



UPMC

LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

# WOC Nursing Department

## Ostomy: Dispelling Myths Versus Reality

IBD Unite

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# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS



After ostomy surgery, you may find helpful tips from other people living with an ostomy in online communities, support groups, forums and more.



Weeding through the fact and fiction can be difficult.



Certified ostomy nurses can outline some of the most common myths they hear to provide you with the truth about living with an ostomy.

# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- All ostomy products are the same. It doesn't matter what type of pouching system you wear

## Reality

- In the weeks and months following ostomy surgery, you may find your stoma and body changing. In the first few weeks and months post-surgery, your ostomy pouching system may need to be changed also.

# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- Having skin irritation is a normal way of life with an ostomy



## Reality

- If the skin around your stoma becomes damaged, it could be painful and lead to infection. Prevention is the key to maintaining both healthy peristomal skin and your comfort.

# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- If you have an ostomy, your significant other will not love you the same way.

## Reality

- It is common to have anxiety about relationships following ostomy surgery. Be open and honest with your partner about any concerns you have. Remember, having an ostomy is nothing to be ashamed of.

# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- I can't get my pouch or wafer wet, which means I can't enjoy water activities or bathe with my pouching system in place.

## Reality

- You can shower, go swimming, or even get in the hot tub with your pouching system in place. If using a pouch with a filter, cover the filter with the covers provided.

# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- Don't shower without your ostomy system off.

## Reality

- You can shower with or without an ostomy system in place.



# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- Now that I have an ostomy, I am no longer able to enjoy the foods I love.



## Reality

- Right out of surgery, you may be more sensitive to foods than you will be in six months. Slowly add different foods to your diet and pay attention to your body's response.



# LET'S DEBUNK COMMON OSTOMY MYTHS

## Myth

- People living with an ostomy cannot fly, because the cabin pressure can cause the pouch to fail.

## Reality

- People living with an ostomy can fly, ride in a car, or use any other mode of travel.



# REFERENCE

[Ostomy Myths vs Reality - United Ostomy Associations of America](#)