Discharge information
Urostomy
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All about your stoma care nurse

The stoma care service at Addenbrooke’s Hospital is designed to meet the needs of patients who have undergone bladder surgery which will or has resulted in a stoma. We aim to support in the following ways:

- Teaching you the practical care of your stoma.
- Supporting you and your family in adjusting to life with a stoma.

Your stoma care nurse is Nicola Cheale, urology nurse practitioner.

I would prefer you to call me by my first name; however, if you do not feel comfortable with this, you can refer to me as Sister.

I can be contacted Monday to Thursday, 08:00 until 18:00 on 01223 349800 (24 hour answer phone). If I am on holiday a colleague will deal with messages appropriately.

This is a direct line where a 24 hour answer phone is in operation if I am out. I will ring you back as soon as I can. Sometimes this may not be until the following day.

If you have an urgent problem over a weekend or bank holiday, you will need to contact either your general practitioner or community nurse.

What will happen when I leave hospital?

You will not be discharged until you feel confident with managing your stoma. You will be visited at least once by your local district nurse, usually within 48 hours of your discharge from hospital.

You are then normally followed up in the stoma clinic approximately two weeks following discharge. You will then be seen for as long as we all feel it necessary.

If you have problems between clinic appointments or in the future, you can always contact me at the hospital and I will arrange to see you in clinic.

Please note that if you live out of the area, I will refer you and give you the details for your local stoma nurse for ongoing support and follow up.

You will be telephoned two to three days after discharge and an appropriate follow up can be arranged as required.
How to obtain your appliances/equipment

Your stoma products are on prescription. As your stoma is permanent you will be exempt from prescription charges. You will be given an exemption certificate for your GP to sign if needed.

Before you are discharged, we will complete a card with the prescription code for your stoma equipment. This is your record and must be shown to your GP in order to obtain a prescription. The card is your record and will be altered by ourselves as needed so do not let the GP keep the card.

Once you have the prescription, you can obtain your supplies in two different ways.

1. Take your prescription to your chemist as you would for any other medicines or tablets. It is important to remember that, generally speaking, chemists do not stock stoma equipment and they will need to order it especially for you. This could take up to one week so do not wait until you have only two or three bags left before you take your prescription in. If your chemist has trouble ordering your stoma equipment, please contact us for advice.

2. There are several delivery companies listed in the back of this booklet. You can register with them on the phone or over the internet and they will send your stoma equipment free of charge to you.

   They do require a prescription and will ask you to obtain this from your GP and send it on to them. If you are unable to obtain your prescription, they will offer to write to your GP and obtain it for you. They will also send complimentary items such as dry wipes and scented disposal bags.

For those of you having to cut your bags to fit your stoma, if you send a pattern/template, they will deliver your equipment already cut. Please allow six weeks before asking for this service, as your stoma will need to settle in size and shape. Please ask us if you are interested in this service and require additional support / advice.

Material used for cleaning around your stoma, ie cleaning wipes, are not available on prescription. However, kitchen roll is an excellent substitute and can be bought in all local shops/supermarkets.
Step by step guide to changing your bag

1. Collect all necessary equipment:
   - New bag
   - Scissors
   - Disposal bag/nappy sack/plastic bag
   - Dry wipe/kitchen roll
   - Warm tap water

2. If necessary, cut the new bag to the required size or shape.

3. Empty the used bag down the toilet and reseal.

4. Remove the soiled bag – peeling it off from the top.

5. Place the soiled bag in disposal bag.

6. Clean the skin and stoma using warm water and wipes. If you wish to use soap, a milder or un-perfumed soap is recommended and skin must be rinsed thoroughly.

7. Dry the skin thoroughly using dry wipes or kitchen roll. Pat dry and check dryness with your hand.

8. Peel off the backing paper from the new bag and position around your stoma. Press the bag firmly in place.

9. Wrap the used wipes and the soiled bag in newspaper and put in a plastic bag. Knot or seal the top and place in household rubbish bin.

Night drainage

It is up to you whether you use the night drainage system.

1. Always remember to ensure that the bag is lower than the level of the bed.

2. When connecting at night, do not empty the bag first. Run the urine through the system as this will reduce air pockets and allow free drainage.

3. Once disconnected, wash the bag with hot, soapy water (ie washing up liquid or liquid soap).

4. Do not wash with Milton, bleach or disinfectant.

5. You should change the night drainage bag and adaptor every week.
Frequently asked questions

Q. Will my friends and family be able to see that I am wearing a bag?
A. No.

Q. Do I tell my family and friends?
A. It is up to you. No one needs to know unless you wish to tell them.

Q. Will I get depressed?
A. Both men and women sometimes feel ‘down in the dumps’ after surgery. This is quite normal and we will help you get through it.

Q. Do I have to eat a special diet?
A. Generally speaking, no. A well balanced diet is recommended. You may have a poor appetite after leaving hospital and we recommend small, frequent meals until your appetite returns. Drinking plenty of fluids is essential and we recommend two litres a day.

