



## Information Sheet - Pancaking

*Pancaking occurs when a vacuum (absence of air) occurs in the stoma bag preventing the stoma output dropping down into the bag. This can happen if you have a colostomy or ileostomy.*

### What causes pancaking?

The main reason for pancaking is because the filters on the bag let out all the air to the extent that there is no air left in the bag. The vacuum effect that occurs causes the plastic on the inside of the bag to stick onto the stoma. This does not harm the stoma or prevent the output from coming out of the stoma. However, it can lead to the build-up of the output on top of the stoma, which then can push under the adhesive/baseplate onto the skin, instead of dropping down into the bag. This action may then increase the risk of leakage and sore skin.

### Hints and tips

Aiming to have the faecal output more of a softer consistency can be beneficial; this will help the output to move down into your bag.

#### This can be achieved by:

- Eating regular meals throughout the day
- Drinking an extra couple of glasses of water or squash on top of the recommended 6-8 cups a day
- A balanced diet which includes good amounts of fibre and fluids
- Fibrous food includes fresh fruit, leafy vegetables, salads, beans, brown bread, rice and pasta
- Fluids; fresh orange juice with bits, prune juice



### What can you do to reduce pancaking?

- **Blow air into the bag just before you apply your bag** - This will help contain a pocket of air in the bag.
- **Cover the flatus filter** - Your box of stoma bags will usually contain a strip of adhesive filter cover discs (stickers). Place one of these over the filter. The adhesive disc can easily be removed to release any excess wind if this builds up (ballooning).
- **Trapping of air in the bag** - Some people have found a piece of screwed up tissue or cotton wool ball in the bag helps. Placing this in the bag before wearing it enables some air to be trapped within the material of the tissue/cotton wool.
- **Regular opening of the bag** - If you have a two piece or drainable appliance, release the bag from the baseplate at regular intervals to encourage air into the bag. This action 'devacs' the bag by allowing a pocket of air to be re-introduced into the bag.
- **Try adding a lubricant into your stoma bag** - There are lubricating deodorant/oils available on prescription, or some people have found using baby oil/vegetable oil onto the inside surface of the bag will help the faeces to slide down to the bottom of the bag. Take care not to get any oil/lubricant on the adhesive as this can reduce the effectiveness of the seal.

### More support

If you did not find all the information that you need in this factsheet, you can contact Coloplast Charter on **0800 783 1434** for advice and support. Alternatively, you can visit [www.coloplastcharter.co.uk](http://www.coloplastcharter.co.uk) or discuss your questions and concerns with your healthcare professional.