

My name is Katie Alder and I'm from Frederick, Maryland. Next week marks the one year anniversary of the day I was diagnosed with breast cancer at 29 years old. Over the past year, I've gone through 14 rounds of chemo, 2 surgeries, and the loss of control over so many aspects of my body, my life, and my future. Through all the uncertainty, having access to scalp cooling gave me the opportunity to hold on to control over the way I presented myself to the world. It meant that I could tell people what I was going through on my own terms, rather than being instantly identifiable as someone with cancer. Even though I suddenly felt different from everyone else my age, I didn't have to look different too.

Now, as I'm getting closer to finishing up treatment and finally starting to imagine life on the other side of all this, growing out my hair is one less thing to worry about. This fall, I'll be marrying my fiance Josh, who spent hours learning how to put my cold cap on and tighten it perfectly. At our wedding, I will have scars from my port and my surgeries, and I will be a different person than I was before my diagnosis in so many ways, but I won't be wearing a wig, and I'm so thankful for that.

I know how lucky I am to have had access to scalp cooling, and I want every other cancer patient to have the same opportunity. Thank you for your consideration.