

HandⁱⁿHand

Real stories • Real advice

Issue 29

Gill Castle

Mum, triathlete,
ostomate

“Look after yourself
by making the most
of the life you have”

Gill's story

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- Hello, Aura Plus
- Learning to look after me
- SecuriCare supports the sunflower

SecuriCare[®]
Putting you first



Dear Reader,

A very warm welcome to the latest edition of Hand in Hand.

As ever, time flies and I am sat reflecting on what has occurred over recent months and how we, as a business and as individuals, have had to continue to adapt to our ever-changing world.

As a business, we continue to strive to provide the level of customer service that you deserve, despite the challenges that come our way. From the feedback we have received, we have delivered on our promises, which we are all proud of.

If nothing else, I believe that the Covid-19 pandemic has given us time to reflect, along with a chance to focus more on ourselves, those around us and the importance we all play in each other's lives. I am hopeful that we will see a change in the way we think moving forward and that we realise the need to look after ourselves, our friends, families, and each other in general.

Happy reading!

Neil Freeman,

Managing Director, SecuriCare (Medical) Ltd and CliniMed Ltd

We trust that the contents of this edition reflect this, along with the launch of our 'Looking After Me' campaign. We want to continue being there for you in your time of need and to provide advice and support where we can. We want to encourage everyone to achieve their own goals and hopefully play some part, however large or small, in that.

We are excited to have several ostomates, healthcare professionals and voices from third parties, charities, and patient associations in this edition - I personally think it's a good one!

As ever I would like to thank everyone for their contributions to this magazine and our team for producing it.

I hope 2021 sees us move on from recent challenges in a positive way and I look forward to welcoming you to future editions of Hand in Hand shortly.

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Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue.

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I'm looking after me!

In April, we launched our brand new 'Looking After Me' campaign, which will continue through 2021. We're celebrating people just like you, because we think you're amazing!

We want to provide an opportunity for people to achieve some of their personal goals and objectives, with a bit of help and support from our expert panel.

We had lots of nominations for the first part of the campaign, which focussed on wellbeing. Many people with a stoma or continence need told us about a personal fitness or nutrition objective they'd love to achieve in 2021. We've announced our first winner (drum roll please)... the fantastic Janine Langler!

A massive congratulations Janine, we're so excited to be supporting you on this journey.

Janine is a 49-year-old NHS Manager, wife, mum and step mum from Aberdeen. She decided to nominate herself as she needs support to help her feel fantastic before her 'big birthday' in December.

In 2016, Janine's ulcerative colitis had become unmanageable. She was in constant pain and on high dose steroids, which made her feel quite unwell and bloated. She married her wonderful and supportive husband, Graeme, just a few months before her ileostomy surgery. Sadly, Janine didn't feel comfortable or confident in her wedding dress and

still does not like to look at her wedding photos. In fact, Janine's wedding photos were the last time she let anybody point a camera at her. While her surgery has left her pain free, she is still suffering from the physical effects of long-term steroid use and is struggling with her body image.

Janine says she nominated herself as it's her goal to feel fabulous and confident at 50, with her aim to up her fitness levels with yoga, and feel glamorous and gorgeous in photos. Janine has also selflessly said she'd love to help others to feel confident and give back with her prize. Her

ultimate dream is to teach yoga to fellow ostomates or women her age who want to feel confident enough to embrace exercise and fitness, even if they aren't the "slender gym bunnies" they used to be.

She says "I've been feeling frumpy and a bit sorry for myself for a while now and when I saw SecuriCare's 'Looking After Me' campaign I just went for it. I'm so excited that I've been chosen as the winner and delighted that the wonderful team will be supporting me to reach my 2021 goals. I really feel like it is the nudge I need to get back on track with my fitness. I don't want to be a size 8, I just want to feel good about myself."

"I adore yoga and ultimately would love to train as an instructor and help people like me to feel confident and fabulous. I understand how hard classes can be with a stoma (or just when

you're feeling a bit old and dowdy.) The last few months I've lacked motivation to exercise properly and my weakness for bread, coupled with a very busy year at work, have meant that I've been dreading my 50th in December more and more. But now I'm excited that I'll be getting support with achieving these goals and I'm feeling revved up and raring to go."

From expert fitness and nutrition sessions to workshops with stylists, we'll be looking after Janine throughout her journey to achieving her personal goals and we'll also be gifting her a glamorous photoshoot with her husband, where we guarantee our team will have her feeling like a million dollars.

We'll be documenting Janine's journey via our social media channels and website so you can keep up to date with how she's getting on. We know our

wonderful community will be cheering her on every step of the way.

What's more, Janine won't be the only one to benefit in 2021, as we'll have more chances for you to nominate yourself, a friend, or family member who has a stoma or a continence need for our 'Looking After Me' campaign before the end of the year. Keep an eye on our social channels for details of your next chance to win expert sessions and bespoke prize bundles to empower you to achieve your 2021 objectives!



@SecuriCare
@OneStopStoma
@1StopContinence
@clinimed_
securicare

Follow us for more!



Mum, triathlete, ostomate:

This is Gill's

“Skydiving. Scuba diving. Swimming. Cycling. Running. Lifting. Laughing. Eating whatever I want. Drinking. Police officer job. Sex. I lay in my hospital bed one week after giving birth to my only child prematurely, reflecting on all the things I thought I couldn’t do with the stoma bag attached to my abdomen.”

My stomach was extremely painful, my perineum hot, swollen and infected from a raging infection that rapidly took over my body due to the terrible tear I sustained during birth. I was left on the ward to suffer days of excruciating pain. The day before giving birth I had been in my police uniform in the police station, working the last day of a 7 day shift set, and looking forward to my 4 day long weekend.

Having a stoma (colostomy for me) because of childbirth complications is not something most people associate with having a baby. Although it's rare to be left with such life changing injuries, 30,000 women every single year experience some form of birth trauma. During my son's birth, his heart rate had dropped and forceps were used in the rush to get him out, causing me to tear from my vagina right through my anal sphincter – more commonly called a 'fourth degree tear'.

Sadly, I suffered a very rare complication called a recto-vaginal fistula. It wasn't long before the whole area became badly infected and I was almost unable to walk. After 4 days, I was examined by a gynaecological consultant, this was when the extent of my injuries became clear and a stoma became the only way to let my injuries heal. I was told it would be for 12 weeks, then it would be reversed, and my life would go back to normal. The outcome was very much the opposite.

After my stoma surgery, I was given the usual advice on avoiding lifting, and the various ways to avoid a parastomal hernia. The Stoma Care Nurses were wary about the ability to resume extremely energetic activities, and when asked about scuba diving (a lifelong dream of mine),

I was told that the pressure would be too much on the bag. I was heartbroken.

The initial few months of having the bag were horrendous, as I was juggling not only a bag, but also a premature baby, an infected fistula tract and a husband working away offshore. My family lived 150 miles away, so I was very much on my own. My life revolved around leaking bags, stressful toilet stops and a crying baby. My bags pancaked all the time, and I was often woken by the familiar smell of poo under the sheets. I worried constantly about getting a hernia, frightened to exert myself in any way, dedicated to protecting myself from further harm.

I spent the first 2 years like this, cocooning myself from exposure to new experiences or active pursuits, although once I switched to convex bags the pancaking stopped and my confidence grew. I coned myself into believing that I was looking after myself, when in actual fact, I was neglecting my mental health by denying myself the endorphins I had previously had from exercise and being out in the fresh air. I wasn't looking after myself at all.

One day I read an article about an ostomate who said that they were grateful for their stoma bag as it had enabled them to live an active life, free from incontinence. A light bulb moment. Had I not got a stoma, I would have been incontinent too. The article mentioned a Facebook page called the Ostomy Lifestyle Athletes – a whole page of ostomates taking part in triathlons, running events, and all sorts of activities; I suddenly realised what was possible.

