



SOUTHERN
COMMUNITY
CARE
SERVICES

Seaford Stoma Care Department

HINTS



Tips

*for the Ostomist
and the Stoma Care Nurse*

Clothing

- ◆ Underwear — both male and female underpants are now available with Lycra to give extra support. Look for them in all well-known High Street stores.
- ◆ Boxer style swimwear for men and patterned swimsuits for women hide any bulges.
- ◆ Track suits and shell suits are comfortable to wear and will hide any weight gain or loss.
- ◆ Trousers or skirts with pleating at the front will hide any bulges.
- ◆ A well-sited stoma will not be visible under clothing. However, if the stoma is sited near the waistline it may be necessary for men to wear braces as opposed to belts, and women to wear looser clothing.

Emptying & Changing

- ◆ Carry a newspaper or a small square of carpet if you kneel down to empty your pouch in public toilets.
- ◆ Put a few sheets of toilet paper down the toilet before emptying which will prevent splashing and aid a poor flush.
- ◆ Ileostomists can use the edge of their clip to help squeeze down the faeces from the pouch.
- ◆ The handle of scissors can be used to smooth out any creases when applying a flange or a one-piece appliance.

Emptying & Changing

- ◆ Take spare equipment in tin foil or in a plastic bag which can be used for disposal afterwards.
- ◆ Carry spare equipment in a make-up case or spectacle case.
- ◆ Make an 'S' shape out of a wire coat hanger to hang the soiled pouch over the edge of the toilet to flush it through whilst you are doing something else.
- ◆ Use the tie of your dressing gown to tie it out of the way behind you whilst emptying pouch.
- ◆ Button your pyjama jacket behind you if you have to change your pouch at night.
- ◆ Use a mini fan to dry skin.
- ◆ Always check pouches for faults or nicks before applying.
- ◆ Ileostomists and urostomists with a long spout who use a two-piece appliance may find it easier to keep skin dry if a suitable hollow tube is slipped over or a piece of kitchen roll wrapped around the stoma first and then the flange fitted over this.
- ◆ 'No Waiting' cards are available from the Hollister Advisory Service on Freephone 0800 521377 to avoid toilet queues.
- ◆ When eating out at a function, make an excuse to visit the toilet before the rush. This avoids embarrassment over queues and odour.

Emptying & Changing

- ◆ Use a two-piece system as a one-piece system if in difficulty, or put a little warm water in the two-piece seal to make attachment to pouch easier.
(Not applicable to all two-piece systems.)
- ◆ Do not cut out too many flanges in advance as adhesion is sometimes lost around the edge with time.
- ◆ Always carry 2.5cm Blenderm Tape with you to repair minor leaks.
- ◆ Use deodorant spray before and not after emptying pouch and spray it in an upwards, not downwards direction.
- ◆ Fold the bottom of closed pouches for cleaning.
- ◆ Use backing paper of flange to assess if cut to correct stoma size.
- ◆ Use cotton buds to clean inside of flange of two-piece system before applying clean pouch.
- ◆ Some filler pastes can be more easily applied by using a syringe.
- ◆ If a corner of Microporous Adhesive is turned over to form a tab, this leads to easier removal.
- ◆ If Microporous Adhesive is removed when wet, a film will remain on the skin, therefore the adhesive should be removed when dry.
- ◆ Keys for Disabled Toilets are available from RADAR at £250 (exclusive of VAT). Contact RADAR on 0171 250 3222.

Emptying & Changing

- ◆ In the case of a hairy abdomen, the hair should be cut or removed with an electric shaver. Wet shaving can damage the epidermal layer leading to irritation, poor adhesion and infection.
- ◆ Moisten a finger or cotton bud when applying filler pastes.
- ◆ Dry paste with a hairdrier or mini fan.
- ◆ To hold clothes out of the way when changing, attach a peg to each end of a suitable length of string. Place string around back of neck, and peg up skirt or nightdress out of the way.
- ◆ Leave a strip of backing paper on the flange to help start removal.
- ◆ If you have to use soap to cleanse the skin on changing the pouch, use an unperfumed variety and always rinse off thoroughly with water, otherwise the pouch will not adhere properly.
- ◆ When changing the pouch place a carrier bag on the floor and cover this with old newspaper to prevent soiling the floor. After changing, place soiled equipment and newspaper in a carrier bag ready for disposal.
- ◆ On changing the pouch either put the disposal bag over the pouch and peel off into it, or alternatively hang the disposal bag over the tap to collect the used pouch and soiled equipment.

Sore skin

- ◆ If the skin becomes sore or irritated the cause must be found and you should seek help from your Stoma Care Nurse, Doctor or Chemist.

Hints to help with Wind

- ◆ Excessive flatus can occur as a result of:
 - Smoking
 - Eating with mouth open
 - Skipping meals
 - Fizzy drinks
- ◆ Certain foods cause more flatus than others. The effects vary from individual to individual, therefore only one new food should be added to the diet at a time, so that any culprits can be identified.
- ◆ 'Windcheater' capsules are available from chemists.
- ◆ Eat live yoghurt.
- ◆ Peppermint oil is available from chemists and health food shops and can be taken as a drink with hot water or other mixers.
- ◆ Eat slowly and avoid talking and gulping air.
- ◆ Avoid drinking at least 45 minutes before food and until 45 minutes after eating.
- ◆ Drinking fennel tea can sometimes help.
- ◆ Two pineapple capsules taken 3 times a day may be helpful.
(Available from health food stores.)

Tips for coping with Loose Stools

- ◆ Try eating 10–20 marshmallows.
- ◆ Eating a very ripe banana will sometimes help.
- ◆ Eat a live culture yoghurt.
(Either with or without ripe banana).

