

4. Urostomy Bags 101: Styles, Brands, and How to Choose

[00:00:01] Leaks happen, but life doesn't have to stop and neither do we.

[00:00:07] Hello and welcome back to Leaks, laughs, and Life with Urostomy, the podcast that proves bladder less living comes with challenges, a surprising amount of comedy, and the chance to find your zest for life again.

[00:00:20] I am Dawn, your guide through the ups and downs and occasional Oh no moments of urostomy life. I share lessons learned from my own urostomy journey and from my husband Alex's Neobladder journey because bladder free living comes in many forms. Everything from leak disasters to travel hacks, from emotional hurdles to unexpected victories.

[00:00:42] This show is a safe place to laugh, learn, and feel a little less alone.

[00:00:48] Each episode brings real talk, practical advice, heartfelt encouragement on everything from surgery, prep and supplies to relationships, self-confidence and [00:01:00] reclaiming joy, you're not alone in this.

[00:01:03] Life after bladder removal can be meaningful, messy, and sometimes hilarious. If you're navigating life without a bladder or supporting someone who is. Let's walk this path together.

[00:01:15] Today we'll be discussing Urostomy bags 101: styles, brands, and how to choose and all the things that go with them. So grab a cup of coffee or tea, or better yet, a big glass of water and settle in. This is a long one. Before I begin, I want to encourage you to see this as a journey to building something amazing, your new life.

[00:01:36] Look at it as an exploration or an expedition. You're looking for pieces and parts to a puzzle that will assist you in building your new normal. Some pieces will be helpful, others may not be. This is a journey and it may take some time, but in the end it will be amazing.

[00:01:55] Keeping a positive attitude is incredibly helpful. And don't forget to add in the [00:02:00] laughs when things do become frustrating, it will lighten your load.

[00:02:04] This episode will especially be helpful for new Urostomates, people preparing for surgery or anyone feeling unsure about their current pouching system.

[00:02:13] It is also a great refresher if you've been using the same setup for a long time and are curious about other options.

[00:02:20] I will do my best to describe the differences between the types and styles of urostomy pouches and the supplies that accompany them.

[00:02:29] Choosing a urostomy pouch. Can feel overwhelming at first.

[00:02:33] One piece, two piece, convex, flat brand names, accessories, opinions from everyone and their neighbor. It's a lot.

[00:02:40] In this episode, I break it all down in a practical, no-nonsense way so you can understand what your options are and how to choose what works for you.

[00:02:50] This is a true deep dive. I will walk you through the main urostomy pouching styles, explain why they exist, who they tend to work for best, and what to [00:03:00] consider when deciding which system to try. If you are new to life with a urostomy, my hope is that this episode will help you feel more confident and less intimidated. If you have been living with one for a while, you might still pick up a few helpful tips or ideas you've not yet considered.

[00:03:18] Okay, let's begin.

[00:03:21] Let me share with you a little bit about my exploration. It took me over four months to find my favorite pouching system. My stomas output is very forceful at times, and all of the one piece systems I tried did not work.

[00:03:38] Two to six hours after a pouch change. I had leaks when I was at work, some at 2:00 AM in the morning and some when I was just sitting on the couch.

[00:03:49] When I came home from the hospital, I was sent home with a Hollister two-piece system, and after trying some of the one-piece systems, I ended up going back to [00:04:00] trying some of the two piece systems.

[00:04:03] They all worked, but some were bulkier than others. Some prevented me from bending over comfortably. I had a difficult time finding pouches that

were short enough for my body. Most would hang down to the middle of my thigh. I didn't like how the drain spout hung down.

[00:04:18] And then came my stoma's soulmate, aAAAAHHHH, like the heavens opening up!

[00:04:24] Coloplast's SenSura Mio Flex. They have an eight inch bag. Soft, flexible wafer that allowed me to bend, soft cloth on both sides and the drain spout tucks up into the bag. Absolute game changer for me.

[00:04:43] Let's begin your journey now.

[00:04:45] Your ostomy nurse is going to refer you to a program or enroll you in programs where you can receive product samples and ongoing support from the following manufacturers: Coloplast Care program, Convatech Me Plus [00:05:00] Program, and Hollister Secure Start Program. These are the three major brands we'll be discussing today, and each has its own personality.

