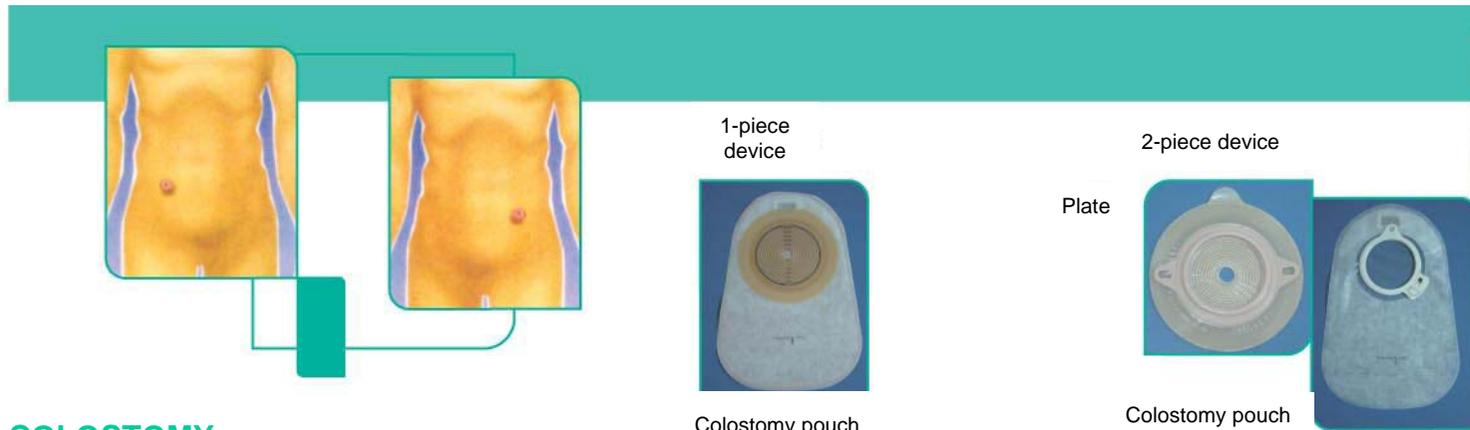


COLOSTOMIA



COLOSTOMY

Colostomy is an opening of the colon (large intestine) in the abdominal wall, which is used to allow the faeces to pass out of the body. The stoma may be located on the left or right-hand side of the abdominal wall.

Characteristics of the faeces

When the stoma is located on the left side of the abdomen, the faeces may be of a solid consistency, similar to that before surgery. When the stoma is located on the right-hand side, the faeces are more liquid.

