

To obtain further information or help with any stoma questions, contact your:

### Stomal Therapy Nurse

Name: .....

Phone: .....

Hours: .....

●  
●  
●

### Your Local Association is:

Name: .....

Phone: .....

Hours: .....

*\*The information in this brochure has been developed as a general guide only. Any concerns need to be discussed with your Stomal Therapy Nurse or doctor.*

# Caring for your colostomy



ABN 16 072 891 322  
Stoma / Wound / Continence

**Prepared as a guide by the:**  
Australian Association of  
Stomal Therapy Nurses Inc.  
Education and Professional  
Development Subcommittee

**Developed October 2004 – Reviewed 2013**  
**Level IV Evidence (Expert Opinion)**

[www.stomaltherapy.com](http://www.stomaltherapy.com)

## Changing your appliance

- Prepare your equipment
  - Bowl of warm water
  - Washcloth or chux-style cloth / nappy liner
  - Cut out the hole in your base plate if not already precut
  - New pouch if two piece appliance
  - Plastic bag for disposal
  - Accessories as required
- Remove old appliance (if using a drainable pouch, empty first)
- Clean the stoma and surrounding skin with warm water and dry the skin
- Check your stoma size and adjust base plate to fit
- If the skin around your stoma is red or sore, contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse (this is not normal!)
- Apply the clean base plate and attach the pouch (two piece) or apply pouch (one piece)

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

## Disposal of your appliance

- Place the appliance in a plastic bag and secure the end
- Use freezer bags, nappy bags or recycled plastic bags
- Wrap in newspaper and place in the bin with other rubbish
- It is not recommended that the appliance is burnt

## Stoma review

A review of your stoma and stoma care by a Stomal Therapy Nurse should be conducted:

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

## Ordering supplies

- Always keep a small amount of supplies on hand in case of a delay with your order
- An order form with the supplies you use will be given to you prior to discharge from hospital. Order only what you require each month from this list
- **Do not over order**, as appliances are expensive
- You will have been given spare order forms
- Orders may be collected in person or send postage and handling costs with your order form

## Handy Hints

- If you wear a 2 piece appliance your base plate can remain in place for up to 3 – 4 days providing it does not leak
- Avoid getting the filter wet in the shower or when swimming – cover with the small patch supplied and remove when finished
- Review your eating pattern and diet if gas in the pouch is a problem – see relevant brochure
- Your 1 or 2 piece pouch can be changed as required
- Avoid the use of bath oils, talcum powder or creams, as they will interfere with the adhesion of the appliance
- A trace of blood when the stoma is cleaned is normal - dab with small amount of stoma powder
- Keep hairs around the stoma trimmed or shaved. Hold a tissue, toilet paper or soft cloth over the stoma while shaving to protect it
- Carry an emergency stoma care kit with you at all times. Include a spare appliance, wipes and plastic bag
- Learn the name, code number, diameter and type of pouch you are wearing, as it makes ordering easier
- Your stoma size may decrease over 6 – 8 weeks following surgery. Adjust your base plate size to ensure a snug fit
- Appliances are never to be flushed down the toilet