**3 Common concerns women share about their hair loss when going through chemo**

1. **Will I lose my hair? If so, how long will it take to regrow?**

A: Hair loss is a major concern for women when undergoing chemotherapy. We know that almost all women will lose some hair or all of their hair during treatment. Different drugs have different effects on each individual. Drugs such as Cytoxan usually cause only mild thinning. On the other end we know most women taking stronger drugs such as Adriamycin and Taxol usually result in complete hair loss. It is important to speak to your doctor about any hair related side effects before you begin treatment. How long it takes to grow back a full head of hair (and pubic hair, lashes, and brows if you lost them too) varies from person to person. Generally, the hair most likely to fall out is the hair that tends to grow back the fastest. The hair on the top of your head grows faster than your eyebrows or eyelashes. Your new hair may be just like your old hair, or it may be thicker and curlier, or straighter, than your original hair. And your hair might grow back a different color. Women who dyed and processed their hair might not remember what their hair was like originally and may be surprised by the new natural color and texture. Eventually, your hair usually goes back to the way it used to be after the effect of chemotherapy on the hair follicle wears off.

1. **How do I choose the proper wig or “cranial prosthesis?”**

The best time to purchase a wig is right after your doctor prescribes your treatment. You will want to ask your physician for a prescription for a “Cranial Prosthesis” (this helps with the insurance reimbursement process). Take this prescription to a hair restoration specialist and have them fill by making a garment that is specifically tailored to your needs. This starts by taking measurements of you head and choosing the matching color that is going to help you keep your identity throughout your treatment.

Human hair is probably the most popular yet more expensive type of wig available. However, they are the best looking and by far more versatile than synthetic wigs. Unlike synthetic fiber, human hair can be custom colored to match your hair exactly to the color you had before the hair loss. With human hair, your style is very flexible and can simply be changed with the same styling tools that you are used to using on your own hair. With human hair you are not limited during everyday activities the way you are with synthetic.

1. **Q: Will my insurance cover my wig?**

A: Many women fortunate enough to have insurance coverage find that their policy will cover a cranial prosthesis. This however is on a case by case basis. Different policies cover different things. Some companies will cover 100% some will only cover 65% and some will cover nothing. It is up to you to call your insurance provider to find out how much coverage, if any, you have for a cranial prosthesis. The key when calling is to refer to the wig as a cranial prosthesis. If you call regarding a claim for a wig, 99% of the time the claim will be denied for cosmetic reasons.