

DOES YOUR STOMA HURT ?

Quite often people say that their stoma hurts. This is a surprise since stomas do not have sensation. You could cut, burn, do anything to the stoma and you would not feel a thing. That's hard to believe, but true stomas do not have receptors for pain.

Sometimes the lack of sensation can lead to problems. For example, an incorrectly fitting appliance may cut into the stoma, but no pain will be felt, therefore a stoma can be badly damaged before the problem is noticed. For this reason, it is important not to wear your pouch for extended periods of time, since it is good to check if the stoma is OK.

Actually, when people talk about stoma pain, they are usually talking about pain from the skin around the stoma. That skin, the peristomal skin, is full of nerve receptors that are sensitive to things such as heat, cold, chemicals and adhesives that cause pain. It is the skin that is sensing the pain, not the stoma. If any unusual symptoms or irritations are noticed, do not hesitate to contact your Stomal Therapy Nurse for an evaluation.

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