

Stylist tips and tricks for dressing with an ostomy



Stylist Birgit Axelsen gives styling tips and inspiration on how to dress for situations where you may want to conceal your pouch. Birgit has selected three sets of clothes each for men and women and provides some helpful tips to keep in mind when selecting clothes for your wardrobe.

Tips from the stylist

For women

1. Pants that stretch and a loose blouse

Pants with a stretchy waistband are comfortable and keep the pouch in place. A shirt with loose pleats will fall lightly over the pouch and camouflage it well. Wear a jacket if you think others will notice if your pouch is full.



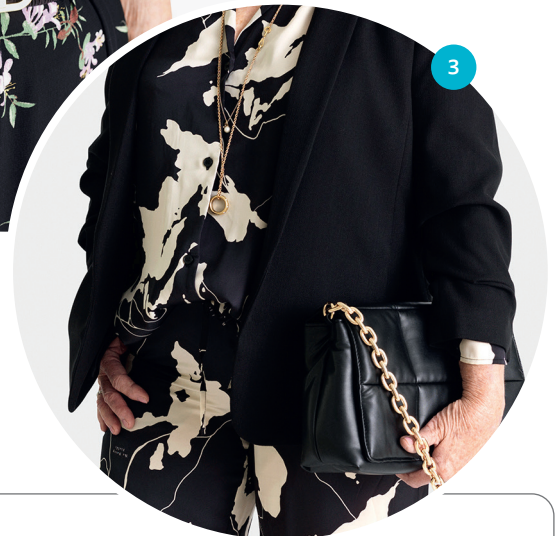
2. Patterned dresses

A patterned dress covers the pouch well. This dress also has a frill over the pouch so the area over it is not smooth. Wear it as it is or use a belt to create a waist.



3. Layering

Layering is a great way to camouflage your pouch, even when it gets full. Add a cardigan or a blazer depending on how formal you want to look.



What do women with an ostomy think about underwear?

Survey results show that many women like to wear high-waisted, microfiber panties that hold the pouch in place. Some prefer shapewear, others feel the right undershirt plays a big role in holding and camouflaging the pouch. Choose shapewear in a larger size to avoid it tightening over the pouching system.

Good tips for women:

"A bodysuit is a great way to keep the pouch in place."

"You can ensure the edge of your underwear doesn't sit where the pouching system is by wearing larger sized shapewear, which will provide a firm fit without pressing too tightly."

"Wear microfiber tops underneath your clothes, as they hold the pouch in place well."



Shaping bodysuit

Lightweight-shaping shorts



Tips from the stylist

For men

1. Layering

A turtleneck sweater and a jacket will camouflage your pouch as the jacket will hang over the sweater. A patterned jacket lights up and draws attention away from the center of your body.



2. The coarse knit

Coarse knit materials do not lie flat against the body, so they will help mask the contours of the pouch well. With a plain knitted sweater, consider pairing it with trousers with a pattern or bright shoes to shift the focus away from the ostomy area.



3. The suit

A suit trouser option with a wide leg cut could offer more room around the stoma, depending on where your stoma is located and whether you have a bulge. Trousers are also available with adjustable waistbands or with drawstrings that can help. A striped or patterned shirt will help camouflage the pouch better.



What do men with an ostomy think about underwear?

Survey results show that many males with an ostomy are happy to use special ostomy underwear, elastic ostomy belts, or hernia belts that hold the pouch close to the body.

Good tips for men:

"A hernia belt will keep everything in place and support the stoma during heavy lifting."

"Low-waisted underwear briefs are tight, while other underwear like boxer shorts cover the stoma and are more comfortable."





General wardrobe tips from the stylist

- Clean out your wardrobe and put your clothes in these three piles: keep, throw away and store.
- Consider whether some clothes can be kept if small adjustments are made by a tailor.
- To give you a complete overview, sort items separately and place them on hangers.
- A full-length mirror and good lighting are a must when you need to see what looks good on you.

1. Recommended materials

Heavy materials, and materials with structure, patterns, stripes, or plaids camouflage the pouch best. If you are worried that others will see your pouch when it's full, or if you have a bulge around your stoma that you don't want to draw attention to, add a loose-fitting vest, cardigan, or jacket.

2. Cut and fit

Garments made from stretchable materials hold the pouch close to the body and provide space. Having an elastic or adjustable waistband will allow you to change your waist width when needed. Pay attention to the types of cuts for different pieces of clothing, as different styles suit different bodies.

3. Shift focus

Conceal your pouch by adding details that move the focus away from the center of your body. Accessorize your look with eye-catching jewelry, shoes, bags, and nail polish, or wear a hat or brightly colored scarf. This will help draw attention to your face, hands, and feet instead of the center of your body.

This information is for general education purposes only. Each person's situation is unique so your experience may not be the same.