I decided to start living my life, not just existing, basing it all around my bag and avoiding a hernia. I joined a cycling club, became fitter

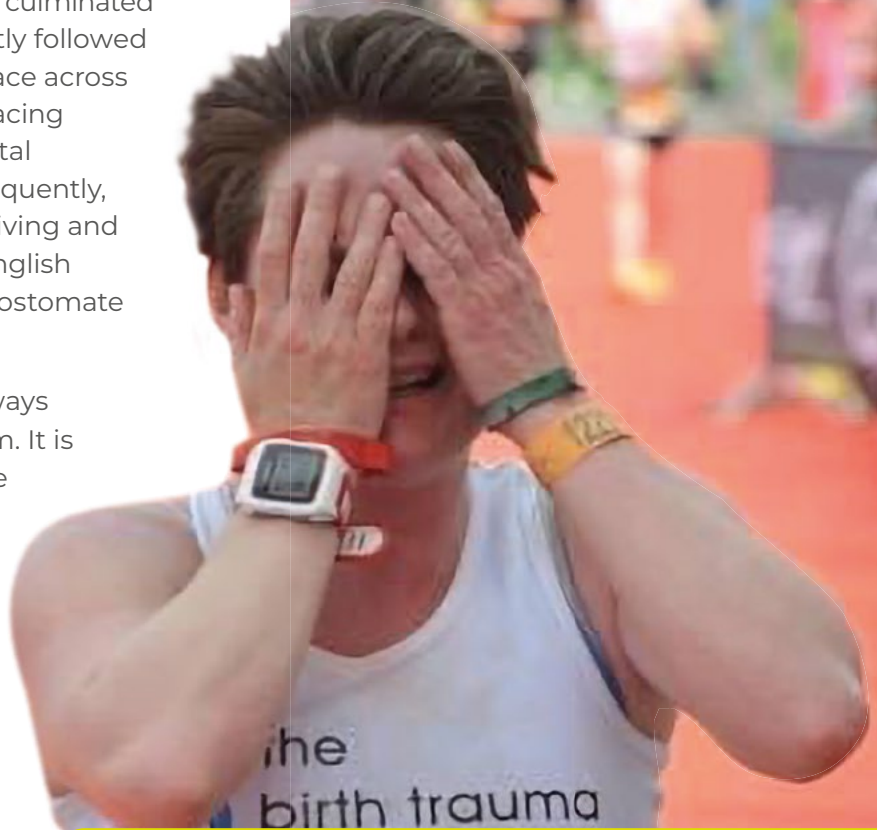
story

and then started triathlons. This culminated in a half ironman triathlon, swiftly followed by a 105-mile run/cycle/kayak race across Scotland. I was living life, embracing every opportunity and my mental health soared as a result. Subsequently, I have been sky diving, scuba diving and I have signed up to swim the English Channel solo in 2023 – the first ostomate to do so.

Looking after yourself is not always protecting your body from harm. It is about giving yourself time to be you again, and not just a bag with a person attached to it. Now I am a happy, healthy, active triathlete, who happens to have a bag too. Look after yourself by making the most of the life you have.”

Gill Castle, ostomate

Visit www.stomachameleon.com to keep up to date with Gill's journey.



“Looking after yourself is not always protecting your body from harm. It is about giving yourself time to be you again.”

Gill Castle

Life begins again at 14

**“Have you ever thought about when you were taken ill?
Isn't it amazing what our bodies can survive?”**



Barry Caplan,
SecuriCare customer
and ostomate

I was just 13 when I got the first twinge, it was on the way to school. “This is not right what's happening here” I thought, and by the time I got home the pains were flaring more frequently. By the next day I was spending

quite a lot of time on the toilet. So off we went to see our doctor friend, who examined me and said I must have eaten something that had upset me. “Great”, I thought, but how come my parents were alright?

It was about a week later; I was feeling bad, and the symptoms were getting worse. The doctor said “I will have to get you into hospital as I'm not sure what's wrong.” There and then he called for an ambulance and I was taken to Hendon Isolation Hospital where I stayed for 2 weeks with no one knowing what was wrong with me.

My next stay was at Edgware General in May. Things really got worse here. I was losing a lot of blood, in fact I had 12 pints while I was at this hospital, and 3 relapses. The doctors were getting worried about me as they had tried everything, so they called a specialist from London.

Suddenly it was September, I had no idea of time, I just knew what the pain was like and I didn't like it. By the end of the week I was in the back of another ambulance going to a different hospital. Again they tried, but it was no good. On 31st October 1957, I had my operation.



I went to theatre at 12am and didn't know anything till 12pm the next day. When I woke up there was a doctor standing at the end of my bed, who said "everything will be alright now". What did he mean?

There were no Stoma Care Nurses to put me at ease. When the surgeon came round later, he told me what they had done. This was the beginning of another struggle. They had left a portion of the infected bowel to heal and after 18 months it was still causing problems, so they removed everything.

At that time all the equipment was horrible. The bags were heavy rubber and a screw at the bottom to drain the contents out. We didn't know any better because there wasn't anything else! My stay in hospital finished on Christmas Eve, 8 months later.

Growing up through my teen years was a little difficult but I managed. My biggest problem was meeting girls. I would tell them at the second

meeting what I had, and if they couldn't accept me I would just say goodbye.

Maureen, my wife of 54 years, has been wonderful. We have had a great time and nothing has stopped us from enjoying life. We have 2 great boys. One lives in Canada and the other son lives only a few miles from us. They have blessed us with grandchildren, who we love dearly. Of course, we miss the Canadian girls, but we see them on FaceTime every weekend. Technology is wonderful today.

We've travelled quite extensively and I haven't let the bag hinder my enjoyment. Once you find a bag that suits you, keep using it. The style of bag I use has been about for the best part of 50+ years and they're still producing them. (I hope they keep going for many more years).

If someone ever asked me if I would like to revert to normality, my reply would be "No thanks, I'm very happy the way I am. How about you?"

My aim is now to help as many people as I can. When I was younger, I donated 50 units of blood and was awarded a gold badge. As I am a rare blood group, I had a phone call one morning asking me to come in as a baby was having an operation and needed some extra blood. It gave me a lot of satisfaction to help someone.

"Don't hold back. Just go about your life and don't let your bag stop you"

What I want to say is: Don't hold back. Just go about your life and don't let your bag stop you. Travel, go to the theatre, visit a restaurant. I wish you all well and a happy, long, and safe life.

I'm now a young 76. Let the good time roll on!"

**Barry Caplan,
SecuriCare
customer and
ostomate**





Hello, Aura Plus

When it comes to stoma products, where do you start? We know that depending on where you are in the UK, or the world in fact, you'll hear all sorts of names to describe them. You'd have thought that surely we'd all have agreed on 'pouch' or 'bag' by now, seeing as stomas been around for many decades, nay centuries, but no!

What is clear is that the stoma bags (or pouches, whichever you prefer to call them) available today, could not be any more different to those ostomates used even half a century ago.

In this edition of Hand in Hand, you'll read lots of stories from ostomates, including Barry Caplan, a SecuriCare customer. Barry had his stoma in the 50s and experienced first hand what bags were like back then, often made from 'black rubber' and harsh on the skin.

"Gone are the days of heavy, rigid devices. The modern pouches are here to stay."

Stoma products have continued to advance through the 21st century, making vast improvements to ostomates' overall quality of life through new materials and innovative technologies. Gone are the days of heavy,

rigid devices, The modern pouches are here to stay.

In this article, our sister company, CliniMed, proudly introduce their latest stoma pouch range which is designed around what ostomates value most – security, comfort and healthy skin.

Reduces the risk of leaks

The new Aura Plus pouch benefits from a unique plus shaped flange which increases your security. The distinctive shape reduces the risk of creases forming when you apply your pouch, protecting you against leaks throughout the day.

Contains medical grade Manuka honey

Our skin-friendly hydrocolloid contains medical grade Manuka honey, which is known for its therapeutic properties and may help to promote healthy skin around your stoma. Recent studies show

how changing to a pouch with medical grade Manuka honey in the flange helps to promote healthy skin around the stoma whilst improving users' comfort and confidence¹.

Available in a choice of colours

Mix and match your pouch with your outfit, occasion or even mood. Our stylish black option is elegant and bold, and easy to match with your outfit when you need it to. You might prefer our sand option, which is light and suits brighter and more colourful outfits, perfect for the summer months. Aura Plus also benefits from a brand new soft and water-repellent material. So as well as benefitting from a choice of colours, you can be confident with our comfortable pouch which is less likely to sag or become misshapen throughout the day.

