

Personalising waste management

Cancer, digestive diseases, birth defects, even traffic accidents – there are many reasons why you might need to have a portion of your digestive system removed. Ostomy surgery creates a small opening in your abdomen through which toxic bodily waste can be collected in a colostomy bag. This does the job of the missing section of your digestive tract. Surgery has saved your life but good ostomy care is now essential for you to stay healthy and to lead a comfortable life.

Around 700,000 people in the European Union (EU) have such an ostomy, an artificial opening in the abdomen to allow for the elimination of waste. The majority of ostomies are permanent and require care to minimise the risk of infection, hospitalisation and even death¹. Ostomy surgery saves lives and quality after-care allows people to continue playing an active role in their families, communities and the workplace.

Still, ostomies are prone to complications because exposure to bodily waste can irritate the skin and cause infection². Inadequate ostomy care is a significant burden for people affected and for the healthcare system. Around one third of patients who have colon surgery (colostomy) and up to two thirds of patients who have urinary system surgery (urostomy) and small intestine surgery (ileostomy) are affected by skin complications³.

Patients often suffer from skin problems in silence because of the stigma that surrounds ostomy care – few people want to discuss digestion, bodily waste or skin disorders. One study has shown that only 38% of patients diagnosed with a skin disorder recognised that they had a medical problem, and more than 80% of patients with skin disorders did not seek professional healthcare³.

Good ostomy care reduces healthcare spending as a result of complications. The French health system spends around €25.4 million per year dealing with skin complications in ostomy patients⁴. This can be reduced with a little innovation: modern ostomy products are personalised and fit individual patients and their body types. They help to reduce the risk of complications, and also reduce the need for hospital care by allowing services to be provided elsewhere, like at home⁴.

People who need ostomy surgery often require care for the rest of their lives. This is why they value tailored ostomy bags that are more personalised, fit properly and do not irritate their skin. It provides a better quality-of-life and allows patients to live their lives normally and in dignity.

Getting ostomy care right is good for patients; good for everyone.

Medtech: value for people

- Provides life-saving products for patients who require ostomy surgery¹
- Develops tailored ostomy bags and skin barriers to suit patients' needs⁵
- Supports community-delivered services for the convenience of patients
- Ensures a better quality-of-life for patients

Medtech: value for governments

- Keeps people healthy and active in society and the workplace
- Facilitates community care and reduces burden on hospitals⁴
- Delivers value through innovation and supports high-quality jobs in Europe

Medtech: value for regulators

- Creates products tailored to patients⁵
- Reduces skin complications caused by bodily waste⁵
- Provides a safe and effective means of removing bodily waste
- Reduces risk of infection, hospitalisation and mortality associated with poor ostomy

Medtech: value for payers

- Fewer hospitalisations due to skin infections⁴
- Community care shifts burden away from hospital sector
- Allows patients to continue working after ostomy surgery thereby contributing to the economy



NOTES

1) Eucomed Ostomy Market Industry Survey, May 2011.

2) Herlufsen P, Olsen AG, Calsen B, Nybaek H, Karlsmark T, Laursen TN, Jemec GBE. Study of peristomal skin disorders in patients with permanent stomas. *British Journal of Nursing*, 2006, Vol. 15, No 16.

3) Bosio G, et al. A Proposal for Classifying Peristomal Skin Disorders: Results of a Multicenter Observational Study. *OstomyWound Management* 2007; 53(9): 38-43.

4) Meisner S, Lehur P-A, Moran B, Martin L, Jemec GBE (2012). Peristomal Skin Complications are Common, Expensive, and Difficult to Manage: A Population Based Cost Modeling Study. *PLoS ONE* 7(5): e37813.

5) Lindholm E, Persson E, Carlson E, Hallen AM, Fingren J, Berndtsson I. Ostomy- Related Complications After Emergent Abdominal Surgery. *Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society* (2013); 40(6): 603 – 610.