

When will the stoma nurses visit?

The stoma nurses will have already arranged to see you.

Skin care

Your skin around your stoma needs to be kept clean using warm water and then dried well. The template should be the shape of your stoma. Any variations may cause the bag to leak. If you have any problems with the skin around your stoma, please contact the stoma nurses and arrange to see them as soon as possible.

Diet

Your diet sheet is a guideline. The aim is that you will be eating a normal diet within a few weeks as your bowel adapts. Your stoma may work a little or a lot depending on the food and drinks you have, and when you eat your meals.

- Chew your food well
- To begin with have small, frequent snacks
- Beetroot or coloured drinks may affect the colour of your stoma output
- Drink plenty of fluids, at least 2 litres a day. Remember complan, soup, ice cream, jelly and custard are fluids
- Introduce new foods gradually.

Problems that may occur due to diet:

- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Watery diarrhoea
- Constipation (for colostomies)
- Blockages (for ileostomies).

Extra information for patients with an ileostomy

- You will need to have extra salt. This may be up to one teaspoon extra per day
- You can become dehydrated more easily with symptoms of dizziness and tiredness. Increased thirst and passing small volumes of dark urine are all early signs – it is REALLY important to increase your fluid intake 2-3 litres per day.
- You may be taking loperamide capsules to help prevent fluid loss and to thicken the output....take as directed. We are aiming for your motion to have the consistency of thick porridge.

Electrolyte drinks (gastrolyte/enerlyte) may be needed in the first few weeks after surgery and also in warmer weather and after physical exercise.

Pain relief

After major surgery it is not unusual to have mild discomfort and/or wind pains. Take your usual pain medication following the instructions on the packet.

Any form of pain tablet can be constipating. If you have a colostomy eating a piece of fruit each day and drinking plenty of fluids will help.

Abdominal cramps

- May be due to something you have eaten. They may go within a few minutes or hours
- Cramps may mean a bowel blockage
- Partial blockage will cause very liquid output
- Full blockage results in no output in bag
- Blockages may cause bloating, nausea and/or vomiting
- If you have severe and persistent abdominal cramps, together with vomiting, seek urgent

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medical help.

Helping to prevent Hernias

To help prevent hernias it is important not to lift after surgery. We advise not to lift anything more than a jug of water for at least 2 months after your surgery.

Rectal Discharge

If you still have a rectum it may continue to produce mucous with or without faecal matter. This is ok. If this discharge becomes offensive smelling or bright red blood please contact your stoma nurse or doctor.

When can I drive?

We advise that you wait for a few weeks (and check with your insurance company) before you start to drive again.

Supplies

The stoma nurse will arrange the supply of your bags. Stoma supplies are funded by the Ministry of Health and we have to follow their guidelines for the amount supplied.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

You may wish to make contact with your family doctor (GP) or practice nurse and let them know you are home again.

You will have a follow up appointment with your surgeon in 2-4 weeks' time but your own doctor will be pleased to know how you are before this.

I still have some concerns

Write a list of any concerns or worries that you have as it is easy to forget things. Discuss these with the stoma nurse at your next visit.

Contacting the Stoma Nurse

Contact the stoma nurse if you have any questions or concerns regarding the above.

If you need to speak to the stoma nurses they can be contacted by phoning (04) 918 6375 during office hours 8 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holidays).

If they are not able to answer the phone please leave a message on the answer machine. The nurses will get back to you as soon as possible. Alternatively you can email the stoma nurses on stomanurses@ccdhb.org.nz

If your call is urgent please phone Wellington Regional Hospital on (04) 3855 999. During **normal working hours** ask the hospital operator to contact the stoma nurses. **Afterhours** ask the hospital operator to contact the district nurse on call. Give the hospital operator your contact details and the district nurse will phone you.

Contact us

If you wish to contact a stoma nurse phone:
(04) 918 6375 8am – 4.30pm

Monday – Friday (excluding Public Holidays)

After hours phone:

Kapiti: (04) 903 0224

Kenepuru: (04) 918 2011

Wellington: (04) 806 2556

Essential phone calls only over weekends and evenings