



Managing Your New Ostomy

This handout explains how to care for your new ostomy. The 2 main care areas that are explained are how to get a good seal and how to protect your skin.

Getting a Good Seal

Having a good seal around your stoma will help prevent leaks. To get a good seal:

- Clean and dry the skin around your stoma before you apply your pouch. This is easiest to do if you change your pouching system in the morning before you eat or drink anything.
- Use an ostomy measuring guide to measure your stoma and trace the pattern onto the back of your ostomy wafer.
- Cut the wafer along the pattern line. It should fit $\frac{1}{8}$ inch away from the edge of the stoma. This will be close to the stoma, but it will not touch it.
- If you have skin creases or wrinkles, or if your skin surface is not flat, it may be hard to get a good seal. Ask your ostomy nurse to show you how to get a good seal. You may need to use barrier rings, convex ostomy wafers, and ostomy belts.

Protect Your Skin

Your stoma should be red, moist, and feel firm. The amount of output will vary. Output will depend on how much food you eat (if you have a *colostomy* or *ileostomy*) and the amount of fluids you drink (if you have a *urostomy* or *ileostomy*).

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Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

- Inpatient Wound and Ostomy Care Service:
206-598-4532

 - Outpatient Wound and Ostomy Care Clinic:
206-598-1438
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When feces or urine leaks under your ostomy wafer, it can irritate and damage healthy skin. When this happens, your skin may be moist and feel like it has a bad burn. It is hard to get your ostomy wafer to stick to irritated, moist, and painful skin.

A technique called “crusting” will help you get your wafer to stick to moist and irritated skin.

To “crust” follow these simple steps:

- Lightly apply stomahesive powder to your irritated skin.
- Apply a layer of skin barrier prep over the powder to trap the powder.
- If your skin is really moist, repeat the above steps one more time. End with the skin barrier prep.
- Let the “crust” dry before you apply your pouching system.

Crusting protects irritated skin, helps your skin heal, and gives you a dry surface to attach your ostomy wafer to.

Support

Talk with your doctor or nurse if you have questions or concerns about how to get a good seal or how to protect your skin.

Many people who have ostomies live full and active lives. Support groups, where you meet with other people who have ostomies, can provide information and answer many questions you may have about living with your ostomy.

The United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. (UOAA) offers many support groups in the U.S. Call the UOAA at 800-826-0826, or visit their website, www.ostomy.org.

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