

Chemotherapy Guilty of Hair Theft

How to Use Your Own Hair as a Hairpiece



**3 days after being
diagnosed**



Proactive



Summer



Winter
wearing my own hair

My story

Inflammatory breast cancer was my diagnosis.

When I was told I would lose my hair due to chemotherapy, being pragmatic, I just thought, my hair, O.K.

I decided to plan and focus on a hairpiece which would help me feel in charge before and during cancer treatment.

My friend Kate cut my hair into small clumps so I could see if I would have enough hair to make a hair piece or a fringe, depending on the amount of hair gathered. We agreed to cut my hair down to 1cm. When I saw tufts of fine strands falling - for the first time since being diagnosed I felt dread and absolute panic. My Hair!!! Kate was there in a heart beat and shaved my head.

Kate and Anna (a friend who could sew!!!!) helped me through the steps to make my own hairpiece. I felt such elation at the thought of being able to use my own hair.

I would like to share this gift with you in memory of my warm beloved friends, Denise Morgan who taught me Carpe Diem (seize the day) and Kathy Webster, who forever makes me smile - these women have been with me every step on my rocky path. I have felt their loving encouragement and shared laughter and thank them for inspiring me.

I hope for you who are about to embark on a similar path that this may be of some help and comfort as it has been for me.

If you need any advice about this brochure feel free to email me: maureen.ford@optusnet.com.au

To my friends Kate Delaridis and Anna Shelton my loving appreciation. Your skills, love, laughter made this a joy for me.

What you need to make your own hairpiece

Hair

Fabric glue/garment (*Craft shops - Must be fabric glue*)

Brush for glue

Scissors

Cotton

Iron on interface med weight (*Hemming material*)

Hemming tape

Heavy object (we used bricks)

Satin blanket binding

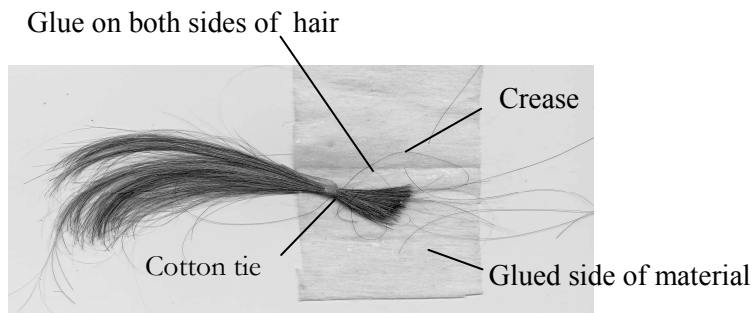
Pins

Velcro

Hats, caps, beanies, cancer cap (*from cancer council*)

Instructions for hairpiece

- Wash Shampoo /Conditioner and dry hair. Cut hair close to scalp in small clumps. Carefully place varying lengths of hair on a clean dry surface so as the hair stays in neat clumps. (Long lengths will go to the sides of the hairpiece and short lengths in the middle).
- Evenly divide hair into small clumps. With a long strand of cotton, tightly wrap clump of hair 5 - 6 times approximately 1½ cm from the top. Make sure the cotton is tight, knot it securely.
- Cut a rectangular piece of the hemming material, 8cm x 4cm, with the glue side of the hemming material facing up. Fold in half and crease (smooth side on the outside). Unfold the material and on the side close to the crease, brush a generous amount of glue both sides of the clump of hair and fold the material over and press down firmly.



- Place folded individual pieces of hair on a board, place heavy object to seal and leave to dry overnight.



- Measure the distance around the back of your head from the front of the ear on the left hand side to the front of the ear on the right hand side. Cut two strips of hemming tape allowing an extra 2cm on each end.
- Overlap each folded piece of hair strip closely together and glue. When overlapping the hair, space the hair out so as it goes the distance of the hemming tape.



This is a copy of my hair showing the overlapping
(notice the long lengths at the sides and the short lengths in the middle)

- If you don't have enough hair ask a friend if you could have some of their hair from their normal hair cut and if needed combine it with your own hair. Put it in the middle keeping your longer pieces for the sides.
- Once hair strips are glued together, glue strips of hemming tape on both sides of the hair strip. Place a heavy object on top and leave to dry overnight.
- Cut satin blanket binding (gentle against the head) to the length of the hemming tape. Slip over hairpiece, pin in place and hand sew. Trim excess at the sides and sew.



- On one side, hand sew Velcro onto satin binding close to the hair line and sew the other side of the Velcro onto cancer cap and other caps/hats that you wish to wear hairpiece with. These other caps/hats need a wider than normal circumference because you are going to attach the Velcro hair piece inside the hat/cap.



Hairpiece with Velcro



Cancer cap with Velcro

- The cancer cap under a beanie/hat is soft and keeps the head warm during the cold winter months. Sew the Velcro onto the cancer cap. If your head is tender you may wish to sew the Velcro onto the cap inside out in case the stitching irritates your skin.
- Attach the hair piece to the Velcro on the cancer cap (a little tip fold, Velcro hair piece in half and fold cancer cap in half and join in the centre then pressing slowly working outwards. Pull the cancer cap on and then pull the beanie or hat over the top of the cancer cap.
- Time for a haircut, put hair and hat/caps on, trim and tidy up.

- **Care instructions**

No need to wash hair as there are no oils coming from your head, however I did gently wash the satin band with velvet soap.

Don't tell anyone but I would sit in my car with the air conditioner on full watching my hair blow in the mirror.