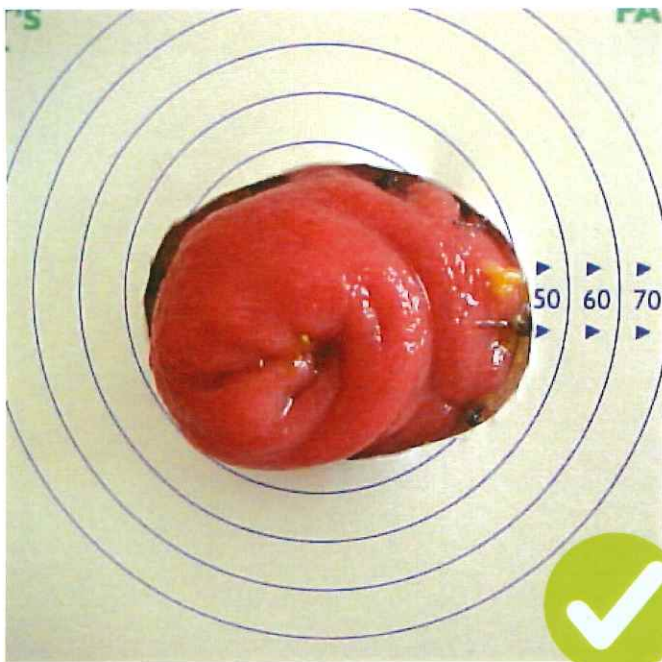


# Caring for your skin

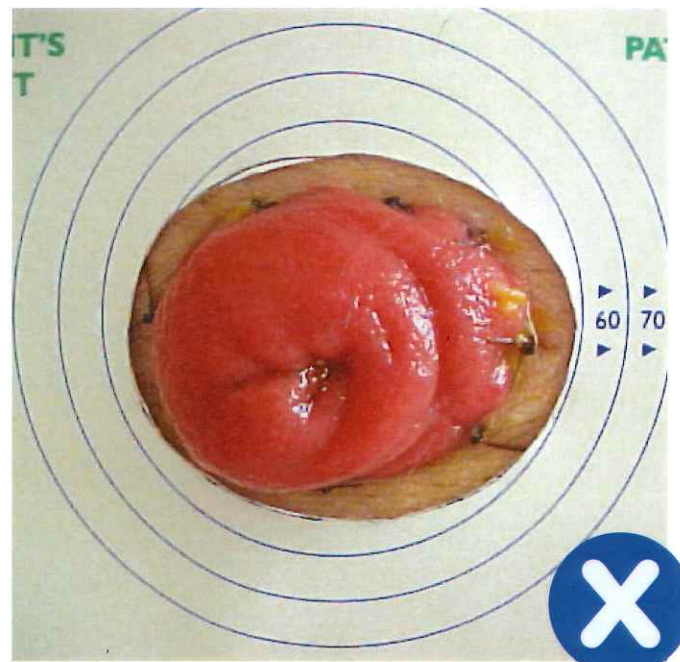
Caring for your skin is an essential part of looking after your stoma.

Immediately after your surgery, your stoma and surrounding skin may look swollen and even a little irritated. This is all to be expected post operatively and with good care it should improve in appearance over time.

You may find that your product requirements may alter due to the changes in your stoma size and shape. Your stoma template will alter and should be checked at least weekly for the first 8 weeks, or particularly if lots of healthy skin can be seen through the hole.



**Correct Stoma Template**



**Incorrect Stoma Template**

*The area of skin around your stoma needs ongoing care and attention to prevent and reduce the risk of soreness.*

If you start to develop sore, irritated or even broken skin, do not delay in contacting your Stoma Care Nurse for appropriate advice on treatment and the need for alternative products.

# What causes sore skin around your stoma?

Good **skin care** is vital to prevent sore skin. Sore skin is a common problem and is often seen, but easily treated. There are a number of reasons why this may be happening. This isn't a complete list, so please contact your **Stoma Care Nurse** for further guidance if your symptoms persist.

## Ill-fitting stoma bag

Following surgery you may find that your abdominal shape changes, especially if you gain or lose weight. This means the skin close to your stoma may not sit evenly against your bag, exposing healthy skin and

allowing sore skin to occur or leakage to take place. It is therefore important to regularly check your template size and suitability of your stoma bag.

## Trauma to stoma or skin

Your stoma and the surrounding skin is at risk of damage and so should be well cared for. An incorrectly sized template may rub and cause injury to the side of the stoma, which may include small ulcers. It may be that the shaped of the stoma remains the same but the size has altered. Get into the habit of checking your stoma,

template and surrounding skin regularly.

## Product sensitivity

Sensitivity to the adhesive on your stoma bag is rare, but can occur even if you've been using it for a long time. It may begin as a slight irritation and become progressively worse if left untreated.

## Folliculitis

This is an inflammation of the hair follicles. It appears like small pimples, occasionally pus-filled, that can be painful and is often seen after shaving the skin around the stoma. As soon as you notice any changes to the skin immediately around your stoma, please contact your **Stoma Care Nurse** for advice about treatment.

## Change in output

A change in output from your stoma could contribute to sore skin. If you experience loose stools and are using a **closed stoma bag**, you may find it helpful to temporarily use a drainable bag to prevent frequent **bag changes**, which can result in sore skin.