Normal Anatomy

The GI Tract

- Esophagus: Transports food to the stomach
- Stomach: Breakdown (digestion) of food
- Large Bowel (colon): Absorption of water & electrolytes
- Small Bowel (ileum): Absorption of nutrients
- Rectum: Storage of formed stool
- Anus
What is an ostomy (or stoma)?

- An ostomy is a surgically-created opening in the intestine that is brought out through the abdomen (belly)
- Ostomies are frequently temporary, but they can be permanent
- Types of ostomies:
  - **Ileostomy** - opening in the small intestine (usually on the right side)
  - **Colostomy** - opening in the colon (usually on the left side)
What to expect after surgery

- A healthy stoma is red, moist and has NO feeling

- It is usually less than 1 ½ inches in size but will shrink by 30% in the first 4-6 weeks
Ostomy Marking

When possible, stoma sites are marked **before** surgery to assure a good spot away from skin folds (creases)

**Four potential ostomy sites**
Caring for your ileostomy

- Wear an external pouch (bag) over the stoma that sticks to your belly (the pouch should not show under your clothes)

- Empty the pouch when it is one-third to half way full.

- In the beginning your stool will be loose and you may have to empty the pouch 6-8 times per day
  - As your stool thickens (toothpaste consistency), you will empty the pouch about 4-5 times per day

- The skin barrier that sticks to your belly around your stoma (called a wafer) is changed every 3-4 days
Emptying your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

1. Undo the velcro at the bottom

2. Pinch the pouch to open & allow the stool to empty into the toilet or a disposable container
A Few Easy Steps!!

3. Clean the opening of the pouch with tissue or a wet paper towel

4. Roll the bottom of the pouch up 3 times and secure the velcro flaps
Changing your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

Gather all the supplies that you will need to change your ostomy appliance
Changing your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

Carefully remove the skin barrier then clean the stoma & surrounding skin
Changing your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

Measure the stoma using the guide then cut the corresponding opening onto the new skin barrier.
Changing your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

Apply the new skin barrier & secure the pouch
Changing your appliance

A Few Easy Steps!!

Press the pouch firmly onto the skin barrier and roll up the velcro bottom
Choosing your supplies

We will help you find what works best for you!!

- 1-piece vs. 2-piece appliance
- Drainable vs. closed pouch
- Clip vs. velcro closure
- Accessories
Daily life and activities

How will surgery affect your daily life & activities?

- You can wear your regular clothes
  - The pouch should not show under your clothing
  - Avoid belts laying over the stoma

- You may shower with the pouch on
  - On the day you are due to change the appliance, you may shower with the entire pouch off

- People with ostomies return to work, travel, swim, and play most sports

- Intimacy will not hurt the stoma
How will an ileostomy change my diet

- Avoid foods & drinks that cause excess gas
  - broccoli, cabbage, beans, corn, soda, cucumbers, dairy products, mushrooms, onions

- Drink 8-10 glasses of fluids daily to avoid dehydration

- Avoid high-fiber foods that may cause blockages
  - **High-fiber foods**: raw fruits, raw vegetables, nuts, popcorn, foods with seeds, meats with casings
Common Concerns

- **Will there be an odor?**
  - When everything is on securely, **no one should smell anything**
  - When you open the pouch, there is some odor, but there are deodorant products available which help lessen this odor

- **Will the pouch leak?**
  - Leakages should be rare, especially after you find the product that works best for you and know how to use it properly

- **Will anyone know you have one?**
  - Not unless you choose to tell them
Common Ileostomy Problems

๏ **Skin irritation (usually minor)**
  - Usually caused by skin being exposed to stool
  - Use powders instead of creams or ointments
  - Re-evaluate products being used

๏ **Dehydration**
  - Drink at least 8-10 glasses of fluid per day
  - Report high output of stool to your doctor or ostomy nurse specialist
  - You may need to take Imodium pills to decrease the output

๏ **Food blockage**
  - Chew your food well
  - Eat frequent small meals
  - Avoid high-fiber foods for about 6-8 weeks after ileostomy surgery
  - Speak with your surgical team to ensure that blockage is not related to the surgery
Your ostomy nurse specialist & the floor nurses caring for you after surgery will teach you and your family how to care for your ostomy before you leave the hospital.

The discharge planning nurse on your team will arrange for home care nurses to continue to help you and your family at home until you feel confident.

We will give you some initial supplies and help to make a plan for how you will order ostomy supplies at home:

- Most insurances cover 80% of the cost of supplies.
- Supplies are usually **NOT** available in pharmacies or local medical surgical suppliers.
- There are several large distributors which will ship supplies right to your home and bill your insurance company.
Keys to Success

○ A positive attitude
○ A sense of humor
○ Let your loved ones help
○ Ongoing follow-up for questions, support, and to report any problems

• Home Care Nurses
• Ostomy Nurse Specialist
• Your surgical team
Web-based Resources

๏ Ostomy Product Manufacturers:
  www.hollister.com
  www.convatec.com
  www.us.coloplast.com

๏ Ostomy Online Communities:
  www.c3life.com
  www.ostomy.org

๏ American College of Surgeons’ Ostomy Home Skills Kit:
  www.facs.org/patienteducation/skills/skillspatient.html
### Your Surgical Team:

**Surgeons:**
- Robert Fry, MD
- Najjia Mahmoud, MD
- Joshua Bleier, MD
- Brian Kann, MD
- Cary Aarons, MD

**Ostomy Nurse Specialists:**
- Ave Preston
- Dawn Carson
- Bill Falone

**Nurse Practitioners & Physician Assistants:**
- Helena McElhenney
- Jennifer Elliot
- Michael Fejka

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