



# Familiarity, opinions, experiences and knowledge about scalp cooling

## A Dutch survey among breast cancer patients and oncological professionals

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### Background

- Chemotherapy-induced alopecia is distressing
- Impact is underestimated by oncological professionals
- Scalp cooling is used to reduce alopecia, available in 76 out of 90 Dutch hospitals, but minimally offered to patients
- Aim: investigate patients' familiarity & opinions and oncological professionals' attitude & knowledge about scalp cooling



### Methods

- Survey among Dutch (ex) breast cancer patients (n=177, scalp cooling n=52), nurses (n=49, scalp cooling n=30) & medical oncologists (MD) (n=100, scalp cooling n=52)
- From scalp cooling and non scalp cooling hospitals
- Oncological professionals with minimal, moderate or much experience with scalp cooling
- Self developed, non validated questionnaires

### Results

#### Patients

- 73% never heard about scalp cooling before diagnosis
- 63% satisfied with information provision about scalp cooling. Main reason for dissatisfaction: scalp cooling had not been mentioned to them
- Main reasons for no scalp cooling: not offered, not available, potential risk of scalp metastases
- Scalp cooled patients: 61% satisfied with the final result  
50% insecure about final result until last cycle  
4% severe tolerance problems
- If expected chance for hair preservation of 35%, 36% would like to use scalp cooling in case of future treatment. Figure of 50% preservation was 54%
- If alopecia despite scalp cooling: 70% minded it very much or moderately

#### Oncological professionals

- In scalp cooling hospitals: 77% MDs & 50% nurses satisfied with the results
- Main reason for offering scalp cooling: service for patient
- Main reason for not offering: lack of evidence about effectiveness & safety, logistical difficulties, too burdensome for patients
- 2% severe problems in implementing scalp cooling
- Scalp cooling is hardly offered to male patients



### Conclusion

- Much room for improvement of familiarity and knowledge about scalp cooling
- Sharing knowledge is important: [www.hoofdhuidkoeling.nl/](http://www.hoofdhuidkoeling.nl/) [www.scalpcooling.nl/](http://www.scalpcooling.nl/) [www.geefhaareenkans.nl](http://www.geefhaareenkans.nl)
- This survey led to a national standard on chemotherapy-induced alopecia
- More regularly offering scalp cooling to patients increases chances on hair preservation & contributes to quality of life

Respondent group	Sufficient knowledge					
	about effectiveness			about safety		
	Yes	No	I don't know	Yes	No	I don't know
<b>MDs</b>						
Scalp cooling (n=52)	27 (52%)	19 (37%)	6 (11%)	35 (67%)	13 (25%)	4 (8%)
Non scalp cooling (n=47)	16 (34%)	26 (55%)	5 (11%)	21 (45%)	20 (42%)	6 (13%)
<b>Nurses</b>						
Scalp cooling (n=30)	10 (33%)	17 (57%)	3 (10%)	13 (43%)	16 (53%)	1 (3%)

Table 1 Self perceived knowledge about scalp cooling effectiveness & safety

