

Speak Up
About Your
Ostomy Care!

OSTOMY AND CONTINENT DIVERSION PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS¹

YOU MATTER! KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT FOR QUALITY CARE!

*To ensure person-centered quality ostomy and continent diversion care,
the patient will be involved in all phases of the surgical experience:*



PREOPERATIVE CARE THAT INCLUDES:

- Preoperative stoma site marked by a certified healthcare professional following the standards of care established by the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society with the American Society of Colon & Rectal Surgeons and the American Urological Association
- Explanation of the surgical procedure and the rationale for surgery
- Education provided on living with an ostomy/continent diversion and self-care post discharge
- Information about the impact of surgery on daily activities including adapting physically and emotionally and lifestyle changes such as clothing choices, exercise, diet and sexuality
- The opportunity to talk with someone who has been through ostomy or continent diversion surgery
- The opportunity to discuss the emotional impact of surgery
- Counseling, care and educational instruction in a language and at a level of understanding suitable for the patient. Communication will be culturally sensitive and delivered in a dignified manner



OPERATIVE CARE THAT INCLUDES:

- A stoma that can be fit with a reliable pouching system
- A stoma that is well-positioned for the patient's unique body shape and medical condition



POSTOPERATIVE CARE THAT INCLUDES:

- Individual instruction in ostomy care, including patient return demonstration of emptying and changing pouch
- Ways to troubleshoot difficulties with basic skin and stoma issues, including skin irritation, stoma blockage, hernia, and prolapse
- Dietary guidelines and strategies to prevent dehydration given both verbally and in a written format
- Information on the variety of product choices available from manufacturers
- Information about the supply ordering process
- Resources for obtaining supplies specific to patient circumstances (e.g., uninsured/underinsured)
- Information about manufacturers' post-discharge support programs
- Information about organizations that support and advocate for patients living with an ostomy or continent diversion such as United Ostomy Associations of America and their Affiliated Support Groups
- Providing the most current educational materials based on ostomy type



DURING THE LIFESPAN OF THE OSTOMY/CONTINENT DIVERSION, ACCESS TO ONGOING CARE AND SUPPORT THAT INCLUDES:

- Healthcare professionals with knowledge specific to the care of an ostomy/continent diversion in all health care settings, including telemedicine
- Re-evaluation of ostomy management and supplies following changes in medical condition, aging and social/economic status
- Ongoing emotional and social support
- Specific and individualized ostomy supplies chosen in consultation with a health care professional to achieve and maintain a reliable fitting pouching system

***Counseling, care, and educational instruction are ideally provided by
a certified healthcare professional that specializes in ostomy care.***

(Disclaimer: These components of ostomy care may be limited or compromised due to instances when surgery is emergent.)



1 The components of care have been validated here: Burgess-Stocks, Joanna; Gleba, Jeanine; Lawrence, Kathleen; Mueller, Susan. Ostomy and Continent Diversion Patient Bill of Rights: Research Validation of Standards of Care. Journal of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing 49(3):p 251-260, May/June 2022. | DOI: 10.1097/WON.0000000000000876

APPROVED BY: UOAA Medical Advisory Board 05/10/2025
©2021 UOAA. Revised 2025. All Rights Reserved.