Aura Plus has made a huge difference to those who have tried it already:

"It felt more secure, and I didn't feel the need to keep checking it as often"

Mrs T, North East

"The shape of the flange certainly stopped the leakage I suffer"

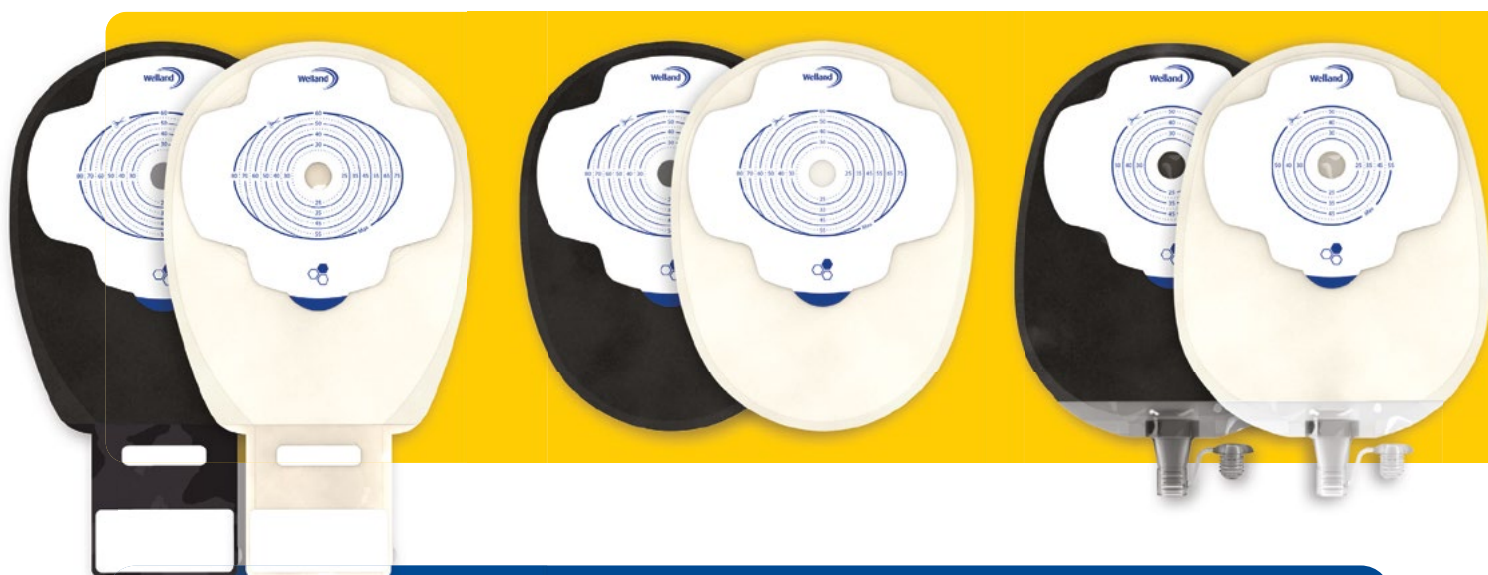
Mr L, East Anglia

"I really liked this pouch, particularly the way the flange fitted"

Mrs B, East Midlands



Aura Plus



Request your free sample of Aura Plus by calling our Careline on 0808 296 2771.

1. White & Evans, (2019), "Clinical governance for ostomates at risk of peristomal skin complications", **British Journal of Nursing**, 28(16), s.24-32

Successful survey for *SecuriCare service*

We're proud to share results from SecuriCare's DAC survey 2021!

Each year, we're required to complete a survey that reviews our service as a Dispensing Appliance Contractor or 'DAC' for short. As a DAC operating in the UK, NHS England sets out a survey which we send to a random sample of people using SecuriCare for the home delivery of their prescription items.

We're pleased to share a snippet from the positive comments and results we received in this year's survey...



Thank you for your feedback. As always, we are striving to improve our service and continue to look after you and your supplies to our best ability. If you have any pointers for us, email them in to info@securicaremedical.co.uk or head to page 37 to learn how to leave us a review.

New

Aura[®] Plus

Make a
posit+ive
choice



Unique plus shaped flange

Designed to reduce the risk of creases or leakage channels forming



The freedom to mix and match

Choose between a bold, versatile black pouch and a light, simple sand pouch



Skin-friendly hydrocolloid flange

Contains Manuka honey and may help to promote healthy skin around the stoma

Request a free sample!

Go to www.clinimed.co.uk

Call the CliniMed Careline on **0808 296 2771**

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Learning to *Look after me*

“Looking after myself was always a difficult thing to do. I wanted the big career, the big house and all the stuff that you think you need in life. To do this, you forget about ‘current you’ and focus on ‘future you’.

This was all going well back in 2006. I got a great job immediately after finishing university. My foot was on the first rung of the ladder. Nothing could stop me. Then I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease.

It happened months after starting my first proper job, and I took it hard. I felt my health was jeopardising my goals as the sick days started to pile up. I was drowning in fear and anxiety; it literally felt like my bowel was trying to escape my body, but I had to soldier on, or so I thought.

Lying in a hospital bed, concerned about how work was coping without me, with my future wife sat at my bedside, I realised I needed help. I was vulnerable, no matter how hard I pretended not to be. My wife-to-be was so concerned about me and my safety. She didn't care about houses, cars, holidays, she just wanted me to be well. This is when I started looking after me.

It began with accepting support from my family and friends. Text messages, phone calls and visits. They were there for me, listening and caring. The IBD team were doing their best to put me back on the straight and narrow on the chronic illness front, and my family and friends were trying to give me support where they could. I was also having to learn my limitations and my work/life balance needed rejigging to be more focused on the 'life' part.

Work isn't as important as I was made to think it was. I love my job and it helps to pay the bills, but it's not my only purpose in life. Relaxing is not a crime and I found it essential to maintaining balance within the body.

A couple of years into my Crohn's disease journey I began to reach out for more help,

and I found it in the form of Crohn's & Colitis UK. At the beginning I found the face-to-face meetings a great form of support. Meeting other people on the same journey, but at different stages, really helped make me feel less alone. It was great to be around other people with fascinating insights into a life with a chronic illness.

After spending some time around the local network of Crohn's & Colitis UK volunteers I realised I wanted to give back. I now felt confident in my own disease and ready to help others, so I became a volunteer too. No longer was my spare time littered with thoughts of work, it was awash with ways in which to help. This gave me a much stronger sense of purpose than anything I was doing in my career. Looking after others became my way of looking after me!

In a matter of years, I learnt how to look after myself and this took many forms. It began with focusing on me. You shouldn't feel like a failure for asking for help; seek it out. Family and friends care about you, they want to be



there for you. Find a group of other people in a similar situation, learn and grow from their stories, develop your knowledge. Before you know it, you will be the expert in your condition and your life. Then, if you can, give back. Help those at the beginning of their journey, be their strength, be their inspiration.

This is how I look after me, even now, 15 years on from my diagnosis. A bad Crohn's week will see me focusing on my own health, seeking support and help from my wife, the IBD team and Crohn's & Colitis UK.

Throughout my journey Crohn's & Colitis UK has been my rock. They have supported me, educated me, and given me a purpose. If you need support or help with your Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, please make one of your first stops the wellbeing section of our website: www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/support/wellbeing-support.

We also have regular virtual social events where you can talk to others affected by IBD in a safe and fun space via video call. More information visit: www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/support/virtual-social-events

If you feel you're at the point in your journey where you want to give back, then please consider joining us as a volunteer or maybe get involved in one of our many fundraising activities like 'Walk It!': www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/get-involved."

Ben Rutter, Crohn's & Colitis UK





A life of **2 halves**

“I was born in Lichfield, Staffordshire, in 1952, where I had a happy and healthy childhood. It was in April 1973 when I first became poorly. I'd never been ill before, or even had a day off work, but at 21 I started passing blood and mucus in my stools so I went to my GP.

My GP thought I had a bug and recommended I tried a diet of shredded apple - like that would cure the problem. Within a couple of days things had gone from bad to worse and I became very weak, so my mother asked for a second opinion. Hours later I was taken to the Good Hope Hospital in Sutton Coldfield and put on steroids. My diagnosis was ulcerative colitis.

I had always been a shy, timid child at school with a nervous disposition. As a young adult, I played a lot of football, which I loved. But my boss at the time asked me not to play because I might get injured while playing and have to have time off work.

In November 1973, a few months after my diagnosis, I suffered my first nervous breakdown. My health problems continued through the years with both colitis and my nerves causing me quite a few episodes and 'accidents'.

My colitis was getting worse, and I was eventually admitted to hospital again in November 1994. I was put on steroids, but it wouldn't stop the flow of blood. The surgeon explained to me that there would be no alternative but to remove my large colon and have a stoma formed. That evening a nurse came to me holding out a black felt pen and a razor. She asked me to have a bath, shave the hair from

my abdomen and mark the spot where I wanted my stoma. I didn't realise at the time that the area that I picked was my belt line! As a result, I can rarely wear a belt around my trousers as it presses against my stoma and is very uncomfortable.

I divorced in 1993 and after having my stoma operation, which lasted 9 hours, in 1994 I found any future relationships very difficult. If I explained I had a stoma and was bipolar they used to run a mile.

