

## Letter to the Editor

### Hair changes following cytotoxic drug induced alopecia

Sir,

My attention has been drawn to the appearance of hair changes following cytotoxic drug induced alopecia.<sup>1</sup> It is not known how frequently these changes occur and thus I undertook a prospective single observer study of 35 consecutive patients with full hair regrowth after cytotoxic alopecia.

A colour difference was the most common change but in no case was it dramatic. Some patients noted that the treatment had aged them considerably, as judged by the greying effect on their hair. This was seen in 4 of 20 patients (20%) with normal coloured hair and in 4 of 15

greying individuals. By contrast a rejuvenating effect was seen in 4 of 15 (25%) grey haired patients and minor colour changes were noted in some normal hair. Straight hair frequently became curly or with a wave (35%) but the converse was uncommon. The change in hair quality was from robust to fine (30%). Hair density was little changed, though it is interesting to note that 6 of 10 balding men regrew new hair in previously bald areas though sadly not in sufficient quantity to be cosmetically significant. Overall 65% of patients experienced some character change in their hair.

D. J. Fairlamb  
*Department of Radiotherapy,  
The Royal Hospital,  
Wolverhampton, UK.*

### Reference

1. Editorial, *Lancet* 1983, **ii**: 1177-1178.