



Urostomy Fact Sheet

Urostomy (Urinary Diversion): A surgically created opening in the abdominal wall through which urine passes. A urostomy may be performed when the bladder is either not functioning or has to be removed. There are several different types of surgeries, but the most common are ileal conduit and colonic conduit.

Reasons for surgery:

Bladder cancer, spinal cord injuries, malfunction of the bladder and birth defects such as spina bifida.

Care of urostomy:

A pouching system is worn. Pouches are odor free and different manufacturers have disposable or reusable varieties to fit your lifestyle. Ostomy supplies are available at drug stores, medical supply stores and through the mail.

Living with a urostomy:

Work: With the possible exception of jobs requiring very heavy lifting, a urostomy should not interfere with work. People with urostomies are successful business people, teachers, carpenters, welders, etc.

Sex and social life: Sexual function is influenced by the reasons for which the urostomy is performed. The urostomy itself should not interfere with normal sexual activity or pregnancy. It does not prevent one from dating, marriage or having children.

Clothing: Usually one is able to wear the same clothing as before surgery including swimwear.

Sports and activities: With a securely attached pouch one can swim, camp out, play baseball and participate in practically all types of sports. Caution is advised in heavy body contact sports. Travel is not restricted in any way. Bathing and showering may be done with or without the pouch in place.

Diet: Usually there are no dietary restrictions and foods can be enjoyed as before. It is suggested that 8-10 glasses of fluid per day be consumed to help decrease the chance of kidney infection.

Resources available:

The physician and medical professionals are the first source of help. Specially trained nurses called Wound, Ostomy Continence Nurses (WOCN) are available for consultation in most major medical centers.

The United Ostomy Association (UOA) is a group comprised of many local chapters throughout the United States. These local groups hold meetings and provide support to prospective and existing ostomates. They sponsor educational events and have qualified visitors to make personal or telephone visits. Contact the UOA for the chapter nearest you and for other educational publications.

Visit the UOA web site at www.uoa.org. It contains a great deal of information and many links to other sites, suppliers and resources.