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Useful Contacts:

Colostomy Association Ltd

Email: cass@colostomyassociation.org.uk

Tel: 0800 328 4257

www.colostomyassociation.org.uk

IA (the ileostomy and internal pouch support group)

E-mail: info@iasupport.org

Tel: 0800 0184 724

www.iasupport.org

Urostomy Association

Email: secretary.ua@classmail.co.uk

Tel: 01889 563 191

www.urostomyassociation.org.uk

Live Your Life

A lifestyle guide for people living with a stoma



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Complimentary samples

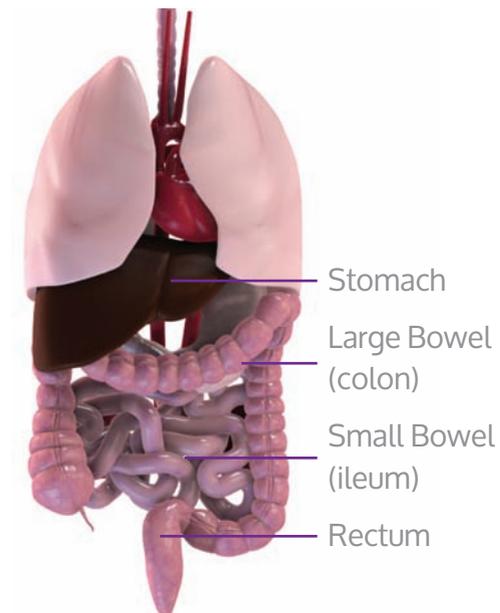
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What is a stoma?

A stoma is a surgical opening that is created to allow faeces or urine to exit the body before it reaches the rectum or bladder. It can be either permanent or temporary.

If your surgery is planned then you should be able to agree on a site for your stoma.

The stoma will be a pinkish red colour, similar to the inside of your mouth, and will be soft and moist.



Colostomy

A **Colostomy** is normally situated on the left-hand side of the body, and used to divert the faecal flow away from the anastomosis or injured area. If possible the surgeon will simply remove the diseased part of the bowel and join the two remaining healthy parts of the colon back together. If this is not possible, a Colostomy is performed.

The faeces from a Colostomy are usually firmer than that from an ileostomy. This is because the large bowel is still intact, and absorbs water which is passed through the stomach.

Colostomies can be categorised into 2 main types:

- End Colostomy
Commonly formed following rectal or anal cancer. Can be temporary or permanent.
- Loop Colostomy
Created by bringing a loop of the bowel through an incision in the abdominal wall.



Ileostomy

An **ileostomy** is an opening from the small bowel, allowing faeces to leave the body without passing through the large bowel. This will usually involve the removal of the entire colon, and is normally situated on the right-hand side of the body.

The faeces from an ileostomy is more liquid, as there is no bowel to act as a distribution point for liquid intake. Therefore it is so important that an ileostomate maintains a high level of hydration.

Ileostomies can be categorised into 2 main types:

- **End Ileostomy**
Constructed when the colon has been removed usually due to inflammatory bowel disease such as Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease.
- **Loop Ileostomy**
Created when a loop of the small bowel is brought out as a stoma but the colon and rectum are not removed. Usually only used as a temporary measure.



Urostomy

A **Urostomy** is when a passageway is made for urine to pass from your kidneys to the outside of your abdomen.

The most common type of Urostomy is an ileal conduit which involves a piece of small intestine being removed and

separated from the gastro-intestinal tract. One end of the ileum is closed while the other end becomes the stoma.

The conduit acts only as a passageway and does not store urine and so urine will constantly flow into the pouch.

Adapting to Life with a Stoma

It is important for you to start getting back to your normal life as soon as possible following your surgery. Recovery after major abdominal surgery generally takes 8-12 weeks, though this will vary depending on your health and fitness before your operation

People who undergo stoma surgery have to adapt to a change in their body image and self-confidence. During the first few weeks and months of adapting to life with a stoma, you may experience intense emotional feelings of hurt,

anger and sadness. These feelings are completely normal and are natural responses to dealing with the stress of your illness and surgery.

Don't be afraid to be open up and to acknowledge how you are feeling.

Discuss your thoughts with your partner, family or close friends. Remember that your stoma care nurse is also there to help and support you. Recognising these feelings and sharing them with others will help you in recovery.

Activity Levels

Make sure you have plenty of rest when you first go home. Listen to your body and if you feel tired, make sure you rest. Try to have an afternoon nap, you will get through the day much easier.

Don't be tempted to over do things, and do too much, too soon. If you push yourself too hard, your body will certainly let you know about it. Accept offers of help from your family and friends, especially in the early stages of your recovery.



