**Prevention and management**

**of a**

**parastomal hernia**

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ABN 16 072 891 322

Stoma / Wound / Continence

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**Stoma review**

A review of your stoma and stoma care by a STN should be conducted:

* + within 2 – 6 weeks after discharge from hospital
  + at any time if problems occur
  + at least every 1 – 2 years

For further information or help with any stoma questions contact

your STN or visit [**www.stomaltherapy.**](http://www.stomaltherapy.)**au**

**Disclaimer** *The information in this brochure:*

* *has been developed as a general guide only*
* *relates to adults only*

*Any concerns need to be discussed with your STN or doctor*

**References**

1. [Hotouras A](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=Hotouras%20A%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=23374759)., [Murphy J](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=Murphy%20J%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=23374759)., [Thaha M](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=Thaha%20M%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=23374759). & [Chan CL](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=Chan%20CL%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=23374759). (2013) The persistent

challenge of parastomal herniation: a review of the literature and future

developments. [*Colorectal Disease*.](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23374759) May: 15(5)

2. Thompson JM. (2009) Parastomal hernias revisited, including a

cost effectiveness analysis: is an ounce of prevention worth a

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***Level IV Evidence (Expert Opinion)***

* + - * Give added support to your abdomen with your hands when you sneeze, cough or laugh
* Seek and use treatments if you have hay fever
* Stop or reduce smoking so you don’t have to cough
* Don’t lift a child or pet, basket of washing, groceries or tools etc. for the first 6 – 8 weeks after surgery. Pushing or pulling objects may be just as difficult
* If you have to lift something, face the way you want to go, bend your knees and don’t hold your breath
* Restart gentle exercises and activities, especially walking, as soon as you feel able and your STN or Surgeon has agreed
* Gain and maintain an ideal body weight
* Seek dietary advice from your STN or dietitian if you have difficulty maintaining soft stools
* Seek medical advice if you are straining to pass urine or have respiratory conditions causing you to cough2

**What to do if you think you have a hernia**

* If symptoms (sudden pain or altered stoma function) occur, seek STN or medical advice as soon as possible
* Make a STN appointment for review of your stoma management, as the style of appliance may need to be changed to prevent leakage and skin irritation
* Ask your STN about support garments if you are not already using them, or for a review if you are
* You may require modification of your clothing to hide the hernia
* You may benefit from support garments which have been properly measured for you when you are doing physical activity eg housework, gardening, walking or sports. You may need to wear them for short periods only at the start
* Don’t order all your garments at the one time, in case your body shape changes over time
* Most hernias are not treated surgically but this can be discussed with your Surgeon

**What is a parastomal hernia?**

A protrusion of abdominal contents through a weakened area of muscle. This area is usually where the muscles have been cut or separated to allow the stoma to be formed

**What makes you think you might have a hernia?**

A bulge under or around your stoma, especially when you increase the pressure in your abdomen eg when you stand up, sneeze, cough, strain to pass urine or to lift objects. Getting in and out of bed if you use a sitting-up motion first can be enough to increase the pressure.

The bulge may subside if you lie down. It may appear suddenly or over time and may vary in size.

It may be emotionally distressing

You may also experience discomfort, dull or sharp pain, a feeling of heaviness or dragging, and the size and shape of your stoma may change. You may note a change in the output of your stoma.

With the change of body shape, the appliance you are using may not adhere as well, leading to leaks

**If any of these symptoms arise, contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse (STN) to discuss your stoma care**

**Can hernias be prevented?**

Currently No – up to 50 % of people who have a stoma develop a hernia1

However, there are things you **can do** to reduce the risk

1. Eat a healthy, well balanced diet, including proteins, vitamins, minerals and water for healing and muscle repair
2. Think about the things that increase abdominal pressure:

* Sit up or get out of bed by rolling onto your side with your knees bent and use your hands to push yourself upwards as you swing your legs over the side