

Camouflage for hairloss

What are the aims of this leaflet?

This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about camouflage concealers. It tells you what they are, how they work, how they are used to conceal hair thinning/patchy loss and skin conditions, and where you can find out more about them.

What are concealers and how do they work?

A concealer is a temporary cosmetic, non-surgical treatment which disguises thinning hair and camouflages the scalp. This does not require a professional application and therefore allows the patient to have control over their thinning or patchy hair loss.

There are different types of concealers:

- Coloured shampoos which last 6-8 washes and are applied in the normal shampooing method with the exception that some have to be left for a few minutes in contact with the hair so that the colour will adhere to the hair's surface.
- Coloured mousses and setting lotions which are applied to the hair after shampooing. These coat the hair and make it appear thicker. These are very temporary and are removed at the next shampooing.
- Creams or wax pencils which are specially formulated camouflage concealers which will eliminate the contrast between thinning hair and scalp. These masking formulations are easy to apply to the skin. The creams and waxes are not greasy or sticky and will be removed by the next shampooing. They cannot block pores or interfere with normal hair growth.
- Coloured aerosols containing very fine synthetic fibres, or sprinkled coloured fibres. These fibres are attracted to the hair and adhere without being sticky and they allow the hair to have the appearance of volume. Once the hair has been dried and styled, the hair is lightly treated with either a dusting of the fibre or aerosol. For best results, a light application is advised. Fixing sprays are available for both aerosols and sprinkled applications which can then be applied to help maintain and prolong the finished result. These products can be brushed out or removed at the next shampooing.

Each of these products come in a variety of colours such as Black, Dark Brown, Medium Brown, Light Brown, Auburn, Blonde, Grey, White. With most of the camouflage products, different colours can be mixed to give a greater range of colour variations to suit the individual.

Will concealers affect my hair or skin condition?

None known but, if using coloured shampoos and mousses, care should always be taken to strictly follow manufacturers' instructions and these products may stain the skin.

How should I apply concealers?

See remarks on the individual types of concealer above.

What are the side effects of concealers?

None are known for creams, waxes and fibres.

With shampoos, coloured mousses and setting lotions, if the hair has been previously chemically treated, such as with permanent waves, coloured (semi or permanent) or bleached and the hair has become more porous, then there is high risk that the hair will absorb the colour and therefore not easily be removed by shampooing.

As with any product, please read the manufacturers' information provided with your camouflage concealers.

Is there anything I should do or avoid whilst applying concealers?

Once concealers have been applied, then you should avoid over handling of the hair and scalp by running your fingers or combs through your hair, as this may remove some of the camouflage.

When should you not apply concealers?

Do not apply If you have any open wounds, infectious conditions or have been advised not to do so by your doctor, dermatologist or trichologist.

Where can I find out more about camouflage concealers?

If you would like any further information about camouflage concealers please look on the Institute of Trichologists' website www.trichologists.org.uk for contact details for your nearest registered Trichologist.