I had many incidents of my bag coming off, which was awkward for me and often as a result of wearing a belt. Fortunately, in later years



my Stoma Care Nurse, Sally, suggested I wear braces and I have done ever since. Sally has been my Stoma Care Nurse since my first operation and still is 27 years later. She has the patience of a saint and is very understanding (like any nurse or angel).

In 1997 I had my ileostomy reversed and an ileo-anal pouch fitted, which caused me ongoing problems. The sheer force and noise when I went to the toilet caused me so much embarrassment. So, in 1999 I had the pouch decommissioned and returned to having a stoma.

I still have the occasional 'accident'. Since my surgery in 1994 I've worn incontinence pads as I still get a small discharge from my back passage and roughly every year I have to

go to hospital to be 'flushed out'. But now I can truthfully say I have a better quality of life with my partner Jenny.

A few years ago, I decided to write my experiences in a book called 'A Life of Two Halves'. It's a light-hearted record, helping other people facing a similar journey. It wasn't written to glorify me, but to prove to others if I can do it, anybody can. In my case, with the aid of a little faith and a sense of humour.

I would like to say that without the assistance of the staff at SecuriCare I wouldn't be here today and that is the truth. Whoever picks up the phone is always most helpful. With the help of Sally, I get to know of new products available for an old codger like me, which again is very reassuring. Medical appliances are improving

all the time so it's good to be kept up to date. It helps my confidence greatly knowing I can speak to SecuriCare for advice when they are available, 7.45am - 9pm Monday to Friday, or email info@securicaremedical.co.uk.

Thank you."

Mike Wetson, SecuriCare customer and ostomate

If you'd like to read Mike's book, 'A Life of Two Halves', email him directly on wetsonmichael@gmail.com. Alternatively, contact SecuriCare and we will redirect you.

Would I lie to you?

Many people accept certain stoma problems as the norm – they shouldn't. Caroline Bramwell from Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association (IA), pictured right, has joined forces with SecuriCare to dispel common misconceptions about living with a stoma.



A leaking stoma bag is normal.

FALSE

Most people living with a stoma will experience a leak from time to time, but frequent leaks are not normal.

Although they happen, you should not be experiencing leaks often, and if it is affecting your physical and mental health it is important to seek help from your Stoma Care Nurse.

If you do experience a leak, remember to stay calm.

To help reduce the risk of leaks:

1. Check the skin around your stoma
2. Find a stoma care routine that works for you
3. Make sure your pouch is cut correctly to fit your current stoma size
4. Find the products that suit your needs
5. Talk to your Stoma Care Nurse if you are worried about leakages

It's possible to be allergic to stoma products.

TRUE

It is important to remember that the skin around your stoma (peristomal) should look similar to the rest of the skin on your body. So, if your peristomal skin looks irritated in any way, contact your Stoma Care Nurse.

You might experience some soreness and/or irritation around your stoma at one time or another. There are a few reasons why your skin might be irritated, one of which is an allergy. It's uncommon to experience an allergic reaction to the adhesive of your stoma bag, however, if you expect that this might be happening you should seek medical advice.

Fortunately, there are lots of different products out there for you to try. You can call SecuriCare's Careline on 0808 296 2771 for unbiased product and lifestyle advice, as well as samples from all brands and makes of stoma supplies.

People living with a stoma have to wear baggy clothes.

FALSE

What you wear is up to you. Some guidance will advise you to wear waistbands that do not put pressure on your stoma or bag, however, wear what makes you comfortable and confident.

There are no rules about what you should and should not wear. Immediately after surgery, you may feel more comfortable wearing loose-fitting clothes, but once you've healed, there's no reason why you shouldn't go back to wearing the clothes that make you look and feel good.

Looking good starts with self-confidence. Some people benefit from wearing clothing designed for ostomates. As a starting point you could check out Vanilla Blush, Comfizz, Aura Clothing or I Am Denim.

Staying hydrated is important.

TRUE

Everyone has different needs, and it will also depend on what type of stoma you have. NHS guidelines recommend drinking around 1.5-2 litres per day, but if you have a stoma (and especially if you exercise regularly or are somewhere hot) you will need to drink more - unless you have been advised not to for another reason. Ask your Stoma Care Nurse how much you should be drinking. You can find out more the 'Staying Hydrated' downloadable leaflet from Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association available at www.iasupport.org.

If you feel any of the below, you may be dehydrated and need to consume more fluid:

- Feeling thirsty
- Dark yellow and strong-smelling pee
- Dizzy or lightheaded
- Tiredness
- Dry mouth, lips or eyes

I am alone.

FALSE

Having a stoma can be life changing. For some people, having an operation to form a stoma can relieve years of painful symptoms, for others it may be a shock and difficult to accept – either way, it may affect the person's quality of life.

If you are struggling mentally with accepting or living with a stoma, you are not alone.

Your Stoma Care Nurse will not only support you with your stoma care routine, but also to help with how you are feeling. If you are struggling with symptoms of anxiety or depression, you may be referred on for further support.

Approximately 180,000 people are living with a stoma in the UK. If you want to talk, have someone listen to you or hear stories from someone who has been through a similar experience, there's help out there.

"I've first-hand experience of living with an ileostomy and recognise how daunting it can seem after surgery. However, there are some myths about living with a stoma; there is no better solution than to talk to someone who has lived in your shoes."

Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association, from its outset in 1956, has been about peer-to-peer support. The Visiting Service that the charity provides is open to everyone, and endeavours to match you with people who are the same gender, age, have had a similar experience and have the same interests. There's always someone there to listen."

Caroline Bramwell, ostomate and PR & Communications Manager, IA (www.iasupport.org)



Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association

Listen • Inform • Support



3 sustainable tips



Use disposable wipes sparingly

Wet wipes are indispensable

to ostomates, however, not all wipes are biodegradable, and most shouldn't be flushed down a toilet. While they are necessary and it is important to ensure you take correct care of your stoma, use them sparingly if you can. Ideally, clean running water should be used to wipe around your stoma.



Correctly dispose of stoma bags

Disposal of stoma bags will vary

depending on where you live in the country, so check with your local council as they may have specific guidelines. If you're out and about, this isn't always possible. You can carry compostable bags to place waste in until a bin is found – one environmentally friendly change.



Make sure you've got the right fit

Measure twice, cut

one – as the old adage goes. Make sure you know which product works for you to avoid leaks, issues with sticking and ultimately waste. If you need help getting your stoma products to fit correctly, call SecuriCare for help on 0800 318 965.

At SecuriCare, we've proudly held our ISO14001 accreditation since 2012. This means that we have an environmental policy, which we're audited against. We also have an EMS (Environmental Management System) team and each year we share our key objectives with you.

Here's what we're aiming for in 2021:

- **Electricity reduction** – reduce electricity usage by a further 1% per person
- **Paper reduction** – reduce paper usage by a further 30%
- **CO₂ emissions** – maintain the average CO₂ emissions per vehicle to under 113
- **Tonnage per mile** – maintain the tonnage per mile at the same levels as 2020
- **Postage** – maintain the pieces of postage sent through the franking machine at the same levels as 2020
- **Waste** – monitor the amount of waste produced so we can set a reduction objective in 2022

Don't get 😡.

Give your skin the 5-star treatment 😊.



LBF® Sterile Barrier Film Range – Superior and preventative protection

Protect your skin from the harmful effects of stoma output and adhesive appliances with the LBF Sterile Barrier Film range.

The alcohol-free, healthcare-grade silicone formulation means it can be safely used on sore skin without stinging. Available in convenient wipe or spray application, LBF provides a long-lasting barrier for up to 48 hours. LBF is also available as a moisturising barrier cream.

Contact us today to receive a free sample

☎ Careline: 0808 296 2771 ✉ info@clinimed.co.uk 🌐 www.clinimed.co.uk



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CliniMed®

LBF®

**Long-lasting protection
at your fingertips**



Searching

“Where do I start... I’m 49-years-old and have an end colostomy, which was formed in 2019 due to slow transit, gastrointestinal dismobility and bowel incontinence. Before my colostomy I had always suffered with incontinence and severe constipation, so I thought this was the norm, my norm.

It came to the point where I couldn’t open my bowels and if I did it was because of laxatives, enemas or irrigation systems that would make my incontinence that much worse. So, after many tests, I decided that a colostomy was the right route to go down.

The journey from the beginning was very long and hard, both physically and mentally, to go through. I’m diagnosed with hypermobile Ehlers Danlos syndrome (EDS), which affects my connective tissue, so healing after colostomy surgery was challenging. I ended up having surgery again two weeks later to close the wound and refashion my stoma. It was very frightening and worrying as at this stage my stoma was compromised.