[00:05:10] I encourage you to order free samples from each of the three companies and try different styles and different lengths. I believe you can only order one or two samples at a time from each company, but I know I ordered several times from a couple of different companies to narrow down what worked best for me.

[00:05:28] I had amazing customer service representatives who followed up with me about what worked and what didn't, and then would recommend something different.

[00:05:38] Don't do what I did though, I was very optimistic about a sample I had received. It looked amazing, felt amazing, and I immediately had my doctor send it a prescription for pouches, but there was a minor technicality. I hadn't tried it yet, and it was a single one piece pouch. [00:06:00] And they didn't work. So not only did I end up with a surplus of them, but I also wasn't able to order ones that were working for me for another month.

[00:06:11] So make sure you try the samples and then order what works for you. You are allowed to switch systems. You are allowed to try new things, and you are allowed to ask for samples and take your time figuring this out. The brands want to help you succeed and you deserve a system that supports your life, not complicates it.

[00:06:34] Every brand has its own vibe and you will absolutely have a favorite eventually. Do not settle for something that doesn't make you jump for joy. Keep trying until you find the one you're Stoma's Soulmate, as I call it.

[00:06:49] Here are the brands, and a little bit about the personalities.

[00:06:53] This is beginning to sound a little bit like a dating game.

[00:06:58] Hollister: comfort [00:07:00] forward, soft materials, easy drainage, and great beginner friendly options.

[00:07:07] Coloplast: sleek, high quality feel, skin friendly adhesives, fancy technology vibes, tuckable, drain spouts on some of their bags. Excellent for active or sensitive users. Soft water resistant material. I can vouch that these stay on hot springs and while swimming.

[00:07:28] ConvaTec: is reliable, secure, very workhorse energy and has adhesives that work well for tricky skin.

[00:07:39] Unfortunately, these manufacturers do not allow you to order directly from them because they do not deal with the insurance, however. You can call and order free samples from each of them, and they're very helpful.

[00:07:51] Something a couple of these manufacturers do, which I thought was really nice, is send out a urostomy toolkit.

[00:07:59] It is a small [00:08:00] travel bag with extra supplies and scissors to carry with you when you're out and about for those "ah, crap" moments. I received a travel bag from both Hollister and ConvaTec. One lives in my car and another lives in my backpack for work, and when I'm going to be some distance away from my car, like when I'm hiking or shopping, you know, et cetera.

[00:08:27] When you are ready to order a new system, you will be ordering from a medical supply distribution center that carries all of these products. Note, keep all packaging or write down the manufacturer's name, item numbers and descriptions before you use anything, and then make notes about what you like and what you don't like, after using them.

[00:08:53] After you've tried your free samples, and if you find one you'd like to use for a longer period of time, you'll then [00:09:00] call your doctor and provide the item numbers for the pouches, wafers, nighttime bags, leg bags,

adhesive and adhesive removers, barrier strips and barrier rings if the system uses them.

[00:09:14] This is a long list and you'll need to know the numbers off of all of the ones you choose. Everything must be written as a prescription from your doctor in order for it to be ordered. The doctor's office will then fax the order to your medical supply company.

[00:09:32] Insurance will approve it, and then it will ship to you.

[00:09:36] Ordering a brand new system can take up to 14 days for approval and delivery. So be sure you plan ahead to avoid running out of supplies.

[00:09:47] Remember, customer service representatives have not lived through this experience with a urostomy. They work there but they don't have all the answers.

[00:09:57] Once you have an established order, the medical [00:10:00] supplier will usually call monthly. They're going to ask you how many days of supplies you have on hand. This was very confusing to me because I didn't know how many days I had left on hand. What they're asking for is actually how many pouches do you have left?

[00:10:21] If you have more than 10, actually, if you have 10 or more, they will not ship to you. They will delay your order, and this is normal. Delivery usually takes anywhere from seven to 10 days to arrive.

