What Ostomates Wish They Had Known

Fourteen years of conversations with ostomates, in ten plain truths

1. **The pouch you went home with isn't your only option.**
   It is often the one the hospital had on hand. If it keeps leaking, ask your nurse about other shapes and sizes, and ask pouch makers for samples to try.

2. **More adhesive isn't a better seal.**
   Extra paste, powder and spray can keep a wafer from sticking. The right fit does what more product can't.

3. **Don't judge your future by your first few weeks.**
   The first change can take an hour. With practice, it takes minutes.

4. **Your stoma changes size, especially early on.**
   Re-measure often in the first 6 to 8 weeks so the opening keeps fitting.

5. **Change the pouch before you eat.**
   Output is less likely during the change, so many people plan changes before a meal.

6. **Stoma noise has reasons, and most have answers.**
   Eating slowly, small regular meals, fewer fizzy drinks and gentle pressure over the stoma all help.

7. **Support groups exist, often at the hospital where you had surgery.**
   Many people find comfort in each other. UOAA's support group finder lists local and online groups.

8. **Closeness can return.**
   Intimacy comes back at your own pace, and many couples find their way together.

9. **Write down every product number.**
   Keep two weeks of supplies on hand, and a reorder becomes one call.

10. **Every stage brings something new, and that is normal.**
    Noise, travel, intimacy, a changing body: each one has answers from people who have been there.

Go one step deeper with My Ostomy Blueprint

A personal plan written from your own story. Scan the code or visit **stomastifler.com/my-ostomy-blueprint**

Educational information only, not medical advice. Your ostomy nurse knows your situation best.

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