Q. Can I drink alcohol?
A. Yes.

Q. Will I smell?
A. No, all the bags are odour proof. If ever there is a smell (other than when you are emptying or changing the bag) there is either something wrong with the bag, the bottom hasn’t been cleaned effectively when emptying, or there is a small, undetectable leak. Change the bag if this occurs.

Q. Will I have to pay a prescription charge?
A. No, not if your stoma is permanent, you will now be exempt. We will give you an exemption form if you are not already exempt.

Q. How do I order equipment?
A. See page 9.

Q. Will I have to wear a bag all the time?
A. Yes, you will. However, you can remove it for bathing or in the shower.

Q. Will I have to carry a lot of equipment with me?
A. No, but you will need to carry a spare bag, disposal bag, and dry and wet wipes in case you need to change your bag.

Q. Where do I store my bags?
A. In a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight.

Q. Will I be able to work?
A. Whatever your occupation, once you have recovered from surgery you can return to work.
Q. **Will I need to change my job?**
A. No, generally speaking.

Q. **Will my partner reject me?**
A. If you have a good stable relationship before your surgery there should not be any problems. If there are we will talk to you and your partner together, or separately if you wish.

Q. **Will I be able to have sex?**
A. We can discuss this with you. Generally speaking, the answer is yes.

Q. **Will I be able to have a baby?**
A. Generally speaking, yes, but consult your surgeon or us for advice.

Q. **Can I continue to take the pill?**
A. Yes.

Q. **Can I travel and go on holiday?**
A. Yes, we are happy to discuss this with you.

Q. **Can I travel by air?**
A. Yes, contact us for travel tips and advice.

Q. **Will I be able to bath and swim?**
A. Yes, the bags are waterproof.

There are a number of companies providing swim wear for stoma patients. Please contact us if you would like more information. Patterned swimwear is best.

Q. **Will I be able to wear my usual clothes?**
A. Yes, there are some companies that manufacture clothes for some patients, such as high waist trousers and swimwear, as well as underwear. Please contact us if you require further advice on this.

Q. **Can I continue with my sporting activities?**
A. Yes, once you have recovered from the operation, which is normally around three months. For high impact sports such as rugby and squash, it may be worth considering a stoma shield. Please contact us to discuss this further.

Q. **When can I drive?**
A. Not until six weeks after surgery. You should not drive until you are safe to do an emergency stop. It is also worth checking in the small print of your insurance policy or with your insurance company.

Q. **Can I wear a seatbelt?**
A. Yes. You can buy a device from car accessory shops, which loosens the seatbelt without affecting the safety and mechanism of the belt.
Q. **Will I get sore skin?**
A. Generally speaking, no, especially if you look after your stoma in the way you have been taught in hospital. If you do experience sore skin give us a ring.

Q. **Will my bag leak? If it does, what are the reasons?**
A. Generally speaking no. However, you may get an occasional faulty bag leakage. It can also occur if your stoma changes shape or size or you allow your bag to get too full. If you experience recurrent leakage, you should contact us. If you ignore it, you could lose confidence and your skin could become very sore.

Q. **Are there any support groups?**
A. Yes, see the information on page 8.

Q. **How will I find out about new and different bags?**
A. We will keep you informed. We hold open days every 18 months, which you will be invited to. Companies attend with all the latest products for you to see.

If you join the Urostomy Association, you will receive a regular journal, which will inform you of any new products.

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**What to be aware of**

**Bleeding from the stoma**
As the stoma has such a good blood supply, slight bleeding may occur when cleaning it. This is nothing to worry about. It may also occur if the appliance is too tight, causing rubbing or irritation. If you experience bleeding from the opening of the stoma, contact us or your GP.

**Mucus**
Your urostomy is made from a piece of bowel, which will continue to produce mucus. The mucus is white and sticky and will be passed into your stoma bag, or may be evident on the stoma when changing the bag. It can be simply wiped away and should not be mistaken for any signs of infection.

If copious amounts of mucus are passed, it can cause blockage of the drain valve or night bag. This can normally be passed with manipulation.

Vitamin C has been shown to help reduce the amount of mucus and keep the urine clear.
Dietary tips and useful information

For most people, a urostomy has very little effect on diet and you will be able to eat whatever you like.

Certain foods may give odour to the urine. This includes asparagus, fish, onions, garlic and some spices.

Drinking cranberry juice (200ml a day) can help to keep the urine free from infection and can also help to prevent urine infections. If you are taking warfarin, please check with your doctor before taking cranberry juice.

Beetroot, red fruit and red fruit drinks will turn the urine red.

Some medications may also change the colour and odour of your urine.

