work out, walk or run? If so, wigs can get hot and itchy and increase sweating.
- Is your head large, average or small? This will affect the proper fit of your wig.
- What kind of climate do you live in?



Here are some things to consider:

- Human hair wigs look more natural, but humidity affects them – they can go limp or curl up just like your own hair.
- Synthetic wigs don't react to humidity, but they tend to lose their luster if not properly cared for.
- Cotton turbans or scarves tend to stay on a smooth scalp better than nylon or polyester.
- Wearing a hat or scarf outdoors in cold weather reduces the loss of body heat.
- If you are bald out in the sun, you must protect your scalp. Chemotherapy drugs make your scalp extremely sensitive, so you must always wear the highest spf sunscreen or a hat.
- If buying a wig, select a somewhat lighter color than your own hair or consider adding lighter highlights around your face. Your skin color may be off during chemotherapy (it may appear grayish, greenish or yellowish), and a lighter shade won't call attention to your complexion.



HOW TO CHOOSE A WIG

Choosing a wig can be a daunting task, but with a little help, you can choose the right wig for you and your lifestyle.

If you are purchasing a wig, you will most likely wear it at least six months after chemotherapy has ended. If you'll be wearing your wig every day, treat it kindly so that it will last. Wigs can get pricey, but remember – you will not be paying for haircuts, highlights and colors for awhile – purchasing a good wig will be worth every penny. ***You are worth it!***

Consider a fun wig that will boost your mood when you look in the mirror and tell the world you're doing fine. Try a new color, a new length, a new style. Have fun with your wig!

If you are a cancer patient on a tight budget, you may be eligible for a free wig through the following organizations. Styles and colors may be limited:

- The American Cancer Society
- Local cancer nonprofit organizations
- Oncology hospitals

Your health insurance may cover a portion of your wig and would fall under “hair prosthesis.” Your doctor can provide you with a prescription.

Visit a wig shop before you lose your hair – take a friend with – you’ll be able to match the color of your hair. Try on as many wigs as possible, but do not purchase a wig on the first visit. If you can afford it, consider buying two wigs in case one needs washing or the other one gets damaged. Ask if the wig can be adjusted after you lose your hair because your wig size may shrink.

The wig buyer has three options – to purchase off the Internet, through a local wig shop or have it custom built.

Once you’ve found a wig style that you like, shop online. Wig shops and online wig stores usually purchase wigs from the same manufacturers, and chances are you may find a better deal online.

SYNTHETIC VS. HUMAN HAIR

You have three options when choosing a wig:

Synthetic wigs are made of synthetic fibers, are the cheapest of all wig types and need little attention and care. Synthetic wigs are prestyled and will keep their styles after washing. They are easy to care for and will not fade. They come in a wide choice of colors. Synthetic wigs are not made for bald heads, so the cap may irritate the scalp and can be hot and itchy. They usually come in one size with adjustable straps, the hair is very thick and can lose its luster after awhile. Synthetic wigs cannot be colored, permed or curled, so styling options are limited. Synthetic wigs may not fit properly; if your head is big, it can fit tightly and cause headaches; if your head is small, it can fall off or move around because of a loose fit. They can be purchased in wig shops or online.

Human hair wigs come with the same cap construction as synthetic wigs, usually come in one size with adjustable straps, and are made of Chinese or Indian hair, which are thicker hair strands. Human hair wigs are more expensive, more natural and versatile, look more believable and last longer than synthetic wigs. You can curl, color and perm human hair and add highlights and lowlights. Human hair is more breathable because it isn't plastic, and it looks more natural and moves like real hair. Human hair wigs are comparable in price to custom made wigs, but are more expensive than synthetic wigs. They must be styled after every wash, are soft and natural to the touch, and look more natural in sunlight and under certain lights. They can be purchased in wig shops or online.

Custom made wig caps are designed specifically for comfort on a bald head and are constructed out of silk or lace. Custom made wigs are created by wigmakers, who are extremely knowledgeable about wig construction and take exact measurements of the head and scalp so that the cap fits perfectly. Custom wigs are designed to adhere with either natural adhesive or double stick tape and are not as thick as synthetic or human hair wigs. They can be custom matched to color and highlights. Custom wigs are comparable in price to human hair wigs and can be purchased through a custom wigmaker.

Most people assume that human hair wigs are better than synthetic wigs, but your correct choice will depend on what you expect from your wig, how you are going to wear it and how much time you can devote to caring for it.

COMFORT TIPS FOR WIGS

Products are available that will make your wig feel more comfortable, including a cotton cap. Choose a cap color that's as close as your wig color as possible. You can also use a "comfy grip" band, a silicone headband that's flesh colored and keeps the wig off the scalp. These products will help if your wig is too large and allows you to secure your wig with pins. They are also useful for added security, for itchy store-bought wigs and for sensitive scalps. Comfy grips conform to and cushion pressure points and prevent pressure sores on store bought wigs.

FINALLY...WHEN HAIR GROWS BACK!

Many woman fear that their hair may not grow back.
Don't worry – it will!

- First hair growth will be similar to when you were a baby and will grow in fine and wispy. It may actually appear clear. As hair begins to grow back and strengthen, trimming the new hair will prevent split ends.
- New hair may break easily at first, so give it 4-6 months to come back strong. Avoid perms, straightening and coloring during that time.
- Hair may grow back patchy at first, so be patient. It may grow back completely different than your original hair – it may be curly instead of straight, or come in a different color. It may or may not go back to its original state.
- Keep hair short and easy to style.

Inspired

Stephanie Caillabet is a professional wigmaker who became inspired in 2000 after working with her first breast cancer client in need of a custom wig. That experience changed her life - she decided to devote her life's work to helping cancer patients through the hair loss process.

Since then, Caillabet has been enlightened about challenges breast cancer survivors face in their hair loss experiences. Many women spend hundreds of dollars on wigs -- and never wear them. Others are unaware of their options and suffer through bad-fitting, hot, itchy wigs.

Her goal is to educate women to know their options and choices. "Dealing with cancer is difficult enough," she says. "I want to guide survivors through the hair loss process and help them lose their hair with confidence. I am honored and blessed to do the work I love and to help my beautiful clients get through their amazing battles."

Caillabet is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts with a bachelor of arts in wigmaking and makeup design for theater, film and television. She spent eight years in Los Angeles and walked away with an impressive resume in the Hollywood film industry. She and her husband, Sebastien, are raising their children, Sophie and Maxim, in Dripping Springs, Texas, where she owns and operates "The Art of Wigs," offering wigmaking and wig consultation services. Learn more about wigs by visiting www.ArtOfWigs.com.

