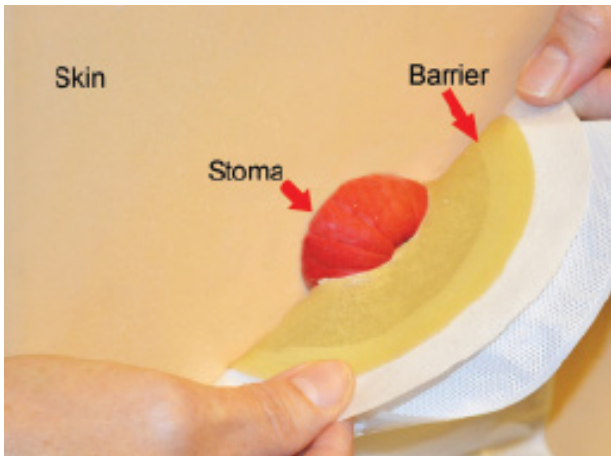


Ostomy Skin Care*

People who have an ostomy often worry that their skin may become irritated from the output or from the pouching system itself. It is important to treat the skin gently, protect it from output, and use products correctly to decrease the chance of skin problems.

How Do I Remove My Old Pouching System?



(Genairex® Pouching System)

- Take your time when removing your pouching system! Do not “rip it off” because that could hurt your skin and cause skin irritation.
- Gently loosen and lift the edge of the pouching system with one hand while pushing down on the skin near the skin barrier with your other hand. Work from the top so that you can see what you’re doing. Working from the top will also allow the pouch to collect any drainage from your stoma.
- Some people find it helpful to use an adhesive remover when removing their pouching system. If you use adhesive remover, it is very important to wash all of the adhesive remover from your skin with soap and water and dry the skin completely before you put on your new pouching system.

How Do I Clean Around My Stoma?

- All you really need to use is warm water and a washcloth, or good quality, soft paper towels. Gauze is not necessary, and can be expensive.
- It is usually not necessary to use soap to clean around your stoma. However, if you prefer to use soap, be sure to use a very mild soap that does not have a lot of oil or other moisturizers. These oils can prevent your skin barrier from sticking to your skin. Make sure you rinse all of the soap off of your skin, because any residue can also interfere with the way your pouching system sticks to your skin.
- Always dry your skin well before putting on your new pouching system. You can use a clean, absorbent towel; good quality, soft paper towels or a hair dryer set to a low heat and low speed setting.
- **Do not** use alcohol or any other harsh chemicals to clean your skin or stoma. These can dry your skin out and cause irritation.
- **Do not** use moistened wipes, baby wipes, or anything that contains lanolin or other oils. These can cause your skin barrier not to stick to your skin.
- Unless recommended by your healthcare provider, **do not** apply powders or creams to the skin around your stoma because they can keep your skin barrier from sticking.



Ostomy Skin Care* (cont.)

Tips For Protecting Your Skin

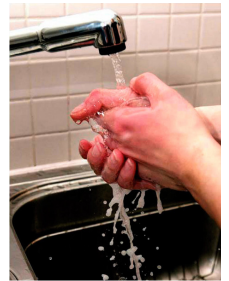
- The best skin protection is a well-fitted and comfortable pouching system. Your healthcare provider will help you choose the system that works best for you.
- It is helpful to hold your skin smooth and taut as you put your pouching system on to avoid wrinkles that may lead to leakage.
- Check your skin and the back of your skin barrier each time you change your pouching system to check for irritation or skin breakdown. You can use a mirror to check your skin under your stoma. Report any problems to your healthcare provider.
- If you have any itching or burning under your skin barrier, remove your pouching system as soon as possible to examine your skin. These could be signs of leakage and/or skin irritation. Inform your healthcare provider so he or she can determine the cause of the irritation and recommend possible solutions.



(ConvaTec)

Day-to-Day Tips

- Empty the pouch when it is 1/3 to 1/2 full; otherwise, the weight of the pouch can pull on the skin barrier and disrupt the seal.
- It is important to change the pouching system at the first sign of leakage.
- Don't try to patch the pouching system with tape or paste; a leaking pouch can cause skin irritation.
- Gas filters don't work after they get wet; use a waterproof tape or sticker over the filter before water activities.
- After swimming or bathing, a towel and/or a hairdryer on cool setting may be used to dry the tape and cloth backing of the pouching system to prevent skin irritation from wetness.
- Wash hands before and after caring for the ostomy.
- Plan ahead; take supplies for an appliance change when leaving the house.
- Pouch wear-time may decrease during warmer seasons or when perspiring more or during times of increased activity.



Always be sure to follow your Wound, Ostomy, Continence (WOC) Nurse or health care provider's recommendations and the directions from the product manufacturers. If you have questions, problems with leakage, or skin problems around the stoma, contact your WOC Nurse or your health care provider.

Additional Tips from My Healthcare Provider:

* (Material adapted from the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society – "Basic Ostomy Skin Care: A Guide for Patients and Health Care Providers")