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Singapore offers scalp cooling therapy to counter chemo side effects

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Study shows over 50 per cent of patients reported hair preservation and those who had hair loss experienced improved rate of hair regrowth



The National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) at the National University Hospital (NUH) is now offering scalp cooling therapy to patients undergoing certain types of chemotherapy that may cause hair loss. Chemotherapy-induced alopecia or hair loss is a common side effect that affects more than 75 per cent of patients who are prescribed chemotherapy treatment.

Scalp cooling therapy has been shown to reduce chemotherapy-induced alopecia in the Caucasian population but there were few published data on its efficacy on the Asian population prior to this.

The NCIS study is the first to work with Paxman (based in England) to investigate the role of scalp cooling in a multi-racial Asian setting.

Scalp cooling works by reducing the temperature of the scalp immediately before, during and after the administration of chemotherapy. The scalp cooling system delivers the cooling via a “cold cap” that is worn on the head of the patient. Reducing the scalp temperature decreases the blood flow rate to the scalp by 60-80 percent, alleviating the damage caused to the hair follicles by chemotherapy.