[00:10:38] Once you've found a system that works for you, you can order online. Medical supply websites can be very overwhelming and often they don't explain what pieces work together. Also note that urostomy supplies are listed under the ostomy section. Not the urinary. It makes no sense, but here we are.[00:11:00]

[00:11:01] And another "note-to-self" pay attention to item counts. For instance, pouches may come in packs of 10. Your wafers or barriers as they call them, may come in packs of five or 10.

[00:11:16] Adhesive wipes and skin protectants come in a box, but sometimes they want an each count instead of a box count, but they don't tell you that information. I learned this because when I ordered adhesive wipes, I put in one, because it said box. Thinking, I was ordering one box. I received one packet. The next time I ordered 25, because I wasn't sure how many came in a box,

'cause I had thrown the box away and I received 25 packets in a box that was marked 50 to a box.

[00:11:50] So, the next time of course, I ordered 50 and I got the whole box, go figure.

[00:11:55] Okay, now let's go over one-piece versus [00:12:00] two-piece urostomy pouches.

[00:12:02] For the ease of creating less confusion, I will be using the term pouch for the urostomy bag just because there are other types of bags and it may get too confusing down the road. And the same goes for the wafers, also known as skin barriers or barriers. I will be referring to them as wafers.

[00:12:23] There are two main systems and each person develops strong opinions about which one they prefer to use. The two types are a one-piece and two-piece urostomy system.

[00:12:34] For the ease of creating less confusion, I will be using the term "pouch" for the urostomy bag. Because there are other types of bags and it may get too confusing down the road.

[00:12:47] And the same goes for the wafers, also known as skin barriers or barriers. I will be referring to them as wafers.

[00:12:56] One piece systems, the wafer and pouch are [00:13:00] fused together and then are adhered to the skin with adhesive.

[00:13:04] The pros are: they're quick to apply, simple, and there's fewer steps. They're awesome for new users who just want things to work, often lower profile under clothes, and it doesn't have the hard plastic connector like some of the two piece systems.

[00:13:25] The cons are: if something fails, you must replace the whole thing. There's less flexibility with certain accessories. It can tug more on the skin during removal. You can't see your stoma if something doesn't feel right, unless it's a clear pouch.

[00:13:45] And this wisdom was earned the messy way, sometimes the pressure from the stoma output can be too strong for the pouching system, and you can have blowouts and they're not pretty.

[00:13:57] Okay. For the two piece systems with this [00:14:00] system, the pouch attaches to what's called a wafer. This wafer is adhered to the skin around the stoma with an adhesive. And then the pouch snaps or clicks onto the wafer. I personally prefer this method, but you need to try both and see which one suits you best.

[00:14:18] The pros of these are: these work great for when you have a doctor visit and they want to see your stoma if you have to have any tests done. They're great for beginners who need to see their stoma and to be able to take the pouch off to clean up the mucus from around the stoma. They're great for sensitive skin, or frequent issues, and they have more options for customizing.

[00:14:42] The cons are: they're slightly bulkier. There's more steps to apply them, sometimes a lot more. The SNAP systems can feel intimidating at first, especially if you don't hear all the clicks when assembling. Leaks to come [00:15:00] guaranteed from experience.

[00:15:03] It's harder to exercise while wearing the bulky plastic ring connectors. However, there is a system, like I said before, the one I use, that is soft and the pouch connects to the wafer by adhesive rather than clicking on.

[00:15:17] New Urostomates are generally sent home with a two piece system, and I'm finding out more and more that it is the Hollister two-piece system that they're sent home with. The two-piece systems are especially helpful. For having easy access to check your stoma because the top piece is removable and then can be put back on without having to redo the whole pouch system.

[00:15:43] I need to clarify an important misconception about wafers. With the two piece systems, you will need to change the wafers regularly, just like the pouch to help reduce the risk of infection and UTI's. There is no, "I'll change the pouch and not the wafer." It's [00:16:00] not a good habit to get into. You're just asking for a UTI.

[00:16:05] There are different styles of pouches and systems, so let's walk through the aisles of the urostomy pouch styles. There are so many types, too many types for me to even mention in just one episode, but we'll go over some of the popular ones, including options like clear versus opaque, different sizes and drainage styles.