Thankfully, with the daily support of my Stoma Care Nurses and the help from Tiffany at SecuriCare arranging different supplies for me to try, everything came together. I still sometimes panic if my skin is sore or I leak, but I have to tell myself that I am far better off the way I am now; I could never go back to how I was before my surgery.

Part of my routine has been to find the right products for me and my stoma, which don’t break down my skin. I have a few tips:

for comfort

- If you suffer with EDS, or have fragile skin, try a 2-piece system. The base plate stays in place for a few days and you just change the bag when needed
- Use warm, plain water and a wipe to clean around your stoma – remembering to be gentle
- Medical adhesive removers: I use a spray to remove my base plate, and a wipe to remove any adhesive left stuck to my skin
- Skin barrier wipes can help protect the whole area where the base plate sticks
- Stoma powder is an amazing product, I use it just below my stoma where it can get sore
- Hernia belts can help support parastomal hernias and make life more comfortable

I also have a suprapubic catheter to add to the mix, which I have had since 2019 too. I've tried to self-catheterise in the past but it wasn't for me. Life with a catheter isn't straightforward, but with the help of SecuriCare I have found the right supplies and I am comfortable."

Thank you to Karen for sharing her story. We know that living with intimate healthcare needs can be challenging, so don't be afraid to reach out for help if you need it. The SecuriCare Careline offers unbiased advice to support you with your stoma or continence care routine. The team speak to people like you every day and are trained to find the right solution for you. Call 0808 296 2771 (9am – 6pm, Monday – Friday).



"Living with multiple chronic illnesses isn't easy, I've had a few. But life is so much easier with the dedication of the staff at SecuriCare,

who are there at the end of the phone to guide us into using the right supplies that we need to do the job and make life as simple as it can be."

Karen Campbell, colostomate and catheter user



"I'm one of an experienced Careline team working every day to help people living with a stoma or continence need. The team and I can help with all sorts

of product and lifestyle queries. Karen was anxious about her supplies and needed help, luckily she found us and now has one less thing to worry about. If you need advice, we're only a phone call away!"

Tiffany Waller, SecuriCare Careline

This article was kindly written by our friends at Colostomy UK; Richard Biddle (Writer, Researcher and Editor of Tidings magazine) and Lucinda Mitchell (Marketing and Communications Manager)



Looking after me with **Colostomy UK**

“If you are like us, then you’re probably forever telling people to take care of themselves. Well, when was the last time you looked after yourself? Indeed, what does that even mean? Here are some things we came up with: eating and drinking healthily; getting enough sleep; making space for what you enjoy; seeking help when you are unwell; heeding the doctor’s advice. Undeniably, the more we thought about it, the longer and more overwhelming the list became. Colostomy UK have been helping people with stomas to look after themselves for over 50 years now.

Here is some of what the charity has learned along the way...



Assemble your team

There are 2 important things to say about looking after yourself: ‘Treat yourself like someone you are responsible for helping’ and ‘Make friends with people who want the best for you’. In other words, you can’t go it alone. Looking after yourself involves assembling a team of people you can trust. This is where Colostomy UK come in. With our 24-hour stoma helpline (0800 328 4257), you know there is always someone who has a stoma or has had a stoma just a phone call away, ready to listen to your needs and give you experience-based advice.

If you need an emotional leg-up, we can even arrange to give you a call once in a while for an ostomate-to-ostomate chat. If you prefer, then you can visit our website and use Live Chat to message us instead. There’s our private Facebook Support Group too. Join this and your team will include a whole community of people who want the best for you! What’s good also, is the reciprocal nature of being a member. Looking after yourself is also about looking after others as well.



Spot SecuriCare! We're proud gold sponsors of Team Colostomy UK.

Get active

Exercise is at the heart of looking after yourself. It's no secret that being active is good for your physical and mental wellbeing. Having a stoma isn't like having a sick note for the P.E. teacher. Provided you have agreement from your doctor or Stoma Care Nurse there is no reason not to exercise. Even competitive sport is possible! The NHS states that adults should do some type of physical activity every day - any type of activity is good for you and the more you do (within reason) the better. The Department of Health's report (2011) Start Active, Stay Active corroborates this and states that engaging in daily physical activity reduces risk of depression, distress and anxiety.

Of course, knowing exercise is beneficial is one thing, but doing it is something else. It's normal to be lacking in confidence about exercising following stoma surgery, especially with the ever-present risk of developing a parastomal hernia. However, maintaining a healthy weight, and keeping your muscles strong can help to prevent parastomal hernias from developing. So how do you get started? Colostomy UK's Active Ostomates sessions; access free professional guidance, support and classes designed for people with stomas of all ages and levels of fitness, from chair yoga to Zumba. In 'normal' times we also offer ostomate only swimming sessions, archery and rugby. If it's the old grey cells that need exercising, then sign up for our art or meditation sessions instead.

Get informed

Francis Bacon famously wrote 'Knowledge is power' and this couldn't be more relevant when it comes to looking after yourself. Knowing what to eat, how to get a restful night's sleep, or how to deal with issues like sore skin and leaks all adds up to a better 'you'. But where can you get trusted information relevant to ostomates? Visit the Colostomy UK website, it's a treasure trove of stoma-related resources, all of which have been reviewed by other ostomates and (where appropriate) healthcare professionals.

Our library of 20 literature titles can be downloaded for free or, if you prefer, we can send you a hardcopy. Some of our booklets have won awards at the British Medical Association's (BMA) annual Patient Information Awards. One title is even used for training purposes by the Royal College of Surgeons. Our website also gives you free and unlimited access to Tidings our award-winning quarterly magazine."

Register with Colostomy UK today

Take the first step in better looking after yourself, by registering with Colostomy UK today. It won't cost you a penny!

To contact Colostomy UK call **0118 939 1537** (9am – 5pm, Monday - Friday), email info@colostomyuk.org or visit www.colostomyuk.org.

questions

answered



Charlie Clark, Stoma Care Nurse

In this edition of 'stoma questions answered', we asked Stoma Care Nurse Charlie Clark to answer some questions about returning to a new normal as lockdown restrictions ease...

Q *How can I manage my anxiety about my stoma?*

A Having an anxiety about your stoma is natural and understandable, especially if you may have not been able to go out and socialise with others following your surgery due to the lockdown restrictions. The best piece of advice would be to practice self-compassion and remember you have come a long way to be where you are now.

Most people will not know you have a stoma, unless you tell them (and you don't need to tell anyone, if you don't want to). Those that do know will want to support you and help you to be the best version of yourself – whatever that might look like. Pace yourself, slowly immerse yourself in your world again by going out for a walk or meeting up with

friends and/or family. It may make you feel better about things and increase your confidence. Every person is individual and whatever you are feeling, is OK to feel.

Q *I'm worried about attending events in a group because of my stoma. How can I prepare myself?*

A Preparation is key. Have everything ready in advance by putting a few of each item into a small bag. If you can, find out what facilities are available where you are going – such as the location of the toilets, handwashing facilities etc - this will make you feel less anxious. Make sure you have all the things you need to change your pouch if you need to. If you feel comfortable with the people you are with, perhaps confide in them about your concerns.

Q *How can I prepare for going back into the office with a stoma?*

A Returning to an office after stoma formation can be challenging. With the right pouch, you should be able to return to the office without any issues. It is important that you have access to toilet facilities nearby in case you needed to renew/empty your pouch during the working day and ideally, you would take the items you need for a change with you. It is up to you if you choose to tell your office colleagues that you have a stoma.

Q *What should I pack in my day bag?*

A Having all the items you normally use with you in a small bag (either the disposal bag itself or in a small toiletry bag) can be reassuring. For most people this may include a medical adhesive



remover spray (or wipes), wipes for cleaning their stoma and drying the stoma and surrounding skin, a new pouch cut to the correct size, a disposal bag for the old pouch and any other accessories you use. There is a common saying that if you have it with you, you might not need it, but if you haven't you can guarantee, you'll wish you did.

Q *I've had some problems with my stoma during lockdown, what should I do?*

A In the first instance, I would encourage you to speak to your Stoma Care Nurse, particularly if you have not seen them for some time. We would rather you call us than worry yourself.

Q *Will my stoma care clinics return to normal?*

A There have been changes to accommodate Covid-19 and reduce the risk of transmission. In the meantime, most Stoma Care Nursing teams are using alternative ways of reviewing and seeing patients as they have been throughout lockdown such as video and telephone consultations. If you have any

issues or concerns, please discuss these with your Stoma Care Nurse.

