



Managing Your Stoma Supplies.

Now that you have a stoma:

- While in hospital your Stomal Therapy Nurse (STN) will have:
 - Helped you choose the most appropriate bag and accessories for managing your type of stoma
 - Taught you to care for your stoma
 - Organised initial supplies for use in hospital and for when you first go home
 - Provided information about the Stoma Appliance Scheme which funds the cost of your supplies
 - Discussed supplies and equipment care with you
 - Joined you to an Ostomy Association – this membership is essential, as it is the Association that distributes your ongoing supply of bags and any accessories to financial members when you order them

Note: Neither doctors' surgeries nor pharmacies stock stoma supplies

- Once you leave hospital you or your carer will be responsible for ordering your supplies. To do this you will need to:
 - Pay a small **annual** membership fee set and administered by your Ostomy Association
 - Complete and submit an order form (hard copy or on the Association website) with your current details and listing the products you need
 - Indicate, for **each product you need** the:
 - a. Reference number (identified on the box or product itself) [NOT the batch number]
 - b. Number of items required
 - Identify whether the supplies are to be posted to you (a set postage fee will need to be paid) or collected from the Association directly, by you or your nominee
 - Submit your order via the Association's website, post, fax or personal delivery
 - Recognise that there is a monthly limit on the amount of supplies
- If you go back into hospital for any reason, take your supplies with you as they are unique to your stoma care

Storage of supplies

- Keep regularly used products together in a carry kit or box
- Check all supplies regularly
- It is expected that you will keep a month's supply on hand to reduce the concern about "running out"
- **DON'T STOCKPILE BEYOND THIS AMOUNT**

- Store supplies in a cool place, out of direct sunlight
- Develop a “change kit” for when you are out of the house – remember to rotate the stock in this kit and don’t leave it in a hot vehicle

Points to consider before ordering

- Most supplies are funded through the Stoma Appliance Scheme
- The Stoma Appliance Scheme is unique to Australia and costly – many countries offer **no** support to ostomates
- A set amount of each type of product is available monthly. This amount has been identified as the **optimum** number required for effective management
- Many members manage their stomas with much less than this amount
- **ONLY ORDER WHAT IS NEEDED IN A TIMELY MANNER**
- Some products are used with each change, others infrequently
- You **DO NOT** have to order all products each month
- Check with your Association about when to submit your order – some have a specific date for the following month, but generally it should be when your supplies are getting low and considering the time it takes to receive them
- Until you have had your stoma for 6 months, only one month’s supply can be ordered at a time
- Don’t over-order products in case you need to change them as you recover and your stoma and abdomen change over time
- If you are having problems, seek a STN appointment before your next order – the management may need to be changed
- If you must change products or if you have your stoma closed, return unused supplies to the Association

Going on holiday

- If your usual order is enough, no change
- An Association can provide a *holiday supply* (if on a protracted absence from home) which consists of a “double supply” – enough for two (2) months
- If a longer absence is planned, discuss the options with your Association
- You may also be able to obtain supplies from other Australian State Associations – ask
- If flying, pre-cut your baseplates (if applicable) and pack scissors in your checked luggage
- Divide supplies between cabin baggage and checked luggage in the event of delays / loss
- Carry the Disabled Card authorising you to use the disabled toilet facilities (request from your Association)
- Consider using a Sunflower lanyard to indicate a “hidden disability” (request from your Association)
- Read the airport screening information at <https://www.perthairport.com.au/passenger-guide/security>