Before you leave hospital you should have:

- Information booklets
- Exemption certificate (if applicable)
- Stoma bags/equipment
- Prescription details and instructions
- Contact number for local stoma care nurse if you live out of the area
- Discharge booklet
- District Nurse Letter
Support groups

**Urostomy Association:**

Hazel Pixley  
National Secretary  
Central Office  
Urostomy Association  
4 Demontfort Way  
Uttoxeter  
Staffordshire  
ST14 8XY

Telephone: 0845 2412159 or 0870 7707931  
Fax: 0870 7707932  
Email: secretary.ua@classmail.co.uk  
Website: www.uagbi.org

The aims of the Urostomy Association:

- To assist those who are about to undergo or who have undergone surgery which results in a urinary diversion.
- To improve the quality of life of people who have undergone urinary diversion surgery and those who care for them.
- To undertake such research as the membership feels is necessary to enhance the life of members.

The association is supported by volunteers and relies on an annual subscription of fourteen pounds from full and associate members.

**Ostomy Lifestyle Centre**  
Telephone: 0800 731 4264  
Website: www.ostomylifestylecentre.com

The Ostomy Lifestyle Centre is run by volunteers and offers advice and support for people with all types of stomas.

The volunteers are both male and female and are all ostomates themselves. They range from the age of 25 to 65.
Delivery companies

**Alpha med Limited**
Bensham Lane
Thornton Health
Surrey
CR7 7EQ
Freephone: 0800 515 317

**Medilink**
Saltar House
Lord Street
Birmingham
B7 4DS
Freephone: 0800 626 388
Website: www.salts.co.uk

**Amcare**
24 Tinsley Close
Claypole
Newark
NG23 5BS
Freephone: 0800 855 050
Website: www.convatec.com

**Oakmed Limited**
54 Adams Avenue
Northampton
NN1 4JL
Freephone: 0800 592 786
Website: www.oakmed.co.uk

**Bullens**
85-87 Kempston Street
Liverpool
L3 8HE
Freephone: 0800 269 327
Website: www.bullens.com

**Pelican Healthcare**
Cardiff Business Park
Cardiff
CF14 5WF
Freephone: 0800 052 7471
Website: www.pelicanhealthcare.co.uk

**Charter Healthcare**
Peterborough Business Park
Peterborough
PE2 6FX
Freephone: 0800 132 787
Website: www.charter-healthcare.co.uk

**Rapidcare (Southern Surgical)**
Unit 8, Stanley Centre
Kelvin Way
Crawley
Sussex
RH10 2SE
Freephone: 0800 181 901
Website: www.rapidcare.co.uk

**Clinimed and Welland**
Cavell House
Kanvess Beech Way
Loudwater
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP10 9QY

**Respond Plus**
1 Carlton Business Park
Carlton
Nottinghamshire
NG4 3AA
Freephone: 0800 220 300
Website: www.respondplus.co.uk

**Fittleworth**
Unit L, Rudford Industrial Estate
Ford Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 4DS
Freephone: 0800 378 846
Website: www.fittleworth.com

**Speed Service**
Appliance Contracting
FREEPOST
Bishop’s Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM23 1B2
Freephone: 01279 654 172
## Manufacturing companies

**B Braun**  
Thorncliff Park  
Sheffield  
S35 2PW  
Freephone: 0800 163 007  
Website: [www.bbraun.co.uk](http://www.bbraun.co.uk)

**Dansac**  
Victory House  
Vision Park  
Histon  
Cambridge  
Freephone: 0800 581 117  
Website: [www.dansac.co.uk](http://www.dansac.co.uk)

**Bullens**  
85-87 Kempston Street  
Liverpool  
L3 8HE  
Freephone: 0800 269 327  
Website: [www.bullens.com](http://www.bullens.com)

**Hollister**  
Rectory Court  
42 Broad Street  
Wokingham  
Berkshire  
RG40 1AB  
Freephone: 0800 521 377  
Website: [www.hollister.co.uk](http://www.hollister.co.uk)

**Clinimed and Welland**  
Cavell House  
Kanvess Beech Way  
Loudwater  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP10 9QY  
Telephone: 0800 360 100

**Oakmed Limited**  
54 Adams Avenue  
Northampton  
NN1 4JL  
Freephone: 0800 592 786  
Website: [www.oakmed.co.uk](http://www.oakmed.co.uk)

**Coloplast Limited**  
Peterborough Business Park  
Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire  
PE2 6FX  
Freephone: 0800 220 622  
Website: [www.coloplast.co.uk](http://www.coloplast.co.uk)

**Pelican Healthcare**  
Cardiff Business Park  
Cardiff  
CF14 5WF  
Freephone: 0800 052 7471 - correct  
Website: [www.pelicanhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.pelicanhealthcare.co.uk)

**Convatec Limited**  
Harrington House  
Milton Road  
Ickenham  
Uxbridge  
UB10 8PU  
Freephone: 0800 282 254  
Website: [www.convatec.com](http://www.convatec.com)

**Salts**  
Saltair House  
Lord Street  
Birmingham  
B7 4DS  
Freephone: 0800 214 603  
Website: [www.salts.co.uk](http://www.salts.co.uk)
We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site.
For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:
If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team:

patient.info@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.

Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

Document history
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