

EXPECT MORE – TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTHCARE!

FIND YOUR VOICE:

Examples of when you or your advocate should SPEAK UP!

Remember: There is no such thing as a stupid question.

Relating to your ostomy surgery health care team (i.e., doctor, surgeon, ostomy nurse, case manager):

- Questions about long/short-term goals
- Clarification with any of the recommendations provided by your health team. Remember it's ok to say "I don't know."
- Unclear why you need to have surgery or if it will be permanent or temporary
- Questions on stoma position/location during marking
- If you are being discharged from a facility and don't understand the instructions provided to confidently self-manage your ostomy
- Unclear if you will receive home healthcare services to continue your ostomy education
- Unsure of how surgery will affect your daily life
- Knowing how and where to find a support group
- Seeking emotional support via a therapist/psychologist

Questions/Concerns for your doctor, surgeon, ostomy nurse during ongoing care:

- Peristomal skin challenges (burning, itching, sores, redness around the stoma)
- Significant change in your stoma color, output, size/shape
- No output from the stoma
- Pain issues
- Experiencing leakage on a regular basis
- Difficulties using supplies (.e.g, if unable to maintain a seal on your ostomy appliance for at least 48 hours)
- How to manage odor
- If you're at the doctor's office and don't understand what is being said

Relating to supplies/ostomy appliances from your ostomy supplier, and nurse:

- If running out of ostomy supplies before the next shipment is due
- If the supplies are not arriving on time/as promised
- Want to know more about other choices

The more questions you ask → more knowledge and understanding → informed decisions made = improved outcomes