



HELPFUL HINTS

- Look at your stoma whenever you empty the pouch. Look at the skin surrounding the stoma (peristomal skin) whenever you change the wafer. The normal appearance of the stoma is pink and moist. If you notice any change in color (such as pale, dusky or bluish discoloration), call your doctor immediately. If you notice any change in the peristomal skin contact your ET nurse.
- The stoma size will change over time so it is important that you measure it regularly. Although most of the change will occur over the first 6 weeks, the size can change later especially if you gain or lose weight. When you first get home, you should measure it every time you change your pouch. Measuring the stoma will help you obtain the right size flange opening and prevent skin irritation.
- Use a stoma measuring guide to make a pattern so that the opening in the wafer is the proper size. Using the pattern, cut the wafer so that no more than 1/8" of skin is exposed between the stoma and the wafer.
- Wash the area around the stoma with water. If you wish, you can use a mild soap. Rinse the area well and make sure that it is dry before applying the wafer.
- Do not use alcohol, peroxide, lotions, soaps with lanolin or baby wipes on the peristomal skin this area.
- Ask your surgeon when you can shower or bathe. When showering or bathing, you can leave the pouch on or take it off.



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- Change the stoma pouching system every 3 days when you first get home. During your outpatient visit with the Enterostomal Therapist, you can discuss if you can increase the time between pouch changes
- You will learn which foods cause odor and/or gas problems for you. In your Discharge Packet there is a diet that lists foods that may cause problems. Gradually introducing these foods into your diet will help you determine how these foods affect you.
- After ostomy surgery, questions may arise about sex and intimacy. Discuss your concerns about changes in sexual functioning and desire with your physician and/or nurse. In addition, communicating and sharing your feelings about your ostomy is important.