

## Wigs

This information in the 'Helpful hints' series is intended only as a guide, to help you deal with your hair loss and wig issues. It is not intended to replace medical advice.

### Where will I get a wig?

If you have lost your hair as a result of cancer treatment, you may be entitled to a wig through the NHS.

There are many different types of wigs such as synthetic ones made from acrylic fibres to those made from real hair. Those available through the NHS are made of acrylic.

Staff in the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre (MVCC) Orthotics Department are specially trained to advise you on the different types and also fit your wig. They are located in the Mount Vernon Treatment Centre.

When you have your first treatment (if you are going to lose your hair) the doctor or one of the health professionals treating you will refer you for a wig. Alternatively your nurse will also be able to refer you when you attend for your pre-assessment visit.

For patients who do not want an NHS wig, we have listed some independent companies overleaf, who have provided a service to our patients. If you wish to buy a wig independently using the NHS prescription system, you must be referred by your orthotics assistant to a company labelled as 'both' in the chart overleaf.

### What happens next?

Once the orthotics staff have received your referral, they will contact you to arrange an appointment.

This will be arranged, as far as possible, to fit in with the time when you will be visiting the hospital for other treatment, so that you do not have to make a special journey.

Patients receiving treatment at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre should obtain their wigs through the Mount Vernon Orthotics Department, who can be contacted on 01923 844271.

### Will I have to pay for the wig?

Most NHS patients who are eligible to be referred for a wig during treatment at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre will not have to pay.

A prescription charge of approximately £60 may be payable in some circumstances. The orthotics assistant will be able to help and advise on what the cost is to you, if any, before the order is placed.

If you need an additional wig, you will be charged the full cost.

If you are receiving your treatment as a private patient, there will be a charge for a consultation fee, plus the full cost of a wig, or you will be given names of suppliers.

### Are there other places I can get a wig?

Yes, there are many organisations (some local) that sell wigs, either within shops, showrooms or by mail order. We would advise you to start by getting advice from the orthotic staff, as they will understand your needs and can explain the range of choices and advise you further.

### What else can I do to make the most of my appearance?

There is a good selection of hats & scarves for both men and women, available from most department stores. The Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre (LJMC) stock a good selection from several suppliers, which are available for sale.

The Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre hosts 'Look Good... Feel Better'<sup>TM</sup> beauty workshops offering advice on skincare & make-up for women undergoing cancer treatment.

To find out more, or book yourself a place, drop in or call 01923 844014.

### Do I have to pay VAT?

No, VAT (Value Added Tax) does not have to be paid on wigs or hairpieces when hair loss is caused by cancer treatment.

The tax cannot be claimed back after payment, so you need to fill in a VAT form at the time of purchase. Most shops will give you this at the time you buy the wig.

## Acrylic wigs

NEVER use any type of heat such as hairdryers, styling brushes, hot rollers or tongs on your wig.

BE AWARE when cooking, as heat from the hob, or a rush of heat from the oven will damage it.

Instructions for washing ACRYLIC wigs, using a regular 'family type' shampoo, not a baby shampoo:-

1. Turn the wig inside out.
2. Wash the wig in luke warm water containing a little shampoo.
3. Swish the wig around in the water, paying particular attention to the part of the cap your head touches.
4. Rinse the wig in luke warm water.
5. Squeeze dry in a towel, don't rub the wig dry as this will loosen the fibres.
6. Turn the wig the right way out and place it over a jug or a bottle to enable it to air dry.
7. Allow the wig to dry thoroughly before brushing it.

Company	Independent or NHS	What they provide	How to contact them
Atelier Hair & Beauty Salon	independent	Range of wigs and accessories. Turbans and scarves to order. Will visit the wards.	01923 826505 (on site at Mount Vernon)
Beesley Goodman Wigs	both	Vast selection of wigs, headscarves, turbans, shampoos & other accessories. Consultation by appointment. Mail order.	01252 871764 100 High St, Sandhurst, Berks www.wigswigswigs.co.uk
Cut 'n' Curl	independent	Range of wigs, turbans & other accessories. Home or hospital visits in the Home Counties area.	01442 265836 93 Lomand Rd Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 6PB
Eden Hair	independent	Wide range of wigs. Turbans and accessories available. Wigs washed, repaired, restyled or alterations made. By appointment.	01923 247474 201 St Albans Rd Watford WD24 5BH
Hair + Beauty Workshop	independent	Range of wigs, scarves & other accessories. Many available from stock. No appointment necessary.	01895 623624 / 623456 137-139 High St, Ruislip
Hair to Ware	both: NHS will need a specific referral from hospital	Wide range of wigs, hats and accessories. Specialising in chemotherapy patients. By appointment. No charge for styling.	01920 460099 65 High St. Ware, Herts www.HairtoWare.com Shop: 10am-5pm Mon-Sat
Jacqueline Collection	independent	Selection of wigs, turbans, shampoos & other accessories. Send for catalogue.	020 7403 5588 9 Fenning St, London SE1 3QR (mail order)
Sabrina & Co.	both	Large range of wigs plus turbans, fringes & hair accessories. Charge for consultation. Call for details.	01582 460900 103 Luton Rd, Harpenden, Herts AL5 3BB www.sabrinasaloon.co.uk
Martin Bond	independent	Selection of wigs. Hand made, made-to-measure real hair wigs. Free consultation. Phone for details and appointment.	North West London 0800 731 2545 020 8953 0093 www.martinbondhairloss.co.uk
Raoul	both	Selection of wigs from synthetic to real hair. Range of turbans & scarves. Call for appointment and catalogue.	34 Craven Rd, Paddington London W2 3QA 020 7723 7173 www.raoulwigs.co.uk
Trendco	independent + NHS prescriptions	Large range of wigs, wig caps, shampoos & other accessories. Mail order service as well.	020 7221 2646 Mail order: 01273 774977 229 Kensington Church St London W8 7LX www.trendco.co.uk