Definition of a Fistula
An abnormal opening between two hollow organs or between a hollow organ and the skin. Predisposing factors for fistula formation include impaired ability to heal after surgery, Crohn’s disease, breakdown of intestinal anastomosis, or infection.

Examples of Fistulas
• Enterocutaneous fistula – An opening between the small intestine and the skin. Drainage will likely be liquid, may be high volume, and will contain digestive enzymes that are damaging to the skin
• Colocutaneous fistula – An opening between the colon and the skin. Output can be liquid to semi-formed in consistency, are usually malodorous, and may contain gas
• Vesicocutaneous fistula – An opening between the bladder and the skin which drains urine
• Spit fistula or esophagostomy – An opening between the esophagus and the skin that drains mucus and any fluids that may be given orally

Challenges Associated with Fistula Management
• Although there are predisposing factors, often a fistula is an unplanned occurrence related to surgery or disease and therefore, challenging for patients, families, and caregivers
• Often located in difficult areas for management (i.e., near or in incision lines, creases, tubes, or other fistulas)
• Often the fistula opening is at or below skin level
• Drainage is often corrosive to skin, malodorous, and may be of high volume

Key Goals for Nursing Management
• Protect the skin – The output from a fistula can be very irritating to the skin. Broken skin contributes to pain and discomfort. A skin barrier can protect the skin from contact with the drainage
• Contain the output – If the output is minimal, gauze dressings may be sufficient for containment. However, if the volume of the output from the fistula is significant or frequently overwhelms the dressing, a pouch may be more appropriate. Using a pouch can be more efficient and can help reduce healthcare professionals from exposure to bodily fluids
• Measure the output – With a high output fistula, loss of fluids and electrolytes can be a major concern. Measurement may be easier with a pouching system than with absorbent dressings. Consider a bedside drainage collector to help keep drainage away from the skin barrier
• Manage costs – Care of fistulas can be costly in terms of supplies and human resources. Using a pouching system and appropriate accessories can be more cost-effective and manageable than frequent dressing changes
• Control odor – Containment of the drainage in a pouching system, even in small quantities, can help with odor management. Other accessory products also can assist with odor control when the pouch is changed or emptied
• Provide patient comfort – Effectively managing a fistula can contribute to patient dignity and comfort
## