

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SUPPORT SERVICES
North East
HELPING YOU HEAL

Your Guide to Ostomy Management



Ostomy Management

310-2222 or 1-888-533-2222

Ontario 

THE PROGRAM

This booklet will help you:

- Manage your ostomy at home
- Improve and maintain your health and quality of life

You can use this booklet and the accompanying passport to:

- Keep track of information about your care
- Answer questions you may have about your ostomy
- Know when you need to call your Home and Community Care Support Services North East care team
- Ensure that your ostomy is being managed in the best way possible

**Your team looks forward to working with
YOU to Take Control of Your Ostomy.**



You have developed some personal goals, and your passport is your tool to keep track of them, and of your care, as you begin managing your ostomy at home.

After your procedure you will need to take time to care for your ostomy and yourself, but it does not mean you need to stop doing the things you love to do, and this booklet is here to help!

Keep this booklet and your passport nearby, in a convenient spot, so you can refer to them and make notes about your journey. It helps to know a bit more about your ostomy.



CARING FOR YOUR OSTOMY

Having an ostomy can be a life-altering experience. Learning how to manage your ostomy will help you to gain independence, and to continue participating in your usual activities with confidence and comfort.

Managing an ostomy includes cleaning the stoma and surrounding skin, emptying and cleaning the pouch, and changing the pouch and skin barrier as required.

Ostomy appliances:

- Collect feces or urine removed from your body through the stoma
- Protect the skin around the stoma from feces and urine
- Manage odour

If you experience leakage:

- Be sure to drain the pouch regularly, even if it is less than 1/3 full
- Measure the stoma to ensure a proper fit with your skin barrier, as the size of the stoma can change over time
- Check to ensure that the pouch is secured to the skin barrier

To become independent and avoid complications you will learn to:

- Care for your ostomy appliance, and the skin around the stoma
- Prevent leakage, maintain skin integrity, and manage odour

MANAGING YOUR OSTOMY

These tips will help you care for your ostomy. In order to be YOUR healthiest, you should:



1. **Wash your hands.** The most important thing you can do to prevent infection is to wash your hands. You can use soap and water for 20 seconds, or an alcohol based hand rub. Wash after emptying and changing your ostomy appliance. An ostomy appliance change is NOT a sterile procedure.



2. **Emptying your ostomy pouch.** An ostomy pouch should be emptied when it becomes 1/3 full. Be sure to clean and dry the tail of a drainable pouch before resealing. Washing should be done with tepid, not warm, water.



3. **Changing your ostomy appliance.** You can sit or stand to apply the pouch, and use a mirror for a clear view of your stoma. Use a measuring guide to help you determine what size the wafer opening should be. Make sure the skin around the stoma is wrinkle-free before attaching the appliance to the skin.



4. **Check your stoma and surrounding skin at each wafer change.** The stoma should be light pink or red. It may bleed when cleansed. The surrounding skin should not be painful, or have any rashes or sores.



5. **Skin care around your stoma.** Use toilet paper or a soft cloth and warm water to gently clean your stoma and the skin around it. Soap is not necessary. Do not use creams or oils as they will stop the appliance from sealing properly.



6. **Diet and hydration.** Drink 8-10 cups of water every day (unless told otherwise by your doctor), and take time to chew your food well to help your body digest more easily. It will take some time to develop a normal diet, and you may benefit from the help of a Registered Dietitian.

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

Your stoma will change throughout the healing process. Changing your ostomy appliance gives you a chance to take a closer look at your stoma.

