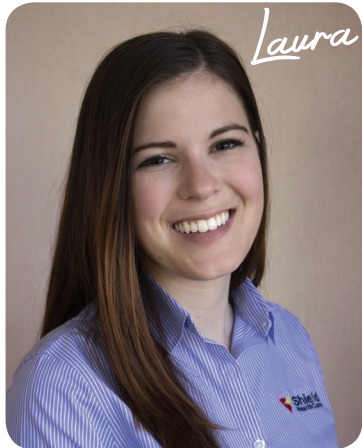


About Laura Cox, Shield HealthCare's Ostomy Lifestyle Specialist



As an ostomate since 2011, Laura offers a fresh and candid approach on living with an ostomy.

In her supportive role at Shield HealthCare, Laura will provide our customers, employees and referral partners with valuable tips and perspective, from her own personal experience.

“This isn’t the life I anticipated, but IT’S A GIFT.”

Where Laura will make a difference:

- As a blog host on Shield HealthCare’s online ostomy community
- Producing online video content with tips, advice and how-to’s
- Offering in-person support at local conferences and trade shows
- Supporting our ostomy customers with inspiration and optimism



Ask Laura!

Ostomy Lifestyle Specialist at Shield HealthCare



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www.shieldhealthcare.com

Answers to the Top 10 Most Frequently Asked Ostomy Questions

Answers for ostomates to the 10 MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Ask Laura!

Laura Cox, Shield HealthCare's
Ostomy Specialist Expert

1. What's the best time to attend to your ostomy?

I find the best time to change my ostomy is about 30-45 minutes after I wake up. I take Imodium immediately, walk around for 10 minutes, and do not eat or drink anything until after I have changed my ostomy.

2. How many times do you empty your pouch in one day? How do you empty it?

I empty my diverting ileostomy 6-10 times a day. The number of times I empty depends on how much Imodium I take and if I eat before I drink. Colostomies are generally emptied less, and urostomies are emptied around every 2 to 4 hours.

3. What can you eat with an ostomy?

Many people do not have to change their diet radically. Some ostomates may not be able to fully digest vegetables and fruits with skins. The best way to figure out what you can tolerate is to gradually add different foods to your diet. When you introduce a new food, try taking a couple bites, chewing very well and following it up with a glass of fluids. If your body seems to be handling the food okay after a couple hours, follow the same process. This method helps avoid any food blockages for people with ileostomies or colostomies. People with urostomies shouldn't have to change their diet, but must monitor fluid intake carefully.

4. Can you control your bowel movements?

People with ileostomies cannot control their bowel movements, and similarly people with urostomies cannot control their urine flow. Many people with colostomies do not have control over their bowel movements either, but if a person has a descending colostomy, they may be a candidate for irrigation. This helps people with colostomies become more continent and have a say in when they eliminate waste.

5. What can I do to eliminate or lessen odor?

Shield HealthCare carries odor eliminating liquid drops you can put into your ostomy bag. I keep this product in my purse and use it after every time I empty my ostomy bag. I also like to carry around a small air freshener just in case I forget to use my odor eliminating drops.

6. Can you go in the water?

Yes! The waterproof barrier works well. There are also other products that can make your ostomy more water resistant by "picture framing" the wafer.

7. What clothes can you wear with an ostomy?

I can wear most everything with my ostomy. I like use Spanx under my clothes, which helps conceal my ostomy well when wearing tight clothes. Patterns and darker colors help conceal my ostomy well. Find more suggestions for clothing options with an ostomy at www.shieldhealthcare.com/ostomylife.

8. Can you have an intimate relationship or get pregnant with an ostomy?

You can have intimate relationships with an ostomy. The ostomy doesn't put limitations on sexual intercourse. You can get pregnant with an ostomy as well, but sometimes people with ostomies have to use in vitro fertilization because scar tissue can build up, making it difficult to fertilize the woman's ovum. Be sure to discuss pregnancy planning with your physician.

9. How do you tell people about your ostomy?

I generally tell people about my illness, and how it affected my life negatively. I then go on to say I had surgery to remove my colon and now I feel much better! As a result of my surgery I had to get an ostomy. At this point I ask the person I'm talking to if they know what an ostomy is. If they say no, I go on to say that because my intestines are not linked up to my rectum now, the doctors had to pull a little bit of my small intestine outside my body and now it empties into an external bag. I add that I love my ostomy and that it has given me a second chance at life. I always paint my ostomy in a positive light when telling people about it.

10. How difficult is it to travel with an ostomy?

I don't find it difficult to travel with an ostomy. I pre-cut one or two wafers, keep all my ostomy supplies in my carryon luggage and make sure to empty my ostomy prior to going through security. I usually smoothly sail through security and arrive at my destination without any problems. Travel by train and car is easy, too. It is always helpful to bring twice as many supplies as you think you'll need when you travel. For official travel guidelines, visit www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/ostomies



Where to find Laura:
Visit shieldhealthcare.com/ostomylife

Come see Laura's latest how-to videos on shieldhealthcare.com/ostomylife