

What if...

you get rectal discharge?

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What is rectal discharge?

If you have had an operation resulting in the formation of a stoma, but have not had your rectum removed you may get a discharge from your back passage which is normal. The rectum produces a natural lubricating substance called mucus which is discharged through your back passage.

What causes rectal discharge?

Although bowel waste no longer goes through your back passage, it is normal for the lining of the rectum to continue to produce and discharge mucus. The amount of mucus produced varies from person to person. Mucus is clear or putty coloured, although initially it may contain stool debris which stains it brown. Sometimes the mucus is sticky or thick and may be uncomfortable. It can also irritate the skin around your back passage.

Hints and tips

- *To evacuate the mucus, sit on the lavatory and gently bear down as if you were having your bowels opened. Do not strain*
- *If the mucus won't come away naturally, it can build up in your back passage and become uncomfortable. If this happens, a glycerine suppository inserted into the back passage may be advised by your doctor*
- *Mucus leakage or discharge may cause the skin around your back passage to get sore. Regular gentle washing and drying of the area will help to prevent soreness*
- *Using a barrier cream or barrier film such as OstoGUARD & Astoa® or an appropriate alternative can help to protect and soothe your skin*
- *Wear a disposable pad or panty liner, which will help to absorb the discharge*
- *Mucus leakage and discharge may decrease with time*

Contact your doctor or stoma care nurse if the mucus discharge becomes yellowish green or contains blood.