

Mythbusters!

Facts and Truth to Fight Ostomy Stigma



MYTH:

Everyone will know that a person is wearing an ostomy pouch.

FACT:

No one will ever know unless an ostomate chooses to tell someone. Clothing rarely reveals an ostomy.

MYTH:

Only older people have ostomies.

FACT:

People of all ages have this life-saving surgery, even infants.



MYTH:

Ostomates are disabled and can't work.

FACT:

People living with an ostomy work every type of job imaginable. They lead active lives, play sports, swim and socialize.

You have likely met a person with an ostomy and never knew it.

MYTH:

People with an ostomy can only eat certain foods.

FACT:

Ostomates are not on a restricted diet. But they should be aware of the effects that various foods will have on stool output such as gas, color or blockage.

MYTH:

People wearing an ostomy pouch smell.

FACT:

Modern ostomy pouching application systems are **made to be odor-proof**. For added confidence some ostomates also use odor-control filters and deodorants.

MYTH:

People with an ostomy aren't physically intimate.

FACT:

People with ostomies live full and meaningful lives that include dating, having relationships and children/grandchildren.

MYTH:

People with an ostomy are homebound because their pouch leaks.

FACT:

A properly fitted pouching system with a secure seal will not leak. There are many types of pouches and accessories on the market. Specialty nurses such as Certified Wound Ostomy Continence nurses can evaluate stomas and find the proper pouching system to prevent leakage. It is possible on rare occasions an accident may occur.

MYTH:

Ostomies are permanent for everyone.

FACT:

For some they are, but **many ostomies are temporary** to help the digestive system heal after surgeries or conditions such as diverticulitis and then they are reversed.

For more information or support, visit www.ostomy.org

* Statistic calculated from researched UOAA population estimates and census data

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