

Convex Pouching Systems:

A Best Practice
Document for
Patients



Wound
Ostomy and
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What Is a Convex Pouching System?

There are two types of pouching systems, flat and convex. A flat pouching system lies flat on the skin around a stoma. The convex pouching system has a curved base like the bottom of a saucer. Therefore, the wafer, faceplate or convex ring curves outward toward the skin. The outward curve presses the skin down around the stoma. This allows the stoma to stick out more to ensure urine or stool empties into the pouch instead of underneath the pouching system.

Why Use a Convex Product?

Convex products may:

- Help the pouch stay on longer.
- Stop urine or stool leakage from occurring underneath the pouching system.
- Make the wearer feel more comfortable and secure.
- Prevent or stop skin irritation caused by frequent leakage.
- Improve wear time of pouching system.
- Save you time and money.

When May a Convex Product Be Used?

Convex products may be used to:

- Prevent frequent leakage under the wafer caused by
 - a stoma that opens at or below skin surface
 - wrinkles, scars, or creases in the skin near the stoma
 - a very soft abdomen with poor muscle tone around the stoma.
- Improve wear time for patients who have two-to-three days or less wear time with a flat pouching system.
- The addition of a barrier ring may also add convexity to a flat wafer and solve the leakage problem.

What Else Should I Know About Convex Products?

- The first convex pouching system should be fitted by a WOC Nurse.
- A follow-up visit may be needed to make sure the convex pouching system is working correctly.
- Convex products may leave an imprint on the skin.
- If a belt is used, it should be snug but not too tight. One should be able to insert two fingers under the belt without loosening it.
- Some convex products may be less flexible and less comfortable than flat pouching systems.
- Depending on the appearance of the stoma and abdomen, a convex pouching system with a shallow, medium or deep outward curve may be needed.
- Some convex products may be more expensive than flat products but may be economical if a longer wear time is achieved.
- A convex pouching system is not the solution for all leakage problems. It is important to see a WOC Nurse so they can recommend the right pouching system.

Glossary

Convex: A curved or outward rounded surface like the base of a saucer.

Flange: The rigid (hard) ring on a two-piece skin barrier (wafer) where the pouch is attached.

Pouching system: A pouch, worn over the stoma, which collects the urine or stool emptying out of the stoma. There are many different pouching systems.

Skin barrier (wafer): A solid square or round piece of adhesive material allowing the pouch and wafer to snap together.

Stoma: A surgically created opening in the intestine or urinary system brought out onto the skin of the abdomen.

WOC Nurse: A nurse with specialized education in caring for people who have wounds, stomas and/or bladder and bowel problems.



What Are the Different Types of Convex Products?

Cut-to-fit or moldable convex: This is a one-to- two piece pouching system allowing users to cut or mold the opening in the skin barrier to fit irregular shape stomas. These are especially recommended if the stoma is not round.

Pre-cut convex: This is a one- or two-piece pouching system with the opening already cut out to fit around the stoma.

Convex insert: These pre-sized plastic rings are used to adapt a flat flange to a convex flange in a two-piece pouching system.

Barrier strips/rings: These products can be molded to different shapes or sizes.

Custom-made convex pouch: A product with built-in convexity made by a special company.

Faceplate: This is a reusable product with built-in convexity.

Moldable Convex: (See Cut-to-fit or moldable convex above)

Ostomy belts and binders: These products may be used to give extra support.

Where Can I Buy Convex Products?

Look in a telephone directory or on the Internet for

- Local medical supply companies
- Mail-order medical supply companies. A WOC Nurse may be able to assist in the set-up for delivery of supplies through a catalog supply company.
- Ostomy manufacturers (most supply samples). The www.uoaa.org Web site has a complete list of manufacturers.

When Should I Call a WOC Nurse?

Call a WOC Nurse if there are:

- Problems with the stoma, such as bumps, cuts, bruises or more than usual bleeding. (All stomas bleed a small amount when touched with tissue or washcloth during cleansing.)
- Problems with the skin around the stoma, such as irritation or rash, bleeding, pain, burning, itching, open sores or skin color changes, which do not return to normal after removing the pouching system.
- Change in the color of stoma.
- Continued frequent leakage of pouching system.
- Weight gain or loss causing problems with adherence of the pouching system.

Where Can I Get More Information?

For more information, contact

- Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society (WOCN)(888) 224-9626/www.wocn.org
- United Ostomy Association of America (UOAA) (800) 826-0826/www.uoaa.org



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