

Wound terms and definitions



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This edition features ostomy definitions. The definitions are all from the *WCET International Ostomy Guideline* (2014) and will also be available on the WCET website. Publishing definition should allow for consistency in terms and definitions for everyone, regardless of where they live. The remainder of the ostomy definitions will be in the September issue.

Term	Definition
Abdominoperineal resection	The rectum, anus and perirectal lymph nodes are removed for rectal cancer. To accomplish this, an abdominal and perineal surgical approach is used. During this surgery a permanent colostomy stoma is created.
Allergic contact dermatitis	Rash resulting from allergy to one or more of the pouch, barrier or accessory product components that touch the skin.
Anastomosis	The joining or connecting of one section of the bowel to another. May also be referred to as an 'end-to-end anastomosis'.
Appliance	A term that refers to an ostomy pouch or ostomy bag. An appliance can be one piece, where the skin barrier is permanently attached or two piece, where the appliance attaches onto the skin barrier and can be removed to empty the appliance. Appliances can also be open-ended so they can be emptied or closed-ended. Appliances with a closed end do not open on the bottom so they must be removed to be emptied.
Bowel obstruction	The flow of waste material through the bowel is blocked; can be caused by scar tissue, tumours, severe inflammation; produces symptoms of nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and inability to pass stool waste. Treated medically and, if not resolved, surgery to relieve the obstruction is necessary.
Candidiasis — See fungal skin rash	
Caput medusae (peristomal varices)	Engorged veins create a blue/purple 'halo' around the stoma due to hypertension in the portal (liver) blood system. Can result in bleeding if skin traumatised.
Colectomy	Surgical removal of part or the entire colon (large intestine) due to cancers or non-cancerous conditions such as ruptured diverticulitis or severe bowel inflammation.
Colitis (ischaemic)	Colon tissue is injured due to lack of mesenteric blood flow to the colon.
Colitis (ulcerative)	A type of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) in which the colon mucous lining is irritated causing abdominal pain, bloody diarrhoea, weight loss, anaemia and fatigue.
Colon	The large bowel or large intestine. The colon's function is to receive the waste products from the small bowel (ileum), absorb water and sodium, and then excrete the waste through the anus.
Colostomy	A surgically created opening in the abdomen where part of the colon is brought to skin level to allow passage of stool waste. Colostomies are created to treat cancer of the colon or rectum, trauma to the colon, or ruptured diverticulitis. Colostomies are often referred to by the section of the colon that is brought to the skin: ascending colostomy , transverse colostomy , descending colostomy or sigmoid colostomy . Expected output is mushy to formed consistency.
(Ascending) colostomy	A surgically created opening in the abdomen where the ascending colon is brought to skin level to allow passage of stool waste. Waste produced by this stoma is expected to be liquid to mushy consistency.
(Transverse) colostomy	A surgically created opening in the abdomen where the transverse colon is brought to skin level to allow passage of stool waste. Waste from this stoma is usually mushy consistency.

(Descending) colostomy	A surgically created opening in the abdomen where the descending colon is brought to skin level to allow passage of stool waste. Waste from this stoma is usually soft consistency.
(Sigmoid) colostomy	A surgically created opening in the abdomen where the sigmoid colon is brought to skin level to allow passage of stool waste. Waste from this stoma is usually soft to formed consistency.
End (colostomy)	The end of a section of the colon is brought up to the skin to be made into a stoma. Both colostomies and ileostomies can be 'end' stomas.
Loop (colostomy)	A type of stoma in which a loop of the large intestine is brought to the skin to create a stoma. This technique is used to create temporary stomas, stomas for persons who cannot tolerate a lengthy surgery and as palliative stomas for terminal cancer patients with bowel obstructions.
Colostomy irrigation	A procedure in which water is put into the bowel (colostomy) to stimulate a bowel movement. The goal is to regulate when the bowel passes stool.
Contact (irritant) dermatitis	Inflammation and skin breakdown of the peristomal skin as a result of contact with stoma output.
Crohn's disease	An inflammatory disease of the bowel, often affecting the small bowel, which can affect tissue anywhere from the mouth to the anus. Crohn's disease affects all the layers of the bowel and can result in strictures (narrowing of the bowel) and fistulas (opening between the bowel and other structures).
Cystectomy	The bladder is surgically removed, most often due to bladder cancer.
Dehiscence	The separation of previously joined tissues. When referring to a stoma, it is the separation of the stoma from the skin, at the mucocutaneous junction. (See also-mucocutaneous separation.)
Diverticulosis	Small sacs form in the large bowel where the lining on the intestine protrudes through a weak place in the wall of the intestine; often no symptoms are present.
Diverticulitis	Diverticulosis sacs become inflamed and cause abdominal pain; often treated medically; if ruptured, will require surgery to repair the bowel and a temporary colostomy to excrete stool waste while the repaired bowel heals.
Epidermal hyperplasia (peristomal)	Overgrowth of granulation (healing) tissue around a stoma. Often due to exposure of the peristomal skin to the stoma output from an incorrectly fitting pouch. Indicates need for stoma reassessment and pouch refitting.
Enterostomal therapist (ET)	A nurse who has undertaken specialised education to manage patients with ostomies. (May also be called: wound ostomy continence nurse or stoma care nurse.)
Evisceration	A complication in which abdominal contents protrude through a dehisced wound.
Faceplate	The part of a pouch system that sticks to the skin. (See also 'skin barrier' or 'wafer'.)
Familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP)	An inherited gastrointestinal condition where many polyps begin forming in the bowel during the teenage years. Persons with FAP are at high risk for development of colon cancer. Treatment of choice is to remove the entire colon.
Fistula	An abnormal connection between an organ, vessel, or intestine and another structure. Fistulas are usually the result of injury or surgery. It can also result from infection or inflammation.
Fistula (enterocutaneous)	A spontaneously occurring abnormal opening between the small bowel and the skin.
Fistula (mucous)	The dormant or defunctionalised part of the bowel is brought to skin level and a stoma is created.
Folliculitis	Hair follicles around the stoma become inflamed. Occurs as result of pulling on the hair during pouch removal or from frequent shaving of the peristomal skin.
Flange	The part of a faceplate for a two-piece pouch that connects with the pouch to the faceplate.
Fungal skin rash (Candidiasis)	A yeast rash under skin barrier or tape portion of pouch. Can occur with excessive moisture under the pouch, cleansing skin with antibacterial soaps, patient taking antibiotic medications, diabetic patients.
Food blockage	Fibrous food material (raw vegetables, fruits with peels, nuts, popcorn...) collect proximal to the stoma and rectus abdominal muscle. If not resolved by the patient, will need ileal lavage by a professional to resolve the blockage.
Reference: WCET. WCET International Ostomy Guideline. Zulkowski K, Ayello EA & Stelton S (Eds). Perth, Australia: WCET.	