Nutrition

Your body's demand for calories and protein to repair body tissue following surgery is very high. Poor appetite can be a problem at first, and you may find it easier to eat more frequent smaller meals or snacks regularly throughout the day. Gradually building up your appetite in this way over a period of weeks is much kinder to your digestive system in the early stages of recovery.

Dietary supplement drinks and high calorie sport drinks can also help to increase your calorie intake and give you more energy. However, before starting to take any food or drink supplements, talk to your GP or stoma care nurse.

Hydration is so important, so ensure that you drink plenty of fluids, especially water. This will help the healing process by keeping your skin well hydrated.

However, don't drink large amounts before meals as this can curb your appetite. If you find that your appetite is not improving, or if you are struggling to gain weight after your stoma surgery, speak to your GP or stoma care nurse who may refer you to a dietician for further advice.

Exercise

Take short walks to begin with. Don't tire yourself out by walking too far, remember that you have to walk home again. Walking with a friend or varying your route will make it more interesting.

If you go out walking alone, be sure to let someone

know where you are going and how long you intend to be out and always carry your mobile phone with you.

Specially designed abdominal exercise will strengthen your stomach muscles, however don't attempt any abdominal

exercise for at least 6 weeks after your operation, or until you have had your first post-operative check up.

BEFORE you start any abdominal exercises you must first speak to your consultant surgeon, stoma care nurse or GP.

Driving

It is important for you to check with your consultant or GP before you start to drive again following your operation. You must check

your car insurance policy as conditions may vary depending on your insurer.

DO NOT drive until you have been given the

authority to do so. Failure to comply with this advice may invalidate your insurance and could also be harmful to your recovery.



Living with a stoma

After stoma surgery, it will take time to recover. This can take 3 months or more depending on your individual situation. After this recovery period you may feel more confident and well enough to resume your normal lifestyle. This could mean returning to work, caring for your family or living out an active retirement.



Gentle Exercise

Walking is excellent exercise. Try to walk every day, gradually increasing the distance as you get stronger and fitter.

Always speak to your GP or stoma care nurse before you start more strenuous sporting activities.

Nutrition

Everyone reacts differently to certain foods, regardless of whether or not they have a stoma. For you, the best option is to have a varied

diet where all food groups are taken in moderation to aid recovery and good health. Following your surgery you will probably

discover which foods may cause an upset or 'windy' stoma and when to avoid eating them.

Returning to work

Depending on the type of operation you have had, you will probably be fit to return to work 8-12 weeks after surgery.

Before returning to work, it is recommended to discuss with your employer the possibility of a 'return to work programme'. Your employer may be very accommodating and offer you a range of alternatives such as part-time hours or lighter duties.

It is completely up to you if you choose to tell your colleagues about your stoma. Whatever you feel comfortable with. However, it is advisable to tell at least one person in your workplace so that you have someone who may assist you if you have any issues, problems or need someone to talk to.



Hints and Tips

- Keep a supply of your stoma care equipment at work.
- Have a few trial runs. Many people find that their daily routine and preparation to leave the house can take them longer than they expected.
- Think about clothing or your work uniform. If you have a uniform you may need a different size to what you wore before surgery.
- Consider changing facilities. Have a think about what facilities are available in your workplace to make sure you are prepared. It is advisable to have a changing bag that you can take discreetly to the toilets.
- If your job involves heavy lifting, consider wearing a support belt. This may help to prevent a hernia from developing around your stoma.



Holidays & Travelling

Holidays are good for rest and relaxation and you can be confident of being able to enjoy one as soon you feel ready. Don't be tempted to travel too far too soon. Give your body time to recover and give yourself time to find out the effect of different foods on your shortened digestive system.

Take a little time to plan ahead to ensure that your holiday will be as trouble free as possible. The following information will help you:

Travel Insurance

When booking your holiday, ensure you obtain adequate travel insurance, remembering to declare any pre-existing medical conditions. Before insurers will provide you with cover, they will require information about all medical events which could affect you in the future.

The following companies may be able to help you with travel insurance:

Travel Insured – Offer travel insurance specifically for pre-existing medical conditions

Call: 0845 850 1066
www.travelinsured.co.uk

SAGA – Offers travel insurance exclusively for over 50's

Call: 0800 015 0757
www.saga.co.uk/travel_insurance

Age UK – Offers travel insurance with no upper age limit and you can cover pre-existing medical conditions

Call: 0800 389 4852
www.ageuk.org.uk/products/insurance

Top Tip

Remember to divide your ostomy supplies between your hand and hold luggage

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European Health Insurance Card

If you are travelling to a country in the European Economic Area (EEA), or in Switzerland, make sure you obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) in addition to your private health insurance. If you have an accident or fall ill abroad, this card will entitle you to free or reduced cost

medical treatment in most European member states.

Anyone over the age of 16 can apply for an EHIC card. For further information visit: www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC



Body Screening at Airports

Body scanners are designed to enable airport staff to detect explosives or other harmful items which may be hidden on a traveller's body.

