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Kenra Professional Has Adopted The Rapunzel Project Dedicated To Saving Hair During Chemo



Indianapolis—December 2010—Kenra Professional has adopted The Rapunzel Project®, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping cancer patients keep their hair during chemotherapy, as its company charity and donated \$50,000 to support the organization’s efforts to help cancer patients keep their hair during chemotherapy via a unique cold cap approach.

More than 1.5 million new cancer cases were diagnosed in the United States in 2010. About 8% of women and men decide not to have chemotherapy because they are afraid to lose their hair.

However, a new cold cap technology commonly used overseas has been shown to prevent hair loss associated with chemotherapy. Kenra Professional is supporting The Rapunzel Project’s mission to inform patients that they have an option.

“Keeping your hair while undergoing chemotherapy is not about vanity—it’s about identity,” explains Nancy Marshall, co-founder of The Rapunzel Project.

“Knowing she can keep her hair can help liberate a patient emotionally and physically from the ‘cancer patient’ label and improve self-image, dignity and morale—vital, yet often overlooked, elements of overall wellness. Cold caps are not a cure for cancer, but they are an enormously powerful game changer for patients.

We are delighted to partner with Kenra Professional to bring that important message to the professional beauty industry, which is critical to spreading our story.”

In fact, The Rapunzel Project is very personal to its founders, Shirley Billigmeier and Nancy Marshall, because they are both breast cancer survivors. When Shirley learned that she needed to undergo chemotherapy to limit the chances of a cancer recurrence, she immediately set out to purchase a wig—anticipating the loss of her hair. In the process, she inadvertently heard about cold cap therapy.

She began to investigate, and ultimately connected with Frank Fronda, the scientist who invented a cold cap that has been widely used in Europe for 15 years.

Cold cap therapy involves the use of special caps, frozen to a very cold temperature and worn before, during and after each chemotherapy treatment. The cooling of the hair follicles prevents chemotherapy toxins from reaching them, preserving the follicles and therefore preserving the patient’s hair.

When Shirley learned that it would be possible to rent the cold caps, she approached her oncologist, who was extremely supportive. The biggest obstacle was that the caps have to be used at -30° centigrade (-22° F), a temperature that normal freezers do not reach. Nancy recognized that this was a huge opportunity for Shirley and many chemotherapy patients.

She started fundraising to purchase a suitable freezer. Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis allowed the donations go to its Foundation, which purchased the freezer for the hospital. Shirley wore the caps during her chemotherapy treatments and did not lose her hair! She and Nancy decided that they needed to make more cancer patients, their physicians and hair stylists aware of this new technology. The Rapunzel Project was born.

“Cancer patients have a right to know they have an option,” says Shirley.

“Kenra Professional supports The Rapunzel Project’s goals to raise awareness of the existence and efficacy of cold caps for preserving hair during chemotherapy and to raise funds to purchase biomedical freezers for oncology facilities,” says Tim McMeekan, CEO of Kenra Professional. “We are proud to donate \$50,000 and committed to raising an additional \$250,000 for The Rapunzel Project on behalf of the Kenra Professional company team, distributors, vendors, salons and consumers.

As a company and in conjunction with Shirley and Nancy, we are setting audacious goals to eradicate hair loss for chemotherapy patients by helping hospitals obtain the needed freezers and support systems. We will be engaging our customers, distributors and partners in the professional beauty industry to help spread The Rapunzel Project’s story and join in the support of this important cause to help FIGHT cancer.”

About The Rapunzel Project®:

The Rapunzel Project® is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping chemotherapy patients keep their hair during treatment. To learn more, get involved or make a donation, visit www.rapunzelproject.org.

Learn more here:

http://www.aolhealth.com/condition-center/breast-cancer/awareness-month/cold-cap-therapy-chemotherapy-womens-hair?icid=main|main|dl6|sec1_Ink3|180663

Watch Shirley’s story on Good Morning America:

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/OnCallPlus/cold-cap-therapy-women-chemotherapy-hair/story?id=11985624>

About Kenra Professional:

Kenra Professional products create inner and outer beauty by giving women and men the trust and confidence to achieve their ultimate style. Kenra offers two collections under the Kenra® Classic and Kenra® Platinum brands—both available in top salons across North America.

The Kenra® Classic brand offers classic, quality, hair care products that consistently deliver professional hair care solutions, enabling salon clients to achieve desired results that make them confident in their appearance. Kenra® Platinum promises a premium, state-of-the art hair care experience that aligns with salon clients’ discerning tastes for high performance and style. Visit www.kenra.com

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