Q *I've recently moved to a new house. How do I find my new Stoma Care Nursing team?*

A You can access your Stoma Care Nursing team in several ways. The best way is to contact your local hospital, as they will know who provides stoma care in your area. Another way is to speak to your GP, or perhaps your delivery company (call SecuriCare on 0800 318 965) as they often have a list of Stoma Care Nurses who cover various areas. Additionally, you can speak to your previous Stoma Care Nurse, who can refer you on.

Q *How do I learn to accept my body with a stoma?*

A It is important to recognise that it is different for everyone. People have stomas formed for a few reasons, and this may influence how easy or hard it is to accept your stoma. If you are struggling with your body image, please talk to your Stoma Care Nurse as we can help you to adjust to this change.





Puzzles

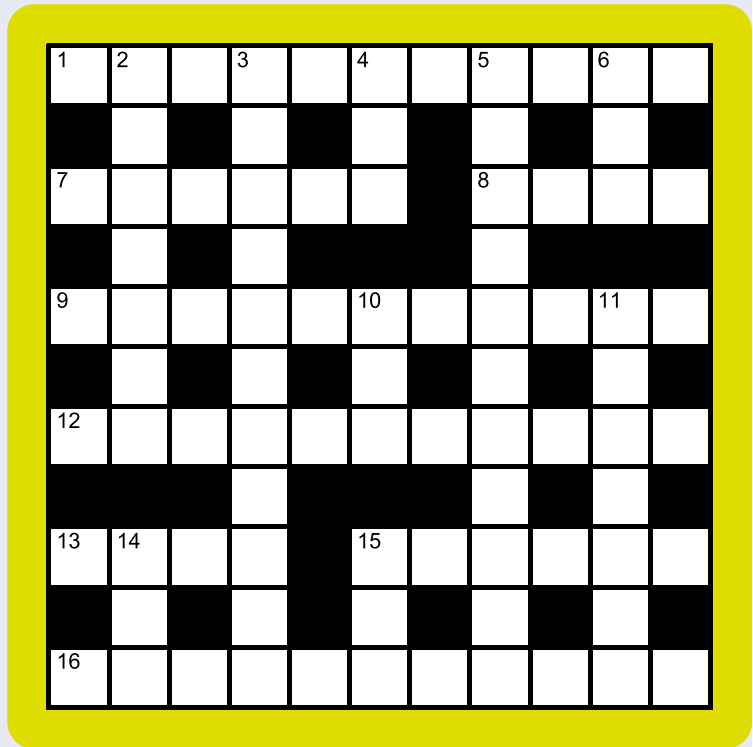
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Killing for advantage (11)
- 7 Missionary St. Francis --- (6)
- 8 Wildcat (4)
- 9 Secrets (11)
- 12 Very disappointed (11)
- 13 Ova (4)
- 15 Roman general (6)
- 16 Large quantity (4,3,4)

Down

- 2 Mollusc with an iridescent shell (7)
- 3 Regions of densely growing evergreen trees and high precipitation (11)
- 4 Fine hair (3)
- 5 U S Secretary of State under George W Bush (5,6)
- 6 Convent dweller (3)
- 10 Young woman just getting going in society (3)
- 11 Graceful (7)
- 14 Relating to the Earth (Prefix) (3)
- 15 Metal container (3)



SUDOKU

EASY

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	4		7					9
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		4						9
	2		3				1	
	9	1			7			3

HARD

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	2				9			3
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				5				
5							3	
		8		1	9		7	2
	4			2				
					7			



One less mess to think about



New Curan® Man, for intermittent self-catheterisation, is designed with you in mind. Lubricated with a mess-free gel to ensure smooth insertion and removal, Curan Man is easy to use. Clean and hygienic, the single-use catheter has a soft guide to aid no-touch application and can be fully resealed after use for convenient disposal. Foldable for discreet, compact carrying away from home, Curan Man fits in to your life perfectly.

For more information or a free sample, call the CliniMed Careline on 0808 296 2771

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Securicare supports the *sunflower*

SecuriCare has adopted the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower to help support and raise awareness of those living with a hidden disability.

Advances to medical appliances has meant that for lots of people, living with a stoma or continence can be discreet. It is a personal choice who you wish to share information about your stoma or incontinence with, and to what extent, meaning that you can go about your daily tasks with those around you none-the-wiser. However, living with an invisible condition can be challenging.

We asked the Hidden Disabilities team a few questions to find out more about how the Sunflower was developed...

Q *What is the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower?*

A It is a visual image of a yellow sunflower on a green background. It can be worn by anyone that has a hidden disability to indicate to others that they may need more time, kindness, understanding and patience.

Q *How did it come about?*

A By 2016, the Accessibility team at Gatwick Airport recognised that some passengers had a non-obvious disability and wondered how could they assist them.

So, alongside the Airport Passenger Advisory Group and local, and national,

charities, the team explored the idea of using a symbol to allow passengers to choose to indicate if they have an invisible disability.

Following discussions with the Alzheimer's Society, Visualise, the National Autistic Society and Autism Support Crawley, the Sunflower was chosen as the symbol to reflect the idea of confidence, growth and strength shown by people with hidden disabilities, as well as introducing happiness and positivity.

Q **What does it mean?**

A It means I have a hidden disability and I may need more time, understanding and kindness.

Q **How can people benefit from wearing a Sunflower lanyard?**

A There are so many situations where wearing the Sunflower has proved beneficial. For example at Gatwick, the staff can quickly and easily identify people to give them access to faster check-in and security clearance. Airline steward staff can also ensure that if a passenger is distressed, they are boarded first and given the room and space they need to feel more comfortable.

It can reduce the negative comments or judgement that people sometimes experience.

For Sunflower wearers who may need to use the toilet quickly, it can reduce the negative comments or judgement that people sometimes experience.

Parents with autistic children have found that it provides a silent explanation if their child is having a meltdown - it stops people from staring and again making judgement.

We have found that many organisations that have taken the hidden disabilities training have gone a step further and implemented it as part of their accessibility policy.

Q **Who can wear the Sunflower? Can I?**

A Yes, you can if you have a hidden disability and feel that it would benefit you. We do not ask for proof of disability because for many people it takes a long time to receive a diagnosis, if at all.

Q **Where can I wear it?**

A You can wear it whenever and wherever you like. On our website, we are continually updating our map of businesses that have taken our training and recognise the Sunflower. You can find this here: www.hiddendisabilities.com/find-the-sunflower.

Q **Will people judge me if I wear the Sunflower?**

A The purpose of the Sunflower is to reduce judgment and to eliminate the situations where you may feel that you need to explain your actions.

In choosing to wear the Sunflower, you do not have to tell anyone what your disability or health condition is. Additionally, and importantly, you do not have to wear it all the time, only when you feel that it would be helpful for others to know.

Q **Where can I get a Sunflower lanyard?**

A SecuriCare now offer the Sunflower lanyard as a complimentary item to people using their home delivery service. If you want to browse other Sunflower merchandise and more, you can visit Hidden Disabilities online shop at www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com.

As a SecuriCare customer, you can request a Sunflower lanyard with your next order. If you're not using SecuriCare and would like to know more about our complimentary items, call our Careline team on **0808 296 2771**.

What's your *incontinence IQ?*

For many, urinary incontinence still feels like a taboo topic, but it can affect anyone at any time in their lives. Discussing incontinence can be uncomfortable, but it is important to ensure correct diagnosis and treatment. Talking to a healthcare professional is the first step, and once they find out what kind of incontinence it is and what causes it, they can help find the best treatment.

Along with treatments, and lifestyle changes, continence products can improve quality of life. The lack of conversation around incontinence often leaves people without basic knowledge of the products that are available to support them, meaning that discussions with healthcare professionals can feel scary and nerve-wracking.

Finding the right product is an individual choice. Dependent on the type of incontinence, a range of products are available. So, whether you're experiencing urinary incontinence or not, here are some terms that you might benefit from knowing...

Pads and pants

Absorbent pads that are worn inside underwear to absorb up leaks, while pants can be worn.. They both have a 'hydrophobic' layer – 'hydro' meaning 'water', and 'phobic' meaning 'fear of' – which draws urine away from the surface and keeps skin dry, this helps to avoid

any complications caused by excess moisture on the skin. Pads and pants are available in disposable or washable variations, depending on the person's needs. If you're purchasing incontinence pads or pants from your supermarket or pharmacy but suffer with severe leaks, we advise you speak with your GP or local continence team.