[00:16:27] All right. Where to begin? There are a lot of factors to consider. Alright, let's start with the pouches themselves. All the pouches, of course, are

made from a plastic material. They are a strong material and don't puncture easily. Thank goodness.

[00:16:41] There are reasons for each style.

[00:16:43] With the completely clear ones you can see straight through the plastic of the pouch. These are great for the very beginning weeks, right after surgery. They allow you to keep an eye out for bleeding from the stoma. See what color your urine is so that you can [00:17:00] maintain proper hydration.

[00:17:02] You are able to see the skin around your stoma to see if there's any irritation and see how much mucus you are producing. These pouches tend to make a crinkling sound when you're emptying them in the bathroom or moving around so they're not very discreet.

[00:17:17] The next type of pouches have a clear plastic on the front, and then a cloth-like backing, which is less likely to stick to your abdomen or your leg when you are sweating. Some of these do crinkle a little bit when you move them, but not as bad as the other ones.

[00:17:32] Then there are the urostomy pouches that have fabric on both sides and you cannot see through them. These are nice because they won't stick to your abdomen or your leg as bad when you're sweating and you can't see through them. The bonus about those is that the fabric on them is water resistant or water repellent, whichever word you want to use, so you can swim or shower with them, and then they dry off very quickly.

[00:17:56] The cloth covered ones don't crinkle as much, so they're much more [00:18:00] discreet when you're in a public bathroom and are emptying them.

[00:18:04] There are different colors of pouches. Personally, I would recommend choosing your pouch more for the style rather than the color of them. But some are gray, some are a beige or light skin flesh tone. Some are grayish purple, perfect for darker skinned people, and some are a taupe color.

[00:18:22] As for the styles, there are long ones, skinny ones, short ones, fat ones, different strokes for different folks. Kinda sounds like a song from the sixties, doesn't it?

[00:18:33] Couple factors that play into choosing as well is your height, your weight, whether your tummy is round or flat. No judgment here! Whether you are a child, a teen, or an adult.

[00:18:49] From about an inch and a half above your stoma to the crease where your leg begins. Will determine how long your pouch should be. The length of the drain spout should also be a [00:19:00] determining factor in the measurement of your pouch, if the drain spout hangs down. Generally you should add about an inch to the length of the pouch.

[00:19:08] Adult pouches range from eight inches up to 10 and three quarter inches. That does not include the drain spout and kid sizes range from five to six inches. Also does not include the drain spout.

[00:19:22] Another factor is whether you want the pouch to hold a lot of urine or an average amount. Yet another factor to use in determining which pouch to use is how you prefer your pouches to be positioned when you're wearing them. You need to determine whether you like the drain spout hanging off to one side or the other, or hanging straight down.

[00:19:44] Once you factor in these elements, you are close to finding pouches that will work for you.

[00:19:50] Now for drain spouts, there are many options to choose from.

[00:19:56] However, the options for drain spouts the part that's used to drain the urine [00:20:00] from the pouch depends on the pouch you choose. Unfortunately, they don't offer a mix and match option for the pouches and drain spouts. You can either choose a pouch first and then you get the drain spout that comes with it or you can choose the drain spout and see which pouch you'd like to try.

[00:20:17] Every company and every pouch, they have different drain systems. There's a spouts that hang down. There are short spouts, some are longer. There are those that fold up into themselves. And then there's my favorite. It tucks up into the pouch and drops down to drain. The style is by Coloplast and it's in the Centura Mio style bags.

[00:20:40] Okay, now for wafers, also called skin barriers or barriers, like I said before, and I will just call them wafers and you'll understand in a minute why I'm doing this.

[00:20:53] In the beginning you will cut the center of the wafer to fit around your stoma. Later, after your stoma has stopped changing shape, [00:21:00] you'll be able to order the pre-cut wafers.

[00:21:03] How do you determine the size of your stoma and size to cut?

[00:21:07] Good question.

[00:21:09] In your box of pouches, there's a piece of paper included that has circles cut out, like a template. You will take this piece of paper and then you will place the circle that is closest to the size of your stoma, over your stoma. This is how you determine what size you'll need to cut the wafer to fit over your stoma.