1-piece device



Colostomy pouch

2-piece device

Plate



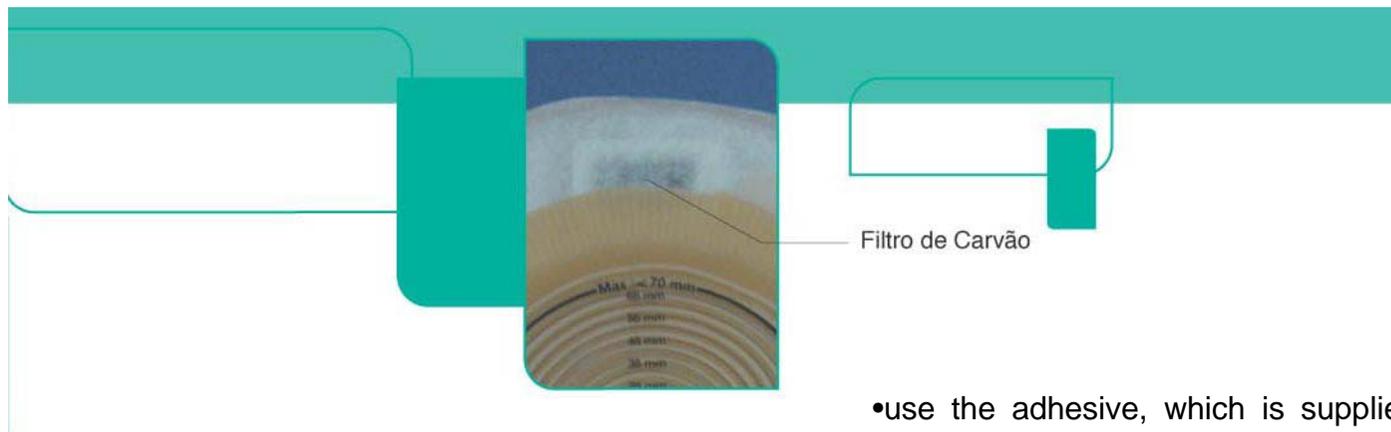
Colostomy pouch

Devices

Either a 1-piece or 2-piece device may be used, which must be cut according to the size of the stoma, as described in your manual. However, it should be noted that pre-cut size devices are available on the market.

If a 1-piece device is chosen, the pouch must be changed daily or whenever it is at half of its capacity.

If a 2-piece device is used, the plate can last for 4 to 5 days, if there is no leakage or infiltration of the faeces. The pouch must be changed daily or whenever it is at half of its capacity.



The 2-piece device is recommended in the first two to three months after surgery, whenever the skin is irritated around the stoma and chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment is being administered. Advice of a nurse is required.

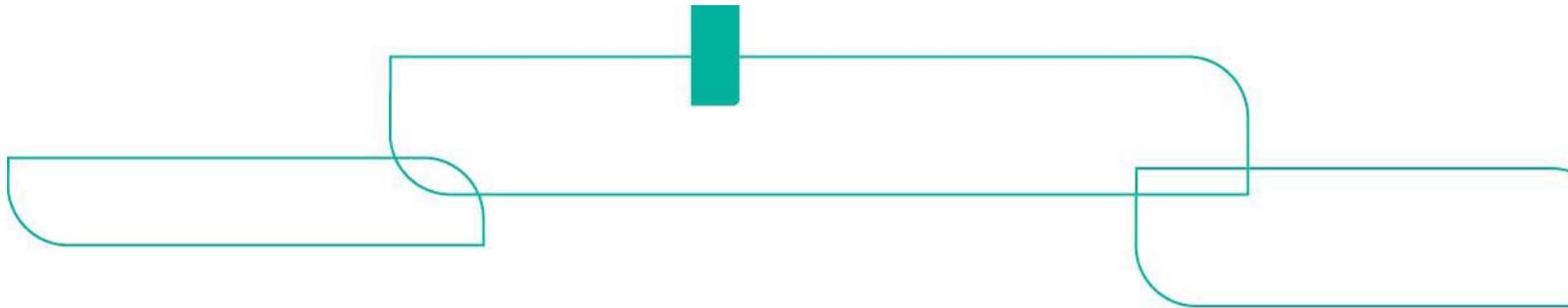
Devices are supplied with a carbon filter in order to prevent odour. The carbon filter remains active for six to eight hours, therefore you are advised to:

- change the bag in the morning;

- use the adhesive, which is supplied in the package, for the filter when taking a bath with the bag on; otherwise, the bag must be changed after bath.

It is important to be aware that:

- the stoma may retract within the wall of the abdomen (retraction);
- the stoma may protrude more than usual from the abdomen (prolapse);
- a hernia may appear around the stoma caused by weakness of the abdominal muscles or excessive force;
- the stoma might become very narrow, which makes the passage out of faeces difficult (stenosis).



In any of the above-mentioned cases advice of a stoma care nurse or doctor is required.

Rectal secretion

If you notice that there are secretions (mucous, faeces or other secretions) through the anus, there is no need to worry: this is due to the normal activity of the intestine. Careful daily hygiene and the use of an absorbing hygienic pad will make you comfortable.

Irrigation

Colostomies may cause incontinence (loss of sphincter control) of faeces and gases. The irrigation method is an alternative for some people with colostomies.

The use of the irrigation method requires medical advice and the assistance of a stoma care nurse.

