

# MY CHILD HAS AN OSTOMY

## KNOWLEDGE

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, has an ostomy. This pamphlet contains information about ostomy surgery, the care that ostomies require, and other information that might be helpful while my child is in your care.

An ostomy is a surgical opening in the abdomen through which waste material discharges when the normal function of the bowel or bladder is lost. An ileostomy is an opening from the small intestine (ileum portion), and a colostomy is an opening from the large intestine (colon). Both types discharge feces. A urostomy is an opening to bypass the bladder and discharge urine. My child has a/an \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHAT CAUSES OSTOMY SURGERY?

Among the reasons for ostomy surgery for children are birth defects (such as spina bifida, exstrophy of the bladder, imperforate anus, etc.), ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, polyposis, malignancy, injury and nerve damage or malfunction. The reason for my child's surgery is \_\_\_\_\_.

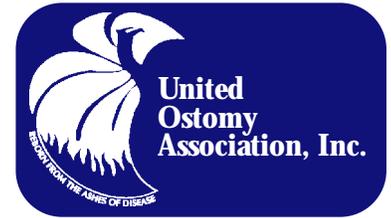
## WHAT DOES THE OSTOMY LOOK LIKE?

An ostomy is constructed by bringing the opened portion of the remaining intestine or urinary outlet through the abdominal wall. It is red, and some people compare it to a rosebud because of the size and color. The technical term for it is "stoma."

## HOW IS THE OSTOMY CARED FOR?

The care and management of the ostomy depends on which type it is.

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Ileostomates, urostomates and some colostomates can no longer control the particular type of elimination, but they can manage the discharge. In such cases, the ostomate wears a plastic collection pouch adhered to the abdomen at all times to protect the skin and collect the output. The pouch is emptied at the ostomate's convenience. Some colostomies can be controlled by irrigation (enema) and only require a small gauze pad or plastic stick-on pouch to cover the stoma between irrigations. My child's method of management is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Some children can take care of their own pouching systems; others may need assistance. My child:

- Needs help changing pouches
- Does not need help

If my child's pouching system needs care, follow these steps/guidelines:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## COMMUNICATING WITH MY CHILD

Some children devise a cute name for the stoma and some children simply call it "my ostomy" or "my pouch." My child calls it "\_\_\_\_\_."

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Most children who have an ostomy can participate in the normal activities of school or camp situations with the exception, in most cases, of harsh physical contact. Sometimes a child might have another problem, such as an orthopedic condition which may limit his physical activities. However, the ostomy itself poses no limitations with the exception of rough contact sports. Otherwise, the child can swim, play ball, or take part in any activity he chooses. My child has the following limitations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL HYGIENE

An ostomy doesn't preclude cleanliness and proper hygiene. However, sometimes a child ostomate may feel embarrassed or shy about undressing in front of peers. If so, do not compel the child to do anything uncomfortable. Arrange a separate time or place for bathing. Allow the child to take the initiative to rejoin the group. In my child's case:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## SPECIAL CONCERNS/CARE

The ostomy itself doesn't require special medication, but some may need it, just as other children may need medication for a particular reason. My child takes:

\_\_\_\_\_

The prescribed dosage is:

\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give permission for:

\_\_\_\_\_

to administer the above medication to my child while in the care of the above named person(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Prescribing Physician)

## NUTRITION

The diet of the child ostomate is usually not limited. However, sometimes certain foods need to be avoided because they may cause gas or odor. The foods that my child should avoid are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

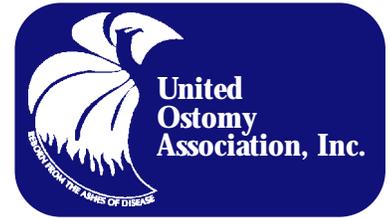
Follow the normal procedure you would for any child. Contact me immediately by calling me at:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If I am not available, contact qualified medical help at once. Do not remove the pouching system, except as described

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previously, or otherwise tamper with the ostomy without direction from me or a physician. Special instructions:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give my permission for:

\_\_\_\_\_

to seek and receive emergency medical or dental care for my child, during the time period of \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent) (Date)

Our doctors' names and phone numbers are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance information (if not covered by camp or school insurance) is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER TIPS

Please keep in mind that the child ostomate is first a child and second an ostomate. All children want to be included in the group. Please treat him/her as you would any other child, including discipline. Some teachers and counselors may be tempted to "go easy"

on a child ostomate. While this is very kind, it can cause resentment among other children.

Also, keep in mind that ostomy surgery is not shameful, but sometimes the child may feel shy about it. He/she might be reluctant to discuss the ostomy, but if it is necessary to talk about it, do so when friends or classmates are not present. He/she may not wish to let others hear about the ostomy until he/she knows them better. Respect these wishes and you will have a happier child.

If the child is to stay overnight, special arrangements are sometimes needed. This may include night drainage tubing for urostomates and plastic sheets. Special instructions for my child are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Instructions

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19772 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 200  
Irvine, CA 92612-2405  
(800) 826-0826 - (949) 660-8624  
FAX (949) 660-9262  
www.uoa.org • info@uoa.org