Catheters

Catheters can be used for certain types of urinary incontinence and can be intermittent or indwelling; however, an indwelling catheter should be a last resort.

Intermittent catheters (ISC) are recommended in most cases. These catheters are inserted several times a day, just long enough to drain the bladder, then removed. Developments in the products available means there's a large choice out there, so you can find the one that is most comfortable!

Curan Man



Curan Lady



Intermittent catheters (ISC) come in a variety of lengths, sizes and coatings. There are numerous ISC catheter options available, which can make choosing the right option for you overwhelming. When finding a suitable ISC catheter, you should have a choice. Your lifestyle and physical capabilities should be considered. You may prefer a certain style of ISC catheter when at home and a different one when out and about and that's OK! The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) states that you should be offered the choice of both a gel and hydrophilic water-based catheter.

Our sister company, CliniMed, offers both choices in the form of their Curan range. The Curan range of intermittent catheters from CliniMed are sterile and single use for men and women with incontinence who carry out intermittent self-catheterisation.

Curan Man and Curan Lady are compact, mess-free, gel-based catheters which can be stored in a discreet sleeve or bag. The grip and twist lid makes for quiet and easy opening and the Blue Grip feature on Curan Man helps hygienic, touch-free insertion and removal.

The Curan Advantage range feature a sterile integrated water sachet, which with a gentle squeeze activates the hydrophilic catheter coating. The unique ComfortCoat coating reduces friction and prolongs lubrication, making insertion and removal more comfortable.

Indwelling catheters are exactly that – they're indwelling! This means that they are inside your body, unlike an ISC catheter. The catheter is inserted by a trained healthcare professional who will make the process pain-free and comfortable. Usually an indwelling catheter is needed because of urinary incontinence (leakage), retention (not being able to urinate), if you're having surgery, or another health problem. The catheter will stay in place for a few weeks, held in place by a water-filled balloon, and connects to a drainage bag that can be emptied and disposed of. Alternatively, the catheter may connect to a valve that can be opened/closed to empty the bladder at intervals.



Urinary sheaths

Urinary sheaths are another option for men who have incontinence and suffer urine leakage. This is a reliable and convenient alternative to pads or disposable underwear for men. Sheaths are commonly referred to as self-adhesive condom catheters, but don't be fooled, these devices are external and unlike a catheter, are not entered inside the urethra (tube that urine passed through as it exits the body).

Like catheters, urinary sheaths come in a variety of styles and sizes to help you find the right fit. They are connected to a urine drainage bag, which too come in various options, to suit your lifestyle needs.

As part of their Men's Health Campaign, Health Awareness discuss the topic of incontinence and product choice in the following article: www.healthawareness.co.uk/mens-health/advocating-patient-choice-is-the-new-normal-so-why-not-in-catheters/.

CliniMed's product range to support people living with incontinence is constantly evolving. To stay tuned about new product information, email info@securicaremedical.co.uk or call **0808 296 2771**.

Vacation vibes:

Steps to a positive holiday experience

Pack your swimming trunks, locate your passport and hurry out the front door (20 minutes late) – we're going on holiday!

So maybe thinking holidaying abroad in 2021 is an ambitious thought, however, the world is slowly returning to normal. Many of us are eager to sit on a sun lounger in the Mediterranean, some fancy a weekend in a cosmopolitan city and others a quiet weekend nestled in the hills of the Peak District. All are great examples of how to be 'Looking After Me'.

One thing that can be a worry when travelling is: what about my supplies?

Whichever way you are managing your stoma or incontinence, hopefully this advice will help to tackle those feelings of holiday horror and leave you channelling vacation vibes.

Getting organised

Planning can be a great way to ease some anxiety and prepare for your holiday. Occasionally time is not on your side, here's a simple tick list before heading out of the door.

- ✓ Travel essentials: booking references, ID, phone (and charger), travel certificate
- ✓ Supplies: ample stock plus a list of the products you need
- ✓ I.C.E.: In case of emergency contact details
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Emergency kit including spare clothes

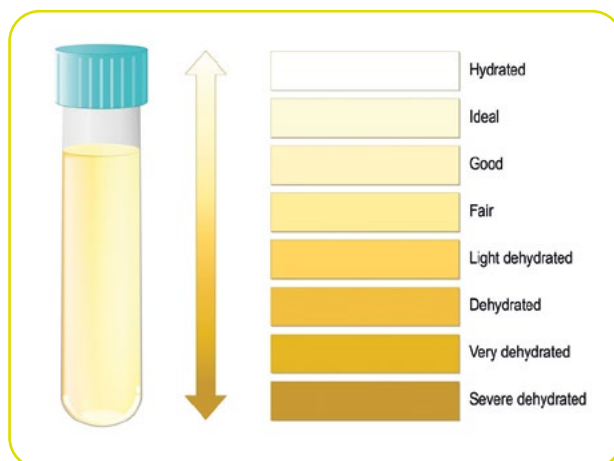
Sorting supplies

Don't be tempted to pack light when it comes to your stoma or continence supplies. If you're using SecuriCare for the home delivery of your prescription items, our team are here to help. We'll work out the supplies that you'll need to ensure that you are covered for your trip and have them delivered to you before you go. If you're travelling in the UK we can deliver to an alternative address.

Vacation hydration

Staying hydrated is incredibly important, especially if you are self-catheterising as it can help to reduce the risk of complications. Wherever you are, make sure you have water with you so you can stay hydrated. Be careful if you are in a hot climate or physically active because these can increase the amount of fluid lost through sweating.

The colour of your wee is an easy way to keep an eye on your hydration. If you're well hydrated it should be the colour of 'pale straw', it should not have an intense colour or smell.





Take a break

Stop for a break whenever you need to, holidays are about relaxing after all. If you need to go for a loo break there are handy apps such as 'Toilet Finder' and 'Flush Toilet Finder' that can help you find one.

To help reduce the risk of infections be sure to practice good personal hygiene by washing your hands regularly and safely disposing of used medical device products.

Jet lag

If you're lucky enough to be travelling far, jet lag can creep up on you. Everyone's body has a different timetable, but ultimately we all have to use the bathroom. Try to maintain a routine that works for you and your body. This can change based on where you are time zone-wise compared to home, as your normal care routine will be shifted by a few hours.

Crossing borders

Once you have received all the supplies that you need, you can simply pop them into your luggage and go. If you're concerned about people checking your bags at the airport, you might benefit from wearing a Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard, which will alert staff that you need some additional care. SecuriCare can provide this as a complimentary item to people using our home delivery service.

Any prescription medicines should be kept in its original packaging, correctly labelled and stored in hand luggage. If you run out of medicine or drugs for any reason whilst away in the UK, you can contact NHS 111 who will be able to help. A local pharmacy may also be able to supply a

limited amount of your medicine on an emergency supply basis. If you are taking any prescription items, it may be useful to take a signed letter from your doctor with their details.

In case of emergency

If you're travelling abroad, it's worth considering 2 options: medical insurance and an EHIC/GHIC.

European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) are still valid if travelling in the EU. Once your EHIC has expired, you will need to replace it with a UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), which gives you the right to access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in the European Union (EU). Visit: www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card.

Looking for medical insurance is easier than ever and there are lots of companies to choose from, many offering cover for people with pre-existing conditions. You may find specialist medical insurers can help ask the right questions and provide advice. Failure to declare pre-existing conditions may invalidate the insurance.



