

## WEARING AND CARING FOR YOUR SWIM HAT.

Many people think that swimming caps are meant to keep your hair dry, but there is not a single style of swimming cap that can accomplish that feat entirely. The real purpose of wearing a swimming cap is to keep your hair out of your face, protect your hair from the brunt of the pool chemicals, and keep some of your body heat in.

**For training**, wearing a cap is optional, unless you swim at a facility that requires one. It is recommended that a hat is worn if the hair is longer than 1-2 inches. The hassle of pulling your hair out of your face every few feet is just too distracting to the serious swimmer. If you don't like swimming caps, just wait. Once you try to take a breath and inhale your own hair (cue visions of death by seaweed monsters)...you'll be ready to try one.

Wearing one **for competition** is highly recommended for smoothness in the water, for not getting hair in your face and mouth (if long) and useful as an identification tool!

To make your caps last, let them air-dry fully then dust them lightly with some talcum powder before storing them in your swim bag so they don't stick together. If you do have a cap that is stuck together, don't try pulling it apart, as this can rip it. Put it in the water and gently pry the folds apart until the cap is open again and you can put it on. So, try to:

- 1. Trim your fingernails before putting on your swim cap to avoid tearing the cap.
- 2. Keep your hair free of hair pins, clips or barrettes when wearing a swim cap. These items are sharp and can puncture the cap.
- 3. Rinse your swim cap with cool non-chlorinated water after each use.
- 4. Wipe the inside and outside of your swim cap with a towel.
- 5. Open your swim cap and sprinkle baby powder inside. Spread the powder evenly throughout the inside of the cap to keep the sides from sticking together.
- 6. Store your swim cap away from direct sunlight. Direct sunlight will fade the colour and shorten the life of your swim cap.

## CARING FOR YOUR HAIR UNDER THE SWIMMING CAP.

Swimming caps greatly minimize your hair's exposure to the harsh pool chemicals, but they don't protect you completely. Here are a few tips to keep your hair healthy:

1. If you can, wet your hair fully before going into the pool. By wetting your hair with fresh water, your hair absorbs the clean water and will not be able to absorb the chemically-treated water as much.
2. Wash and condition your hair immediately after swimming. Washing out the chemicals immediately reduces the drying effect the chlorine can have on your hair and the conditioner replenishes some of the lost oils.
3. Don't wash your hair too much. Chlorine dries out your hair, so washing it too often will only dry it out further.
4. If your hair is really dry, use a specially formulated shampoo to keep it healthy. **Sainsbury's own brand** is highly recommended.