[00:21:32] You want it to be no more than an eighth of an inch in diameter, larger than your stoma.

[00:21:38] You will then take the piece of paper off of your stoma and place it over the wafer on the plastic side with all the circles, and take a marker and mark the inside of that circle on the plastic, making sure it's centered before you mark it. And then you will cut around the mark on the wafer with rounded, rounded tip scissors.[00:22:00]

[00:22:00] There's a reason for that. I'll explain in a minute, and after cutting it, place it over your stoma to make sure it fits correctly.

[00:22:09] No one does this perfectly the first few times. Just be careful to undercut rather than overcut and do not use pointed scissors. The reason for this is there's a chance with those to overcut and it can cause leaks and issues down the road.

[00:22:25] For urostomy wafers, there's a few different shapes. There's the basic convex shape. Where the center of the wafer around the stoma dips in towards your abdomen, giving your stoma more room. When the second piece, the pouch is added to the system, typically used for stomas that stick out more and or are larger in size.

[00:22:48] The starfish looking wafer by Coloplast, which is called the Sensura Mio convex flip barrier. It's really cool looking. It is a convex [00:23:00] wafer. And when applying, it goes over the stoma and then you press it down onto the abdomen by pressing around the edges of it. It's supposed to give a bit more stability to the abdomen.

[00:23:11] I have not tried that one yet. I did get it as a sample. I just played with the wafer 'cause it was so cool. One of these days I may try it.

[00:23:21] There are flat wafers for those stomas that just peek out of the abdomen.

[00:23:26] Then there are the two piece wafers that allow for click on, twist on, or stick on style, two piece pouches that come in convex or flat.

[00:23:38] Different wafers will use different adhesion systems.

[00:23:41] For instance, Hollister uses what they call barrier rings and skin adhesive. The barrier ring is applied to the wafer and the adhesive is applied to the skin Before adhering the wafer to the abdomen. The barrier [00:24:00] ring goes around the center of the wafer where the stoma sticks through and there is a definite technique to using them. The ring will stretch and mold to your liking, but for the ring to work properly, you will need to stretch it slightly. Place the hole over the ring on the wafer, on the backside. Now here comes the tricky part. You need to have no more than an eighth of an inch hanging over the edge of the wafer's middle, all the way around.

[00:24:36] So when you turn the wafer over and look at it, if there's any more than an eighth of an inch sticking out, you need to make sure that it's less than that. So you have to pinch it back or squeeze it, slide it back with your fingers. Any less than that, you will have leaks. Any more than that, and it will squeeze your stoma and cause a backup and you don't want that.

[00:24:58] The barrier ring will [00:25:00] expand. So, this helps seal up the area around the stoma and it protects your skin from getting burned by the urine.

[00:25:07] Several companies or styles don't use the barrier rings. And I found this out when I tried to use a barrier ring with a style that doesn't use the barrier rings. It made a huge mess and I couldn't figure out what I was doing wrong.

[00:25:22] The pouch I use Coloplast SenSura Mio pouches. Do not use barrier rings on the wafer. It only uses adhesive for the adhesion on the abdomen. But what they do offer are barrier strips. Which are U-shaped strips to apply around the outside edges of the wafer after it's been applied to the abdomen to assist in stopping leaks. These were lifesavers for me. I love them. There are different shapes and styles of barrier strips that go with different systems, and I highly recommend using them [00:26:00] on the outside of the wafers. Because they make a huge difference.

[00:26:04] Next, we're going to cover nighttime systems and adapters that can make a big difference in your sleep and your peace of mind. Because your new plumbing is just that, plumbing that is designed to move fluids through, not hold and your pouches do expand. However, unless you're extremely light sleeper and can detect when a pouch needs emptying, you may wake it up laying in a puddle and it's not fun. And yes, I'm speaking from experience.

[00:26:30] If you don't use a nighttime bag, you could possibly be getting up anywhere between four and five times a night, depending on the size of your pouching system and how much you're in your body outputs at night.

[00:26:43] This is where the nighttime bag comes into play. It may very well be your best friend for sleep, and it's my favorite travel companion. We'll do talk about that more later because urostomy pouches tend to fill up so fast, especially if you're only able to use smaller ones like I do.[00:27:00]

[00:27:01] Nighttime bags were a life-changing element for me. Now, I can sleep all night long and such a game changer.

