

## Cancer information centre

The Christie offers a wig service (free for eligible patients). For further information, visit the cancer information centre (department 22). For opening hours please contact: **0161 446 8100/8107**

## Maggie's centres

The centres provides a full programme of practical and emotional support, including psychological support, benefits advice, nutrition and head care workshops, relaxation and stress management. Please check opening times before making a visit.

Maggie's Manchester on **0161 641 4848**, or email [manchester@maggies.org](mailto:manchester@maggies.org)

Maggie's Oldham on **0161 989 0550** or email [oldham@maggies.org](mailto:oldham@maggies.org)

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact [the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net)

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

## Chemotherapy services

### Scalp Cooling

#### What is scalp cooling and how does it work?

Scalp cooling can reduce hair loss caused by chemotherapy. Scalp cooling works by lowering the temperature of the head and scalp immediately before, during and after the administration of chemotherapy. This in turn reduces the blood flow to the hair follicles, thus preventing or minimising hair loss. However, prevention of any hair loss is not guaranteed.

#### What does scalp cooling involve?

Your scalp needs to be cooled from its normal body temperature. This process involves placing a cap onto your head, 30 - 45 minutes before the chemotherapy is given to you. It is attached to a cooling machine which will stay on while the chemotherapy is being administered and for a set time (depending on the drug) following the infusion.

Scalp cooling can be stopped at any time if you want it to, but once you have discontinued the scalp cooling it is not possible to restart cooling at a later date. This will not affect your chemotherapy being administered, this will continue according to the regime. The scalp cooling may also be discontinued for medical reasons, for example if you become hypothermic.



## Before starting treatment

- your cap size will be measured
- your hair will be dampened slightly
- a small amount of conditioner will be applied to your hair
- your forehead will be protected with either the headband you have brought with you or gauze/cotton wool
- the cold cap will be applied
- cooling will begin

## What does it feel like?

Once the cap has been fitted, the machine will start to circulate the coolant fluid in the cap. It can feel extremely cold and may cause some discomfort. After about 10 - 20 minutes it is reported that the feeling should be tolerable. There can be a variable cooling period before you have your chemotherapy, the time may depend on the thickness of your hair.

## Scalp cooling is not suitable in the following circumstances:

- you have haematological cancers such as myeloma, leukaemia or lymphoma
- you are having chemotherapy for several days
- you have severe migraines
- you did not use scalp cooling during your first cycle of chemotherapy
- if there is no evidence supporting the use of scalp cooling for your chemotherapy\*.
- if you have a pre-existing condition such as Raynaud's
- if you already have peripheral neuropathy
- if you have scalp metastases
- if you are receiving continuous treatment via an ambulatory pump
- if you are receiving imminent skull irradiation.

**\* We will only offer scalp cooling when there is clear documented evidence that it will reduce hair loss with the type of chemotherapy you are receiving.**

## Capacity

Due to having a limited number of treatment slots for scalp cooling, you may be offered an alternative treatment day in order to accommodate the use of the scalp cooling machine.

## Aftercare

Your hair will feel damp. As we do not have facilities for you to dry your hair we recommend that you bring a scarf or hat to wear to keep your head warm while travelling home.

Brush your hair every day. However, don't wash your hair more than twice a week or less than once every 10 days.

You will need to treat your hair as gently as possible whilst on chemotherapy and use a colour, perfume and sulphate free shampoo and conditioner which should be smoothed into your hair rather than rubbing. Dry shampoo and coloured root spray is also fine.

You should avoid heated appliances e.g. curling tongs, straightening irons, but you can gently dry your hair with a hair dryer on a cool setting, avoiding tension at the roots. You are fine to use clips, headbands, hats, scarves, etc.

## Keep track of your size

Inner:        S .....    M.....    L.....

Outer:       S .....    M.....    L.....

## Things to remember to bring with you:

Soft headband  
Conditioner (if preferred)  
Wide tooth comb  
Hat/scarf to wear when going home  
Extra layers for warmth