

Colostomy, Ileostomy, and Ureterostomy

An **ostomy** is an operation to create an opening from an area inside the body to the outside. It may be done due to bowel disease, cancer, or trauma. In a resident with an ostomy, the end of the intestine is brought out of the body through an opening in the abdomen. This opening is called a **stoma**. Stool, or feces, are eliminated through the ostomy rather than through the anus. (When a ureter is opened to abdomen for urine to be eliminated it is called a **ureterostomy**.)

The terms “**colostomy**” and “**ileostomy**” tell what part of the intestine was removed and the type of stool that will be eliminated. In a colostomy, stool will generally be semi-solid. With an ileostomy, stool may be liquid. It may be irritating to the skin.

Residents who have had an ostomy wear a disposable bag. It fits over the stoma to collect the feces. The bag is attached to the skin by adhesive. A belt may also be used to secure it. Many people manage the ostomy appliance by themselves. If you are giving ostomy care, make sure the resident receives good skin care and hygiene. Empty and clean or replace the ostomy bag whenever stool is eliminated. Always wear gloves and wash hands carefully. Teach proper handwashing to residents with ostomies.

Many residents with ostomies feel they have lost control of a basic function. They may be embarrassed or angry. Be sensitive and supportive. Always provide privacy for ostomy care.