[00:27:10] Different pouches have different adapters for night bags, so that's one thing you'll need to be aware of right off the bat.

[00:27:17] Different bags use different hoses.

[00:27:19] There are the thick tubing, and then there are the anti kink hoses that are thinner and longer. Not all tubing is interchangeable. Certain pouches use certain adapters that only work with one type of tubing or the other, not both. Something else to investigate while choosing a pouch and then choosing a nighttime bag.

[00:27:41] This is a tricky one to explain. If the pouch and the tubing are not aligned properly, the pouch can twist or the hose can kink. It causes them not to drain properly and back up. You must make sure that the adapter from the pouch and the hose are lying flat. [00:28:00] Check this while standing up, and then again, when you lay down. You can twist each of them holding onto one and then holding onto the other and twist in the opposite direction to even them out. You'll just have to play around with them to figure out a system for yourself. 'cause there's nothing more uncomfortable than a pouch that is backed up and not flowing, and you don't want the pouch to burst. It's just a tad messy at 2:00 AM.

[00:28:27] Also, when you're sleeping, you need to make sure that you allow the hose to lay flat and flow. Don't have it go up on a pillow or up on your leg and over have it go underneath so that it flows easily.

[00:28:44] When I first came home, I had a big bag with the larger tube and the tubing was shorter.

[00:28:50] I slept with it, hanging off the side of my bed, and it was awkward. It would kink if I wasn't careful, and I woke up a lot until I became more familiar [00:29:00] with how to maneuver it.

[00:29:02] Later, when I discovered the Coloplast system, it also had a large bag and a longer slimmer hose. I learned that with the longer slimmer hose, instead of having the pouching system on the side of the bed, it would reach down to the foot of the bed hanging on my footboard, allowing the hose to go between my legs down to the bottom of the bed, which allowed me to sleep on my sides a little bit easier. And maneuvering around it was much easier. I can't have the covers or sheets tucked in, but this works much better for me this way.

[00:29:37] And there's something to keep in mind. I'm five five, so running the hose between your legs down to the foot of the bed, if you're over that height, it may not work for you. I'm just saying. You may still have to sleep with it on the side of the bed.

[00:29:50] This is a note to self. Double check that the bottom of the nighttime bag, the drain part. Make sure it's closed all the way before [00:30:00] attaching it to your pouch. Just saying it makes a huge mess if you don't happen to get it all the way closed or if it happens to get bumped open. And when it's hanging off the bed, you may want to put the nighttime bag hanging off the bed with a small trash can or bucket under it. Or have it in the bucket just to avoid the mishap of the bag leaking. I learned the hard way and it was yucky. And make sure you do this, especially when you're in a hotel.

[00:30:30] There's another reason I love the nighttime bags. You can use them for traveling, whether you're in a car or flying on a plane. It makes life so much easier. You just make sure you have to stretch your legs occasionally.

[00:30:46] Working from home, I can hook up to my bag and work uninterrupted for hours or movies, I can sit there and not have to get up and go to the bathroom.

[00:30:58] The next thing is leg bags.[00:31:00]

[00:31:00] These are designed to allow you more urine storage. During the day. They hook up to your pouch and then you're supposed to strap it around your leg. And the urine gets stored there.

[00:31:11] Whoever designed these has never worn them. I swear.

[00:31:15] I have a love-hate relationship with these. Because my pouch is so small and is located lower on my abdomen, occasionally I need to use the smallest leg bag they have, which is a medium. The connectors are not flexible. In fact, they're very rigid, so the bag ends up being down around my middle thigh and ends just below my knee.

[00:31:39] It's very awkward to walk. I have to wear wide-legged pants or a skirt or dress in order for it to not to create a huge bulge on my leg. And there's one brand that has elastic bands. The skinny ones, they cut into my legs. The other brand has Velcro straps. They also cut into my leg.

[00:31:58] I will have to say, [00:32:00] although they are not the least bit comfortable and are not fashionable either. They do serve their purpose when absolutely necessary. They come in handy when you do need just a little bit more fluid storage, but don't wanna parade around a public with a nighttime bag.

