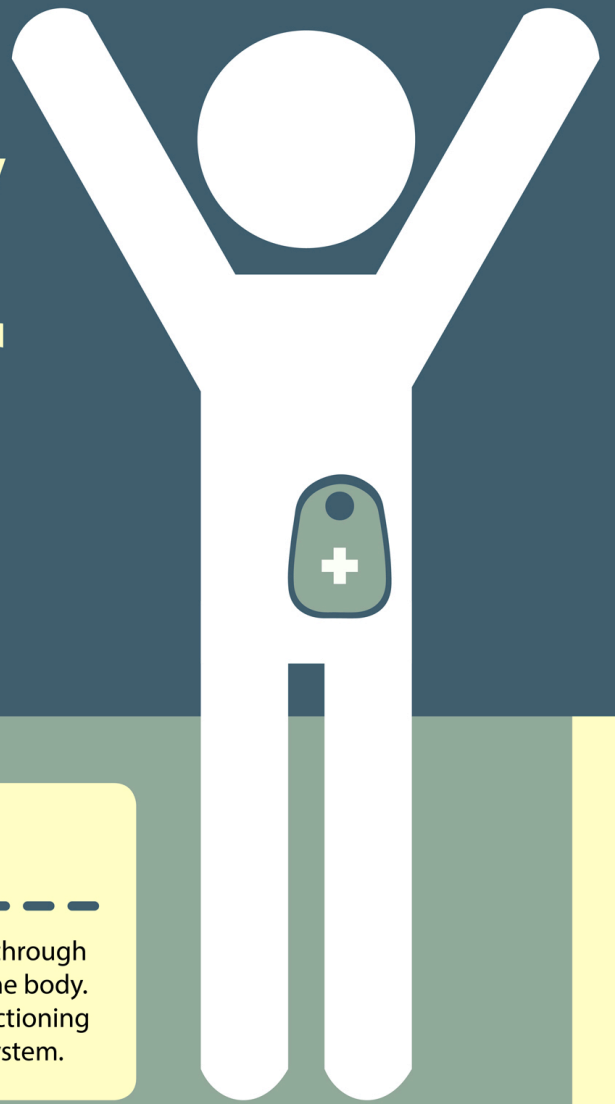


# The Ultimate Ostomy Explainer

Answering your friends' frequently-asked questions, so *you* don't have to!



1

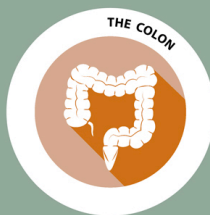
## What is an ostomy?



An ostomy is an opening in the abdomen — created through surgery — that connects an organ to the outside of the body. Its purpose is to divert body waste away from malfunctioning or non-functioning parts of the digestive or urinary system.

2

Are there different types?



A **colostomy** connects the colon to the outside of the body, diverting stool from diseased or damaged sections of the digestive tract.



An **ileostomy** connects the small intestine to the outside of the body. As part of this surgery, the colon and rectum are often removed.



A **urostomy** diverts urine from a diseased or damaged section of the urinary tract. With this surgery, the bladder is sometimes removed.

The **3 most common types** of ostomy are ▲

{ Some ostomies are temporary. }  
{ Some ostomies are permanent. }

3

## What types of illnesses or injuries lead to ostomy surgery?

### Common reasons for colostomy

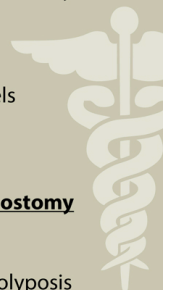
- Diverticulitis
- Crohn's disease
- Cancer of the bowels
- Obstruction of the bowels
- Trauma & injury
- Bowel incontinence

### Common Reasons for ileostomy

- Crohn's disease
- Ulcerative colitis
- Familial adenomatous polyposis
- Total colonic Hirschsprung's disease
- Colorectal cancer

### Common Reasons for urostomy

- Bladder cancer
- Spinal cord injuries
- Malfunction of the bladder
- Birth defects
- Spina Bifida





## Key ostomy terms:



### os-to-mate

noun \äs-tə-mät\  
An individual who has undergone an ostomy

### sto-ma

noun \stō-mə\  
An artificial opening, especially in the abdominal wall, made in surgical procedures

from Merriam-Webster

## Some key ostomy numbers:



American surgeons create an estimated **120,000 new stomas** each and every year.

From the American Society of Colon & Rectal Surgeons

## How does an ostomate go to the bathroom?



People with ostomies have to urinate or defecate from their stomas into a disposable pouch that rests on the outside of their bodies. The “bags” look similar to this

Technology has come so far, though, that ostomy appliances are rarely noticeable to other people.

Depending on what type of pouch system an ostomate uses, the pouches are either drained into a toilet, rinsed, then reused for one or two days, **or** they are disposed of once filled.

Some ostomates have control of their output, others do not.

## What type of limitations does an ostomate have?



**Not many.** The majority of ostomates live happy, productive, active lives like anyone else. Most of the time, you wouldn't even know a person was an ostomate, unless they told you so.

Ostomates run marathons. Ostomates swim. Ostomates climb mountains. Ostomates have sex. Ostomates travel. Ostomates SCUBA dive. Ostomates have kids. Ostomates act. Ostomates model fashionable clothes. **Ostomates do just about anything you can imagine.**

They do have a few minor restrictions on diet and specific types of strenuous or high-impact activity, but, other than that ...

***the sky is the limit.***



This infographic was created, with love and respect, by **Finnegan Medical Supply**. It was inspired by our ostomy patients. We are in awe of them and the countless others around the world who are **living their best lives** — with dignity, passion, and courage.

**#GetYourBellyOut**