



**Bullen.**

A guide to **living with a stoma**

# Travelling with a stoma



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# Travelling with a stoma

One of the most common questions that ostomates ask about involve travel, in particular, flying abroad and how to manage your stoma in a hot foreign climate. Having a stoma doesn't limit your ability to travel but it may just take a little extra forward planning.

## The myths and facts around travelling with a stoma

1



### Will my bag 'inflate' on the plane?

The cabin pressure on a plane shouldn't have any effect on your stoma or inflate your bag.

### Will I get through security with my bag?

Most security personnel are trained to deal with passengers who have an invisible illness or disability such as an ostomy. If the airport has a body scanner then your stoma bag will show up, but the normal scanners should not pick it up. but should they wish to examine you then you are able to request that they do so in a private room. If you have any questions at all then it is best to contact 'special assistance' at the airport you are travelling through.

2



A woman with dark hair tied back is smiling and holding a young child with blonde hair in a swimming pool. The water is bright blue and rippling. The scene is framed by a dark blue circular border.

3

## Can I swim with a stoma?

Yes! You can swim in the sea or in the swimming pool with a stoma. Your bag shouldn't have any issues withstanding the water but if you are worried at all then pop on a couple of flange extenders around your bag for extra security.

## Will the heat affect my bag?

It shouldn't do, but some people find that the heat can sometimes affect the adherence of the bags so you may need to change it more often than if you were at home. Some people also find that the change in climate, food and drinks can also upset their tummy for a few days so it's best to be prepared.

A tropical beach scene with several tall palm trees against a clear blue sky. The foreground is a wide expanse of golden sand. The scene is framed by a dark blue circular border.

4

## How many supplies should I take with me?

We would say that it is worth taking at least double the supplies that you would normally use on a daily basis. This is to take into consideration that a hot climate can sometimes affect how well your bag sticks to your skin and so can any lotions or oils that come into contact with your bag. Some people may also find that a change in diet and drinks can also cause a tummy upset so having extra bags will cover you for this issue. Remember that your supplier may need a couple of weeks to deliver your order so make sure you order your holiday supplies in plenty of time.



## How to obtain extra medical allowance for a flight

Contact the 'special assistance services' number with the airline that you are flying with. They will be able to advise you if they offer any additional hand luggage to take medical equipment on board. Most airlines will make some allowance. It is down to the individual airline whether they charge for this extra hand luggage or whether they provide it for free.

## Taking supplies and prescription medications on a flight

While the liquid restrictions for hand luggage is under 100mls, for essential medication you may carry more than 100mls providing you have the relevant documentation from your doctor. Airport staff may need to open the containers to screen the liquid at security.

It is worth contacting your airline if your medication involves needles and syringes as each individual airline will have their own set of rules of how these need to be stored and administered if required during the flight.

Most airlines will request you to carry a copy of your prescription and/ or a doctors note covering the medication. You may find it's easier to take adhesive remover wipes rather than sprays and pre-cut your stoma bags to avoid needing scissors.



## Invisible disabilities sunflower lanyard scheme



The sunflower lanyard scheme is being rolled out across the airports and is designed to discreetly make airport staff aware that you are travelling with a hidden disability. This may then prompt staff to offer you extra assistance to make sure that travelling through the airport is as stress free as possible. It is not there to let you queue jump and will not get you through security any quicker. Staff may offer you extra help with your luggage and offer you assistance to help you on board your flight. Contact special assistance at the airport you are travelling through to see if they support the sunflower lanyard scheme.

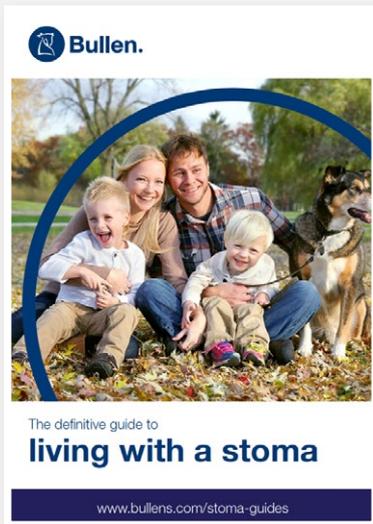
## Obtaining a RADAR key

If you are travelling around the UK then you can purchase a [RADAR key](#) for around £3, which opens around 9,000 accessible toilet facilities around the UK. [The Irish Wheelchair Association](#) have their own version of the key for Ireland and in Europe there is the [Euro WC key](#), this mainly unlocks facilities in Germany, Switzerland and Austria.



# All guides in our series...

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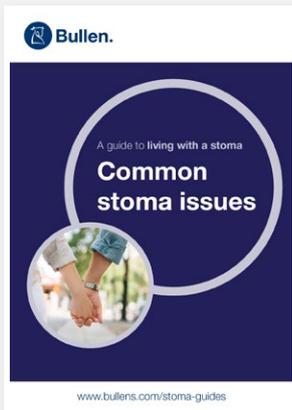
The definitive guide to living with a Stoma (includes all guides)



The right bag for you



How to look after your skin with a stoma



Common stoma issues



Where to get help and support for your stoma



Guide to diet and exercise after a stoma surgery



Travelling with a stoma



Clothing and your stoma

# Can we help?

Why not give us a call today and speak to one of our friendly personal customer advisors and find out more about how Bullen Healthcare can help you get on with life with a stoma without any worries.

Call us on

**Freephone 0800 031 5401**

Visit us at

**[www.bullens.com/stoma-guide](http://www.bullens.com/stoma-guide)**

## Useful Links

Ileostomy and Internal Pouch Support Group

**[www.iasupport.org](http://www.iasupport.org)**

Colostomy UK

**[www.colostomyuk.org](http://www.colostomyuk.org)**

Urostomy Association

**[www.urostomyassociation.org.uk](http://www.urostomyassociation.org.uk)**