
Ostomy Care: Emptying Your Pouch

You need to empty a drainable pouch when it gets to be about one-third full. Don't let it get more than half full. This keeps the pouch from bulging under your clothes. It also helps prevent leaking and odor. To empty your pouch, follow the steps below in order.

Empty the pouch

Steps to emptying the pouch are as follows:

- Sit on or next to the toilet. Or stand in front of the toilet. Put a layer of toilet paper in the toilet bowl to keep stool from splashing.
- Pull your clothes away from the pouch.
- Hold the bottom of the pouch up. Open the Velcro closures or remove the clamp and set it aside.
- Slowly unroll the tail, or spout, over the toilet.
- Bend over the toilet to help prevent splashing
- Slide your fingers down the pouch to push out all the stool.



Clean the pouch

Steps to cleaning the pouch:

- Wipe the inside and outside of the tail with toilet paper. This helps prevent any odor.
- Check both sides of the pouch for tears or holes. If you find any, put on a new pouch.
- If the pouch closes with a clamp, rinse the clamp if there is stool on it.



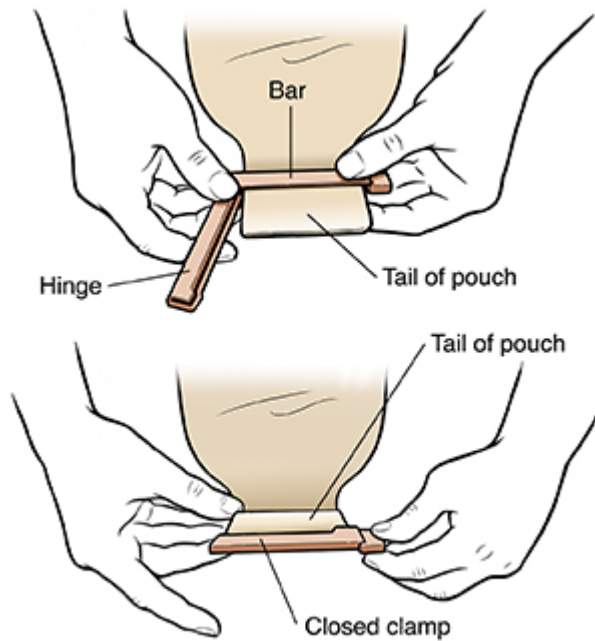
Close the pouch

If the pouch has Velcro closures:

- Properly fasten the Velcro closures to close the pouch.

If the pouch has a clamp:

- Hold the clamp open with the curved side, or hinge, toward your body.
- Lay the bar, or “knife,” of the clamp flat on the tail of the pouch, about 1 inch from the bottom of the tail.
- Fold the tail up over the bar. Make sure the tail lies flat against the bar. Also make sure the whole width of the tail is held within the bar. If it isn't, the pouch may leak or smell.
- Hold the tail of the pouch firmly against the bar. Then close the clamp by bringing the hinge up to the bar. Press the two parts together until they lock.
- Wash your hands with clean, warm or cold running water for at least 20 seconds when you are done. (Hum Happy Birthday twice if you need a timer.) Or use a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. Handwashing is important if your hands are possibly soiled with stool.



Releasing gas

Gas can collect in the pouch even if there is no stool. Never puncture the pouch to release gas. If you do, you'll break the odor-proof seal. Stool can also leak if the pouch is punctured. To release gas, follow these steps:

- Hold the tail of the pouch up slightly and open the Velcro closures or remove the clamp.
- Hold the top of the pouch with one hand.
- With the other hand, push the gas out by sliding your thumb and index finger from the top to the bottom of the pouch.
- Secure the Velcro closures or reclamp the pouch as described above.
- Wash your hands when you are done.