Call your nurse if you see the following changes:

- The stoma is purple, black, or white in colour
- Significant changes in volume of output from the ostomy
- Frequent leaking from the appliance
- Severe cramping, nausea, or vomiting lasting more than 2 hours
- Shrinking or swelling of the stoma by more than ½"
- The skin around your stoma becomes red or irritated
- Excessive bleeding
- New onset of a strong/foul odour from the stoma
- Changes to your abdomen, particularly bulging

DURING NURSING VISITS

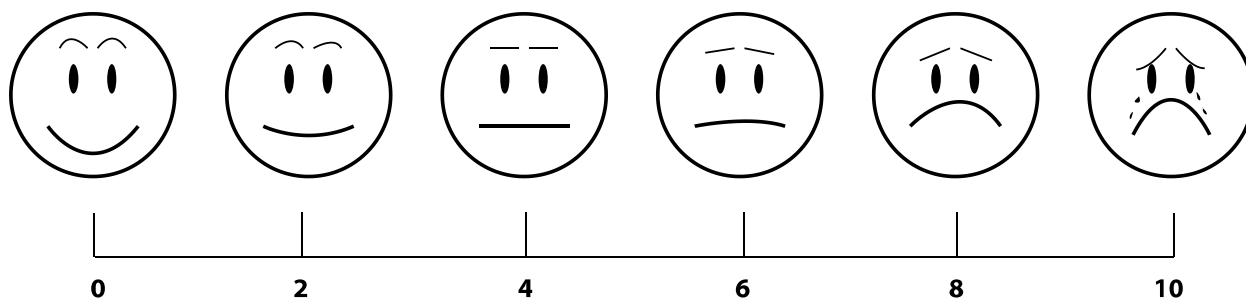
Your nurse will:

- Take a health history, as well as assess your stoma and output
- Teach you how to empty the pouch, clean the stoma, and change the pouch and skin barrier
- Discuss how to prevent skin breakdown around the stoma, and what to do if it does happen
- Review dietary needs and hydration, as well as medication management
- Provide information about where you can purchase your supplies, and the funding assistance that may be available
- Discuss return to routine daily activities including bathing, socializing, and working/volunteering

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Please note the following daily activities:

- Visually examine your stoma, and the skin around the stoma, with a mirror.
- Assess the output from the stoma for volume, as well as the presence of blood, discolouration, or strong odour.
- Drink 8-10 glasses of water (unless told otherwise by your doctor), and work towards a healthy and balanced diet.
- Assess how you generally feel today.
- Assess your pain level. The scale below may help you to assess your pain level. You may review this with your nurse at appointments.



RED FLAGS

IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE, CALL 911 OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM IMMEDIATELY!

- Your temperature is above 38.°C for more than 4 hours
- You have difficulty breathing
- You feel confused
- You have fever, chills, or light-headedness
- If you have bleeding that **does NOT stop**



CONTACT INFORMATION

Use this worksheet to record important numbers and information while you manage your ostomy at home

My Nurse's Name: _____

Cell Phone No.: _____

Office Number: _____

My Care Coordinator: _____

Cell Phone No.: _____

Office Number: _____

My Physician: _____

Cell Phone No.: _____

Office Number: _____

CONTACT US

Call us toll-free at 310-2222 (no area code required) or 1-888-533-2222.

healthcareathome.ca/northeast

The Home and Community Care Support Services North East has many offices to serve you:

KIRKLAND LAKE

53 Government Road West
Kirkland Lake ON P2N 2E5
Telephone: 705-567-2222
Toll free: 1-888-602-2222

SAULT STE. MARIE

390 Bay Street, Suite 103
Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 1X2
Telephone: 705-949-1650
Toll free: 1-800-668-7705

NORTH BAY

1164 Devonshire Ave.
North Bay ON P1B 6X7
Telephone: 705-476-2222
Toll free: 1-888-533-2222

SUDBURY

40 Elm St, Suite 41-C
Sudbury ON P3C 1S8
Telephone: 705-522-3461
Toll free: 1-800-461-2919
TTY: 711 (ask operator for 1-888-533-2222)

PARRY SOUND

6 Albert St.
Parry Sound ON P2A 3A4
Toll free: 1-800-440-6762

TIMMINS

330 Second Avenue, Suite 101
Timmins ON P4N 8A4
Telephone: 705-267-7766
Toll free: 1-888-668-2222