

Caring for your Stoma: A Guide for Teens

Changing your appliance

- Wash your hands
- Prepare your equipment
 - Plastic rubbish bag
 - Adhesive remover wipe/spray
 - Warm water
 - Washcloth or chux-style cloth
 - Accessories as required
 - New appliance, cut hole in the base plate to the correct stoma size
 - Mirror if required
 - Empty and gently remove your old appliance
- Clean your stoma and surrounding skin with warm water and dry the skin
- Check your stoma size and adjust appliance hole to fit snugly
- If the skin around your stoma is red or sore, contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse (STN) - this is not normal
- Apply any accessories if required
- Apply the clean base plate and attach the pouch (two piece) or apply pouch (one piece) as shown to you by your STN
- Position the appliance correctly over the stoma and close the appliance outlet
- Wash your hands

An alternative to the above procedure is to prepare your appliance as above, remove the old appliance and shower with the appliance off. After the shower, dry the skin around the stoma and put on your clean appliance.

Establish a routine for changing your appliance. First thing in the morning prior to eating or drinking is when your stoma will likely be least active.

Your stoma may change in size over 6 – 8 weeks following surgery. Measure your stoma periodically to ensure that your appliance still fits snugly.

Emptying your appliance

- Wash your hands before and after emptying your appliance
- The appliance to be emptied when a third to a half full
- The appliance can be emptied directly into the toilet. To avoid back-splash, a layer of toilet paper can be placed on the surface of the water OR if the output needs to be weighed and measured for replacement, empty into a nappy sack or measuring jug

Australian Association of Stomal Therapy Nurses Inc. Education and Professional Development Committee. Developed March 2010. Last updated March 2025.

This information is a general guide. Any concerns should be discussed with your Stomal Therapy Nurse or doctor. For further information or help with any stoma questions, contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse or visit www.stomalthrapy.au and click on 'Find a Stoma Nurse'

- Clean the appliance outlet thoroughly prior to closing
- Your appliance does not need to be rinsed out
- If you notice a considerable decrease or increase in the volume of output seek medical attention

Disposal of your appliance

- Place the appliance in a plastic bag and tie securely eg freezer bags, nappy sacs, recycled plastic bags
- Dispose as normal household rubbish
- Appliances are never to be flushed down the toilet

Ordering supplies

- Always keep a small amount of supplies on hand in case of a delay with your order
- You will be given a copy of the order form listing the supplies you use, prior to discharge from hospital or attached to your first order
- Order only what you require each month from this list
- **Do not over order**, as appliances are expensive and have a use by date
- Orders may be collected in person or posted to your address. An added fee for postage and handling is required. Allow 2 – 3 weeks for delivery

Hints

- Find someone you can talk to about your stoma and how it makes you feel. Don't isolate yourself!
- Remember it's your decision whether to tell your friends about your stoma
- A stoma shield can protect your stoma if you play contact sports
- Links to websites for teens with stomas are listed below – there are many more websites

Stoma review

You should see your Stomal Therapy Nurse for review of your stoma

- Within 2 – 6 weeks after discharge from hospital
- At any time if problems occur
- At least every 1 – 2 years

References:

<https://www.dansac.com.au/en-au/livingwithastoma/lifewithyourstoma/teenswithstomas> Accessed 26/3/25

<https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/ostomy-day-to-day-activities-for-adolescents-ages-12-years> Accessed 26/3/25

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