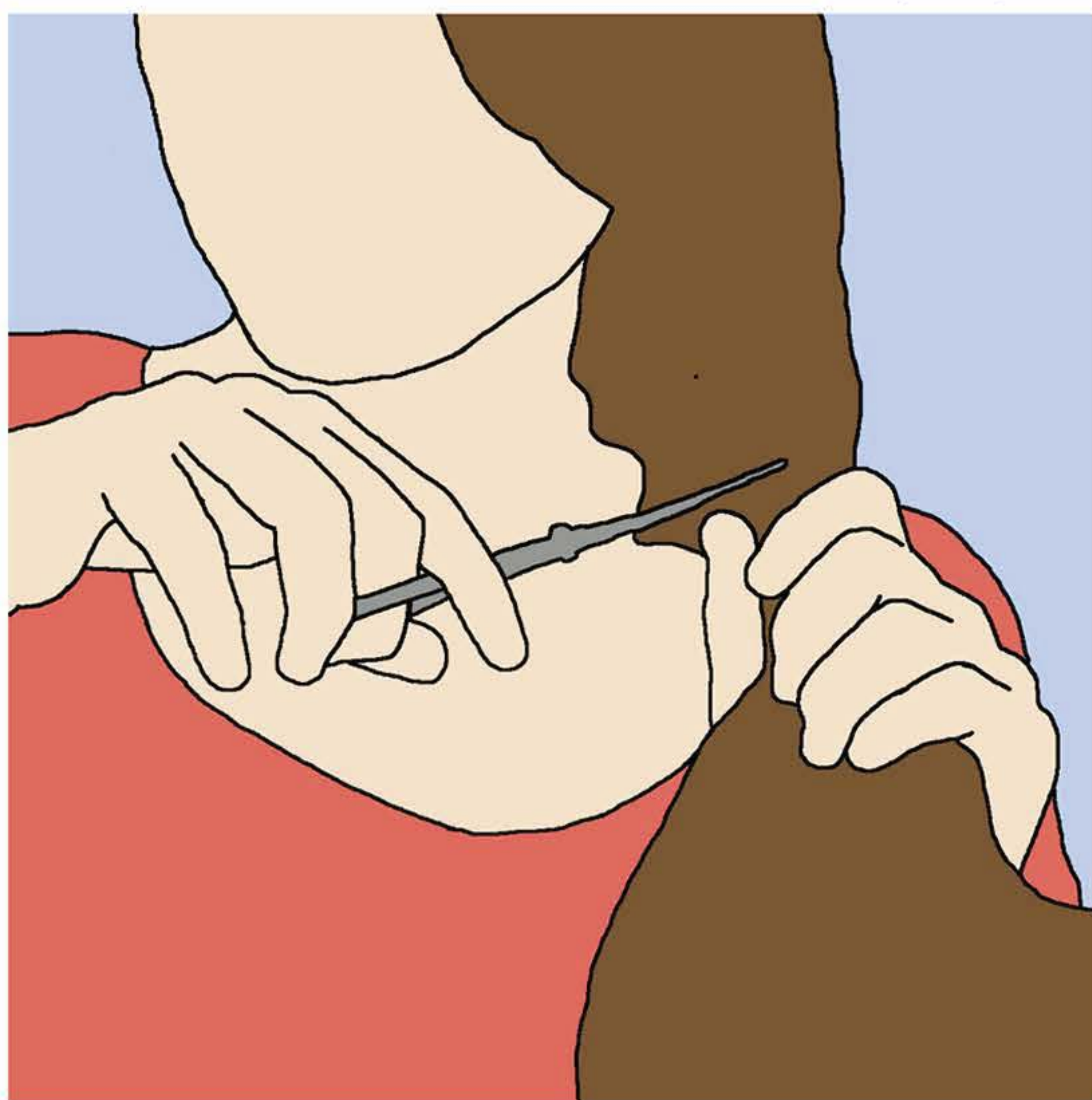


# The motivation behind pandemic haircuts

*Whether due to necessity, desire, or impulse, there is no denying the rise in DIY haircuts during the COVID-19 pandemic*

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By [Emily Bishop](#)

With salons closed across the country, and people with more free time on their hands than usual, DIY haircuts are becoming more common.

Doctor Anna Ciao, a psychology professor at Western said that changing hair could be a method of coping during these uncertain times. However, she emphasized this correlation is based on her own observations and experiences.

“I try to really ground my thinking in data, in research,” Ciao said. “And right now, there is no research to confirm this. We’ve never lived through a pandemic.”

Ciao cautions people cutting their hair because they think it will completely change their attitude. She said that it is important to have realistic expectations about how you will feel after the hair change.

Kim Keay, a second-year biology major at Western, had never cut her own hair before. She had been wanting bangs for a while and decided that now was the perfect time to get them.

“I feel like they always cut them too short in barber shops,” Keay said. “There was a specific cut that I wanted.”

Keay was surprised at how much she liked her haircut, but she doesn’t think she’ll be cutting her hair again any time soon. She advised others that are considering cutting their own hair to watch some videos before attempting, and to have a smock or cover so that cleaning up is easier.

Emma Wiechert, a second-year economics major at Western, had planned to cut her hair over spring break.

“I obviously couldn’t get a haircut,” Wiechert said. “And then Brad Mondo, who’s a hairdresser on YouTube, posted a video that was like ‘[How to Cut Your Own Hair](#).’ So that sorta made me decide to do it.”

Wiechert cut 4 inches off of her hair and has plans to dye it purple. Wiechert does not own hair-cutting scissors, and instead used a pair of kitchen scissors and her roommate’s knitting scissors.

“My roommates helped,” Wiechert said. “We split it into four sections and then everybody got to cut a section.”

Weichert said that although the initial cut was a little uneven, with the help of her roommates, she was able to get all sections of her hair the same length.

Rather than having his roommates help cut his hair, Grady Lehto, a third-year student at Western majoring in studio art, has been giving his roommates haircuts.

“I was thinking about getting a set of clippers for a while,” Lehto said. “And then once the quarantine started, I was like, ‘Alright, well, I guess now is going to be the time to do that. I’m not going to be getting a haircut anytime soon.’”

He has given himself and five of his six roommates haircuts. He said his own haircut was less successful than the ones he had given his roommates. Three of his roommates felt their hair was too long and they needed haircuts. The other two and Lehto just wanted a change in look. Lehto plans to continue honing his haircutting skills even after salons and barber shops reopen.

“It’s really fun and honestly really gratifying to give somebody a good haircut and see how they respond to it,” Lehto said. “It’s definitely something I’d like to keep doing.”

As evidenced by social media, hair cutting is a skill that many have recently been picking up. With social interactions limited, the consequences of a bad haircut are not so severe. After all, it is hair and it will grow back.

“I feel like college is a good time to mess with your hair. You don’t have to look perfect for anything,” Weichert said. “Once I’m a real adult, I won’t be able to just dye my hair purple on a whim.”