

# ILEAL CONDUIT

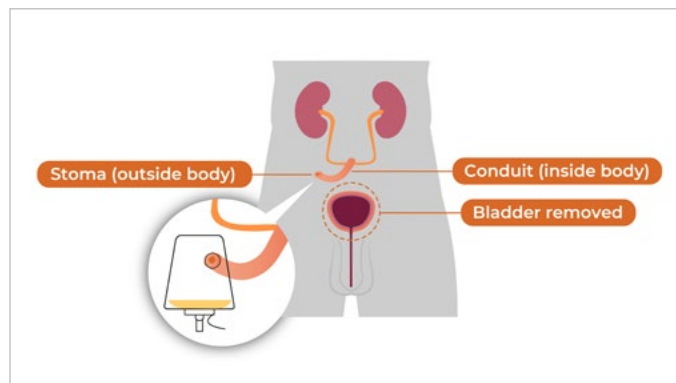
## What is an Ileal Conduit?

The most common type of **urinary diversion**, an **ileal conduit**, is a way for your body to get rid of urine after bladder removal surgery. It does not store urine. Part of the small intestine (called the **ileum**) creates a new path for urine to leave your body.

## How is an Ileal Conduit Created?

After a radical cystectomy (surgery to remove the bladder), doctors make a new way for urine to exit your body using a piece of your small intestine called the ileum. They attach one end of it to a small opening in your belly, called a **stoma**. This opening lets the urine leave your body. The stoma is not painful because it does not have any nerve endings.

- The **ureters** (the tubes that carry urine from the kidneys to the bladder) are connected to the other end of this piece of intestine.
- **Urine** flows from your kidneys, through the ureters, into the ileal conduit, and out of your body through the stoma.
- A special bag, called an ostomy appliance, covers the stoma on your belly. This bag sticks to the skin around the stoma. Urine goes into the bag. You empty the urine with a valve at the bottom of the bag.



## ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

- *Is an ileal conduit a good option for me?*
- *What are the benefits and risks of the ileal conduit?*
- *Where will you put the opening for the stoma?*
- *Ask them "How often do you do this procedure? How successful is it for people like me?"*
- *Ask what you should expect during recovery, including how you might feel and what to look out for.*
- *What symptoms or side effects should I look out for after surgery?*
- *How do I choose what supplies (like the bag and skin barrier) to use? Where can I buy supplies?*
- *How will the bag affect my lifestyle? Is there anything I will not be able to do? Your health-care team can tell you if there are any activities you should avoid and how to adjust to your new routine.*

## TERMS TO KNOW

- **Ileum:** A section of your small intestine.
- **Ostomy nurse:** A nurse who helps patients learn how to take care of their ostomy (the opening where urine or waste comes out).
- **Stoma:** A small opening in the belly area that allows urine to leave your body.
- **Ureters:** The tubes that carry urine from your kidneys to your bladder.
- **Urinary diversion:** A new path for urine to leave your body after your bladder is removed.
- **Urologist:** A doctor who treats diseases of the urinary system (kidneys, bladder).

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## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Advice from bladder cancer patients who have experience with an Ileal Conduit

### BEFORE YOUR ILEAL CONDUIT SURGERY

- **Ask about special preparations:** Talk to your doctor about how to get ready for surgery. This could include:
  - Which medicines or herbal supplements will you need to stop taking?
  - What foods and drinks to avoid before surgery?
- **Talk to the ostomy nurse:**
  - The ostomy nurse will help you decide where to place the stoma, based on the type of clothes you wear.
  - The nurse will show you how to change the bag and keep the skin around it clean.
  - They can also suggest ostomy supplies that might work best for you.

### AFTER YOUR ILEAL CONDUIT SURGERY

The ileal conduit is the simplest type of urinary diversion. With proper care, you can avoid most problems. Taking care of your ileal conduit will become part of your daily routine.

- **Swelling after surgery:** Your stoma might be swollen at first, but it will shrink as you heal. Be sure to check that your ostomy supplies still fit as the swelling goes down.
- **Clothing:** After you heal, most people can wear the same clothes they did before surgery. Just make sure your clothes are comfortable around your stoma.
- **Be prepared for leaks:** Keep extra supplies in your car or at work. Keep them with you when you travel so you can change your bag if needed.
- **If you notice a bulge or bump near your stoma** that is uncomfortable or makes it hard to keep your bag in place, talk to your doctor.
- **If you have trouble with leaks or irritation around your stoma,** ask your ostomy nurse for help.
- **Watch for urinary tract infections (UTIs)** and call your doctor if you have:
  - Strong-smelling, cloudy, or dark urine.
  - Blood in your urine.
  - Pain in your lower back.

### SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT

- **Talk to your family and friends:** It is okay to ask for help when you need it. Let your loved ones know about your bag and how they can support you.
- **Learn more about ostomies:** Visit the United Ostomy Associations of America website at [www.ostomy.org](http://www.ostomy.org) or by calling (800) 826-0826.
- **Try different supplies:** Companies can send you free ostomy samples, so you can see which products work best for you. They also have ostomy nurses who can answer any questions you have.



< Scan this code to learn more about cystectomies:

### The Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN)

*BCAN's mission is to increase public awareness about bladder cancer, advance bladder cancer research, and provide educational and support services for the bladder cancer community.*



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