Hint for Constipation

- ◆ Colostomists who are suffering from constipation should firstly increase their intake of fluids. If this is not effective they may try a tumbler of fresh orange or prune juice. This should work within 24 hours — if not, then contact your Stoma Care Nurse. Stewed prunes, pears or apples are also helpful.

N.B. IT MUST BE EMPHASSED THAT THIS TREATMENT IS NOT SUITABLE FOR ILEOSTOMISTS

Hints to prevent 'Pancaking'

- ◆ Grease inside the pouch with oil.
- ◆ Place filter covers as supplied with pouches over pouch filter.
- ◆ Screw up a tissue and place inside top of pouch.
- ◆ Increase the amount of fluid you drink.
- ◆ Sometimes the use of a stoma bridge will help.

Hints to deal with Odour

- ◊ Place a soluble aspirin in the pouch.
- ◊ If a correctly fitting pouch is worn there should be no noticeable odour once the pouch is fitted.
- ◊ Put a few drops of vanilla essence in the pouch.
- ◊ Urostomists can put a little vinegar into the pouch.
- ◊ Strike a match before emptying the pouch.
- ◊ Try burning joss or incense sticks.
- ◊ Use an aromatherapy oil burner.
- ◊ Burn scented candles (with care).
- ◊ Soak a piece of kitchen roll in lavender oil (or other type of aromatherapy oil of your choice) and hang this over a radiator.
- ◊ Spray air-freshener before emptying the pouch rather than wait until afterwards.
- ◊ If there are consistent foul odour problems medical assistance should be sought as there may be a stricture causing a stump formation.

Travel Tips

- ◊ When eating out have a snack before you go to prevent a rush of effluent into the pouch and accompanying embarrassing noises (this applies mainly to ileostomists).
- ◊ Take a 'First Aid Kit' of fluid replacement powder and anti-diarrhoea treatment. Proprietary brands which are available without prescription are fine for most ostomists, but ileostomists should use the World Health Organisation recipe below:
 - In 1 litre of water dissolve—
 - 25g Sodium Bicarbonate
 - 3.5g Salt
 - 20g Glucose

This can be flavoured with orange juice and you can drink as many litres per day as necessary. Drink in sips, from a straw or suck from a clean cloth if need be.
- ◊ Coca cola and crisps have been used in an emergency by ileostomists and urostomists with the beginnings of dehydration if nothing else is available.
- ◊ If in a very hot country, remember to keep pouches in a cool, dry place. Some people keep their equipment in a plastic bag in the salad compartment of the fridge.
- ◊ Cool bags make an excellent carry-all for stoma equipment.
- ◊ Colostomists who irrigate can buy bottled water and stand it in the sun to warm.

Travel Tips

- ♦ Take twice as much equipment with you as you think you may require.
- ♦ Never take all your holiday supplies from one manufacturing batch in case there is a fault with the whole batch.
- ♦ Colostomists may find it useful to take a few drainable pouches with them in case of stomach upsets.
- ♦ Carry all supplies in hand luggage.
- ♦ Hollister Limited and the patient associations supply a leaflet written in several languages which explains about ostomies and ostomy equipment carried in luggage.
- ♦ Patient associations will supply information about holiday insurance for people with a stoma (most insurers do not provide cover for pre-existing conditions).
- ♦ If you do not use one, it may be necessary to fit a flatus filter when flying to prevent inflation of the pouch.
- ♦ Try to avoid fizzy drinks when flying to avoid inflation of the pouch.
- ♦ Arrange to use the toilet on the plane before and not after meals when there is generally a rush.
- ♦ Some airlines will arrange for you to have a seat near to the toilet if you explain to them on booking.

Miscellaneous Tips

Colostomy

- ♦ Keep a filter cover attached alongside filter so that you always have one handy if needed.
- ♦ *Conseal* plug users who find that seepage occurs can cure this by holding the plug under tepid/warm water for a couple of seconds before insertion.

Ileostomy

- ♦ Ileostomists who cannot kneel or bend to empty their pouches can keep an old jug solely for this purpose and empty the jug into the flushing toilet.
- ♦ Always carry a spare clip in case you drop or break the original.

Urostomy

- ♦ To help prevent a night drainage tube from kinking, the tube can be fed down a pyjama leg.
- ♦ Cranberry juice can be drunk by urostomists to reduce mucus formation. It also acts as a urinary antiseptic.
- ♦ Cherry Stalk Capsules which contain *phytaisittis* can be useful for urostomists whose urine breaks down skin barriers and seals too quickly. These are available from health food shops, and should be taken with plenty of fluids.

Miscellaneous Tips

General

- ◊ J-cloths can be used to make lightweight pouch covers and are easily washable.
- ◊ If a large capacity pouch is worn it shows less than a small one when full.
- ◊ Codeine phosphate sometimes reduces mucus formation, but is only available on prescription.
- ◊ Flagyl antibiotic suppositories can treat offensive mucus and are only available on prescription.
- ◊ If an appliance belt is worn, always wear it at stoma level to avoid upward drag.
- ◊ If you find cotton pouch covers slip off, stitch two lengths of tape to the cover and tie behind the back.
- ◊ Slipping pouch covers can be held in place with Sellotape Fix-Its available from all stationers.
- ◊ Always keep a pouch prepared for emergency use, especially if you have to cut it to size or use protective wafers.
- ◊ Do not use oil-based bath lotion as the pouch may not adhere if the skin is greasy.

*This booklet was compiled by
Fay Tompsett, Stoma Care Nurse
Southern Community Care Services Trust
and printed courtesy of Hollister Limited.*