[00:32:15] Which I've done. I've put it in a little natural grocers little bag and walked around with that because I needed extra storage.

[00:32:27] Okay, let's go to the belts. The belts that come with your pouching system are designed to hook on the little tabs that are on the wafer. They have little loops in them and you can connect these belts to them.

[00:32:43] They're tiny stretchy belts that clip on there, and they do lend some support. And although these are not my favorites, they are worth using right after surgery or right after a pouch change in order to support your pouch.

[00:32:59] For the first [00:33:00] few months, you will not be able to wear anything tight around your abdomen. And these do lend some support and they are, "oh, so sexy," NOT!

[00:33:09] There are also some thicker, more secure belts you can order, and some of these are more for men 'cause they're a little bit bulkier. But there is a website called ostomy secrets.com, O-S-T-O-M-Y-S-E-C-R-E-T-S.com. They

also have different kinds of clothing. Some undergarments for ladies that are like lacey wraps that are really pretty.

[00:33:42] There's also swimwear options and shorts. So something to check out.

[00:33:49] I tried one and found it too bulky for my liking, but it does have a nice feature where you can put your pouch inside the holder and it is leak proof, or will at least contain any [00:34:00] urine that might leak out of the pouch. So if it comes out from under the wafer, it's not gonna help.

[00:34:06] My daughter gave me one for Christmas that she found on Amazon, and it was actually for an ostomy, but it does work well with my urostomy. It does lend amazing support during the day when I'm working out and walking. And it's not very bulky under clothes. It's a little bit like a silky texture.

[00:34:25] Okay, now for the barrier rings and barrier strips.

[00:34:30] The barrier ring, like I described earlier, is a moldable material placed around the stoma to prevent leaks.

[00:34:36] Think of them like a sealant that makes everything work better. Please note these are extremely necessary for some pouch systems. And then there are some that do not use them, and unfortunately when you ask the customer service people, they may or may not know which ones need them or which ones don't. You'll just have to try them.

[00:34:56] There's lots of options with the barrier rings. There's [00:35:00] thin ones, thick ones, and extra thick ones.

[00:35:03] Then there are the barrier strips. These are additional strips, like I said, that adhere to the outside edges of the wafer after it's in place, there are different shapes, different styles, different widths, different lengths, and they are your second line of defense against leaks. They are a game changer.

[00:35:19] I had no idea what they were when they came in my kit. I had no clue and I couldn't figure out what they were for. And then once I discovered how to use them properly, life was so much better.

[00:35:32] Okay for adhesive wipes. My favorite is from a company called Medline. They're no sting or very little sting when you're using them. And these wipes provide a thin adhesive barrier that's designed to protect your skin around

the stoma area and to assist waivers, which also have adhesives to form a better bond to your skin.

[00:35:57] Some brands leave a tacky finish, some [00:36:00] dry, completely smooth. And you'll discover your favorite by trial and error, mostly by error, because some won't work on your skin and others will. I'm not sure why this happens, but it's definitely true.

[00:36:12] Adhesive remover. They come in wipes or spray, and this is your skin's best friend because it stops you from peeling your waivers off like you're waxing your abdomen. Otherwise, you might be swearing like a sailor from behind that bathroom door.

[00:36:27] Well Friends. I think we've covered a little more than the basics. I hope this has helped you in your discovery to finding the one pouching system that is your stoma's soulmate.

[00:36:39] Thank you so much for listening to Leaks, Laughs, and Life with Urostomy. I hope this episode gave you a few insights, maybe a laugh or two, and reminded you that you're not alone in this journey.

[00:36:50] If you found it helpful, please subscribe so you don't miss an episode and share it with someone who might need to hear it. You'll find more information, tips and tricks, and [00:37:00] the show notes on my website@leakslaughslife.com.

[00:37:05] In the next episode. We're going to get fashionable. We'll explore the types of clothing that are most beneficial at the beginning of your journey, and up to about month six or seven.

[00:37:17] Until then, my friend, take care of yourself. Be gentle with your body, and remember, laughter is life's best medicine.