The scan does not show internal body parts but it is likely to highlight the fact that you are wearing a stoma pouch. Security officers have received training to deal with this in

an appropriate and sensitive manner, and no physical contact such as a hand search is necessary.

It is recommended that you carry a travel certificate with you at all times. You can show this to the security staff to describe your condition, should it be required. It may also be useful to carry a letter from your GP.

Travel certificates/cards can be obtained from your stoma care nurse, the Ileostomy Association (IA), Colostomy Association (CA) or Urostomy Association (UA). These are printed in several languages and briefly explain your condition and the equipment you are carrying.

Packing

If you are flying to your holiday destination, it is advised to pack half your stoma care equipment in your hand luggage. If you need a pouch change during the flight or if your hold luggage is delayed or lost, you will have sufficient pouches to meet your

immediate needs. It is a good idea to pre-cut your pouches before you travel, or you can take advantage of the free cutting service from our home delivery service.

Remember ... Scissors must be packed in your hold luggage.

Medicines

If you need to take any prescription medicines on holiday, it is a good idea to find out whether there are any restrictions on taking them in and out of the country you will be visiting. Medicines which are readily

available over the counter in the UK may be controlled drugs in other countries. Always carry your medicines in correctly labelled pharmacy issued containers. If you are taking strong pain relieving

medicine, it is recommended to obtain a letter from your GP explaining why you need to carry this. Your GP may charge you for this service.

Eating and Drinking

One of the great things about travelling to different countries is trying different cuisines. However, a few sensible precautions may help to prevent an upset tummy. In very hot countries avoid food that has been standing for long

periods of time, in particular, shell fish. Wash salad and fruit before eating and drink only bottled water. If the local water upsets you then you should also use bottled water to clean around your stoma. Avoid ice cubes in your

drinks and drink only moderate amounts of alcohol. It is advisable to drink a glass of water for every glass of alcohol you consume as excessive amounts of alcohol will cause dehydration.

Disabled Toilets and National Key Scheme - RADAR Key

The Radar National Key Scheme offers access to the 9,000 disabled toilets around the country. The disabled toilet key is just one of the free gifts available to you when you join our home delivery service. Please call **0800 318 282** to join us today.



Dehydration

Dehydration does not only occur with tummy upsets and tummy bugs but also in hot and humid conditions. In these conditions we perspire much more so it is important to replace these lost body fluids by drinking more. Isotonic sports drinks are available at most supermarkets and

pharmacies and are excellent in combatting dehydration. Symptoms of dehydration are headache, thirst, dizziness, small amounts of dark urine, feeling light headed or weak, or any combination of these symptoms. If dehydration persists seek medical help immediately.

Pouch Storage

If you are holidaying in hot or humid conditions, you may wish to take a cool bag with you to protect your pouches. Alternatively, store your pouches in the coolest part of your holiday accommodation.

Exercise Following Abdominal Surgery and Stoma Formation

Your abdominal muscles may have become weakened as the result of the operation you have had. This can cause backache, a dragging sensation in the lower part of your abdomen and poor posture.

The following simple exercises have been developed for you by the Physiotherapy Department at The Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, and endorsed in March 2013 by Chartered Physiotherapists Promoting Continence (CPPC).

Try these exercises daily and repeat each exercise ten times. If you can't manage ten repetitions at first don't worry, just do as many as you can. Increase repetitions as you become stronger.

Always check with your consultant or GP before starting any exercise routine.

Travel and Holiday Service from Pelican Healthcare

If you are visiting relatives, working away from home or simply on holiday in another part of the UK and require

your prescription items delivered to a temporary address, we will be happy to arrange this for you.

Simply call our customer services team on 0800 318 282.

Pelvic Tilting

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor/bed. Pull your lower tummy in, tilt your bottom upwards slightly whilst pressing the middle of your back into the bed. Try to breathe out as you are doing this and hold the position for two seconds. Let go slowly.



tummy in. With the leg that is straight, draw up at the hip towards your armpit. Then stretch the leg down as far as you can. Do the same with the other leg.

Head Raising

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor/bed. Pull your tummy muscles in. Keeping your knees together, slowly roll them from side to side. A little way at first, gradually increasing as far as is comfortable.



Lift and Twist

Lie on your back with your knees bent up and your head on a pillow. Place both hands on the front of your right thigh. Lift your left shoulder and head towards the outside right knee. Hold for three seconds then slowly return to the starting position. Do the same on the opposite side.

Knee Rolling

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor/bed. Pull your tummy muscles in. Keeping your knees together, slowly roll them from side to side. A little way at first, gradually increasing as far as is comfortable.



Hip Hitching

Lie flat on your back with your head on a pillow. Bend one knee up and keep the other straight. Pull your



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