Answers

CROSSWORD

Across:

- 1 Sacrificing
- 7 Xavier
- 8 Lynx
- 9 Confidences
- 12 Heartbroken
- 13 Eggs
- 15 Caesar
- 16 Lots and lots

Down:

- 2 Abalone
- 3 Rainforests
- 4 Fur
- 5 Colin Powell
- 6 Nun 10 Deb
- 11 Elegant
- 14 Geo
- 15 Can

1	S	2	A	C	3	R	I	4	F	I	5	C	I	6	N	G
		B		A		U					O		U			
7	X	A	V	I	E	R					8	L	Y	N	X	
		L		N							I					
9	C	O	N	F	I	10	D	E	N	C	11	E	S			
		N		O		E		P		L						
12	H	E	A	R	T	B	R	O	K	E	N					
				E					W		G					
13	E	14	G	G	S				15	C	A	E	S	A	R	
		E		T		A		L		N						
16	L	O	T	S	A	N	D	L	O	T	S					

SUDOKU

EASY

1	5	8	6	3	4	9	7	2
2	6	9	1	7	5	4	3	8
4	3	7	9	8	2	5	6	1
9	1	5	4	6	3	2	8	7
8	4	2	7	5	1	3	9	6
6	7	3	2	9	8	1	5	4
3	8	4	5	1	6	7	2	9
7	2	6	3	4	9	8	1	5
5	9	1	8	2	7	6	4	3

HARD

6	8	3	1	7	5	9	2	4
1	2	5	8	9	4	7	6	3
4	9	7	2	3	6	8	5	1
2	1	9	6	4	3	5	8	7
8	3	6	7	5	1	2	4	9
5	7	4	9	8	2	3	1	6
3	6	8	5	1	9	4	7	2
7	4	1	3	2	8	6	9	5
9	5	2	4	6	7	1	3	8

Five stars for SecuriCare

What do you think of us? Well, we've been asking our customers exactly that and here's what they have to say:

"I changed to SecuriCare about 3 years ago because of delivery problems with my previous supplier. A company is only as good as its staff and the SecuriCare staff are brilliant, every one of them, especially the customer service contact that manages me. In a word, they are reliable, trustworthy, helpful, friendly, knowledgeable, and experienced (I know that's more than one word but you get the idea). Truly, they are there when you need them, all the time and whatever the situation – and they use DPD as their courier which is the icing on the cake. The 5 stars I've given are Venus stars (the brightest in the sky) by the way!" – **Doug Conran**



"I have always found that everyone I speak to is so helpful, polite and so friendly. I have been a customer for about 12 years, and everyone is amazing. Nothing is too much for the staff. There aren't enough words to express my gratitude for all that you do. Thank you so much." – **Hellen Walker**



"I'm leaving this feedback on behalf of my mum who uses your service. I'm always impressed by the staff that ring to arrange orders. My mum has never had any problems in the seven years of using them. Really helpful and they send samples and alternative products." – **Louise Gledhill**



"[They] couldn't help me enough. I love the options for placing an order and you can trace

your order and even change your delivery via the DPD app." – **Simon Nicholson**



We're delighted to have received so many positive reviews on Google in 2021, and even happier to share them with you. Our team are always looking for feedback and knowing what's important to you means that we can continue to improve our service to suit your needs.

If you'd like to leave a review, search for 'SecuriCare Medical' on Google and click 'Write a review'.



Stoma support groups near you

Ayrshire & Arran Stoma Support Group

First Saturday of every other month (October, December, February...) 2pm – 4pm.

Ferguson Day Unit, Biggart Hospital, Biggart Road, Prestwick KA9 2HQ.

For further information contact Jim on 01292 220945 or 07729 771350 or email jimkraz@virginmedia.com

We request a small donation to the tea/coffee/ biscuits fund, a newsletter is sent out prior to each meeting for the price of five stamps or free if by email.

Bishop Auckland Stoma Care Group

Every other Thursday at 1pm.

St Mary's Church, Vart Road, Woodhouse Close Estate, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ.

For further information contact Betty 01388 814535 or Maureen 01388 818267

Carlisle

Every 2 months (October, December, February...) 11am – 12.30pm.

Harraby Community Centre, Edgehill Road, Carlisle CA1 3SN

Cumbrian Bellies

Search 'Cumbrian Bellies' on Facebook and Instagram!

For information about the next meet-up please email Nicola on rowson.nicola@yahoo.co.uk

Darlington Stoma Support Group

3rd Wednesday of the month between 6pm – 7.30pm.

Harrowgate Club and Institute, Salters Lane North, Darlington DL1 3DT.

For further information contact Sister Jacqui Atkinson on 01325 743005

Dartford Ostomy Support Group (DOGS)

3rd Wednesday of the month.

St Anselms Parish Centre, West Hill, Dartford DA1 2HJ.

For further information please contact Susan Norris on 0794 8974 350

Durham and Wearside Crohn's & Colitis Support Group

Every 3 months (June, October...) 2pm – 4pm.

Chester le Street Cricket Club, Ropery Lane, DH3 3PF.

For further information please email dw@groups.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Durham Stoma Support Group

First Monday of every month between 4pm – 6pm.

Old Trust Headquarters, University Hospital of North Durham, North Road, Durham DH1 5TW.

For further information contact Sister Katie Sewell on 0191 3332184

High Wycombe Stoma Support Group

12th July, 13th September, 8th November 2019 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Wrights Meadow Centre Wrights Meadow Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1SQ.

For further information call 0800 318965

Horden Stoma Support Group

First Monday of every month between 10am – 12pm.

Horden Youth & Community Centre, Eden Street, Horden Peterlee, Co. Durham SR8 4LH.

For further information contact Claire on 0191 5863520

Inside Out Stoma Support Group

Zoom 'Coffee Morning' meetings every two weeks St. Mark's Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow HA1 3UJ.

For further information please email Barry Caplan on abmc23@virginmedia.com or call 07811 084 514

Kirby Ostomy Support Group

3rd Saturday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm.

The Clinical Education Centre, Glenfield Hospital, Groby Road, Leicester LE3 9QP.

For further details please contact Janet on kosg2013@btinternet.com or 07464 957982

Mercia Inside Out Support Group, South Derbyshire/East Staffordshire

Bimonthly afternoon and evening meetings.

Emmanuel Church, 31 Church Street, Swadlincote DE11 8LF.

For information email merciassgroup@gmail.com

Nuneaton Stoma Support Group

3rd Wednesday, every other month, (September, November, January...) 7pm – 9pm.

Manor Court Baptist Church, Manor Court Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5HU.

For further information contact Bob Burrell on 07564 680803 or email nuneatonstoma@aol.com

Penrith

Every 3 months (April, July, October...) 11am – 12pm.

Temple Sowerby Medical Practice, Linden Park, Temple Sowerby, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 1RW.

For further information, contact one of the Stoma Care Nurses: Jill Coulthard, Gillian Harker, Emma Ludi, Nikki Armstrong, Ruth Hetherington on 01228 814179

Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

2pm – 4pm.

Stanground Community Centre, Whittlesey Road, Peterborough PE2 8QS.

For information contact Pat on 01733 247135/07721189813, Maria on 01778 702237 or Allan on 01354 653290/07836 661102

S.O.S Solent Ostomates Support

Last Wednesday of the month (excluding December) 2pm – 4pm.

Kings Community Church, Upper Northam Road, Hedge End, Southampton SO3 4BB.

For further information call 07527 707069 or email solentostomates@hotmail.co.uk

Stevenage Ostomistics

Last Saturday morning of each month 10.30am – 1pm.

Oval Community Centre, Vardon Road, Stevenage SG1 5RD.

For information contact Judy Colston on 01438 354018 or email neilcolston@btinternet.com (each session is ended with chair yoga!)

Wing Stoma Support Group

Every 2 months, 11am – 12.30pm.

Wing Hall, 71 Leighton Road, Wing, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 0NN.

For information call 0800 036011

Workington

Every 2 months (October, December, February...) 2pm – 4pm.

Workington Infirmary, Park Lane, Workington CA14 2RW.

You are not alone, Chesham Support Group

Last Monday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm.

The Kings Church Chesham Offices, Unit 11 Chess Business Park, Moor Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 1SD.

For further details please contact Carla Wright 07846 354918 carla_wright@sky.com

Calling all support groups!

Ostomates and continence patients often call our Careline asking for advice and support. So, whether you're a stoma or continence support group, we'd love to share your details.

If you'd like to share the details of a group to include in future editions of Hand in Hand please email info@securicaremedical.co.uk.

Help is a phone call away

Whether you are placing your next order with SecuriCare, in need of a friendly chat or advice about your stoma or continence care, help is closer than you think.



Useful phone numbers

SecuriCare Careline
0800 585 125

Colostomy UK
0800 328 4257

Urostomy Association
01889 563 191

Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association
0800 018 4724

Bladder & Bowel Foundation
01926 357 220

Bladder and Bowel UK (PromoCon)
0161 607 8219

SecuriCare Orderline
0800 318 965

Junior Ostomy Support Helpline
0800 328 4257

Multiple Sclerosis Society
0808 800 8000

Spinal Injuries Association
0800 980 0501

Back Up
020 8875 1805

Mental wellbeing support

Our SecuriCare team are always ready to listen, but if you need some additional support with your mental wellbeing these wonderful charities are here too.

Mind
0300 123 3393

Samaritans
116 123

CALM
0800 58 58 58

Childline
0800 1111

Young Minds
0808 802 5544

The Silver Line
0800 4 70 80 90

Age UK
0800 678 1602

Cruse Bereavement Care
0808 808 1677

SecuriCare (Medical) Ltd, Cavell House, Knaves Beech Way,
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Email: info@securicaremedical.co.uk.
www.securecaremedical.co.uk.
PID 9900

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