

Me and my stoma – How do I change my stoma bag

It's always important that a nurse or doctor advises you about your stoma care and that you follow the diet suggestions recommended for the type of stoma you have.

What do I need to plan?

Choose a place in your home to do the care that has a hard surface to put the equipment on, is well-lit and away from rubbish bins, toilets and pets

- Choose a place that is comfortable for you to attend the care that avoids twisting, bending, reaching and stooping
- Make sure you have enough stoma equipment and order more before you run out
- Read the instructions the nurse or doctor has given you on how to do your stoma care

How do I prepare?

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry
- Wipe down the hard surface you are placing your equipment on with warm water and detergent and dry it

| Collect the equipment you need from your plastic storage container that the nurse or doctor has |
|---|
| written below (tick as required): |

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|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| | Non-sterile gloves (if applicable) | |
| | Bowl of warm water | |
| | Open weave disposable cloth like 'Chux' | |
| | Scissors | |
| | Sizing guide to measure stoma | |
| | A protective cover for bed or chair if required | |
| | Rubbish bag | |
| | | |

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Changing my stoma bag

Follow the steps below:

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- Step 1 Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry
- Step 2 If the wafer/appliance are not pre-cut, cut the wafer to the stoma pattern.
 - Check the size of the stoma using the sizing guide before cutting the appliance (if your stoma is less than 6 weeks old)
 - If using a drainable bag, make sure you close the bag now before applying it

Step 3 - Put gloves on

- Gently remove the appliance while pressing down on the skin
- Empty as much waste as possible into the toilet, then throw away the pouch
- Clean the stoma and skin around it gently using warm water and Chux (pre-cut into smaller pieces for easy use)
- Dry the skin gently
- Apply lotions/protective barrier if recommended by nurse
- Step 4 Centre the new appliance over the stoma and press down firmly for 1-2 minutes (your warm body and hand will help it stick better)
- Step 5 Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry
- Step 6 Store your equipment in the plastic storage container, clean the area and throw away the rubbish

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What should I report?

- Increased or new pain at the stoma site that won't go away
- Redness around, or spreading from your stoma
- Any change in colour or the amount of waste coming from your stoma
- Any change to your stoma including colour or shape

Where do I get more supplies from?

- Talk to your nurse or doctor
- Order further supplies at least a week in advance from your state-based Ostomy Association or contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse about supplies needed when they visit or call you

Storing my stoma care equipment

- A large plastic, cleanable container with a secure lid to store your stoma care equipment only
- The cleaned plastic box containing your equipment should be stored off the floor, out of direct sunlight and away from heaters and moisture
- A pair of stainless steel scissors that are kept just for your cutting your wafer to size
- Wash the scissors in warm, soapy water or with a disinfectant wipe, before and after use





- Consider cutting the chux into smaller pieces to use for wiping around your stoma
- Bags for rubbish



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How can we help?

If you have any questions or would like to find out about other self care options, you can contact Bolton Clarke or your trusted health professional.

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