

Your Urostomy

The urinary system

The air you breathe and the food you eat provide energy for your cells to do their jobs. As the cells use food and oxygen to work, they create waste. This waste is passed from your cells into your blood. Your blood carries this waste to the kidneys. In addition to waste, your blood carries things your body needs (like oxygen, water, salt and sugar). The kidneys act as filters. They help the body keep the things it needs and get rid of the things it does not need (like waste). While in the kidneys, waste is turned into a liquid (urine). From your kidneys, urine drains into your bladder. It is stored in the bladder until your body is ready to release it.

Why a urostomy?

Because of a disease, birth defect or damage to your bladder, it no longer works the way it should. To allow your body to get rid of urine, a surgically created opening, called a urostomy, is made to allow urine to bypass the bladder.

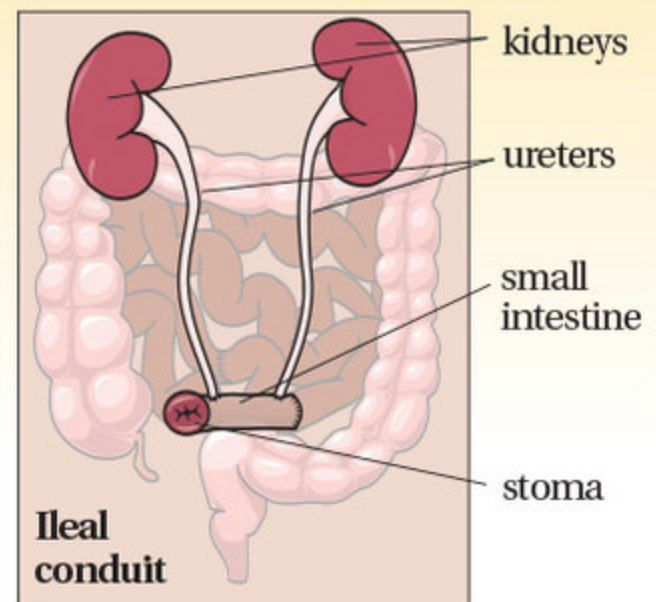
The opening on your belly is called a stoma. Urine will pass out of your body through the stoma and into a pouch.

Different types of urostomies

There are several different types of urostomies. But the two main types are:

- **Ileal conduit**—a short part of the small intestine is removed and used to let urine flow out of your body.
- **Colon conduit**—a short part of the large intestine is removed and used to let urine flow out of your body.

Your doctor or WOC (Wound Ostomy Continence) nurse can tell you more about the type of urostomy you have.



Learning About Your Urostomy

Everyday with your urostomy

A urostomy does not have a sphincter muscle, so you have no control over when you urinate. You wear a pouch that will collect the urine as it leaves your body.

A skin barrier wafer is used to attach the pouch over your stoma. The wafer also helps protect the skin around your stoma, called the peristomal skin. It helps keep your skin from being irritated by urine. Each time you change your pouch, check your skin for signs of skin irritation.

Having a urostomy may be hard at first. But, your urostomy can help you live a long, healthy and more active life. The sooner you learn how to care for your urostomy, the better you will feel about yourself. With each day your urostomy will be easier to manage.



Taking care of your urostomy

Taking care of your urostomy means learning to:

- empty your pouch
- change your pouch
- eat a healthy diet
- take care of the skin around your stoma

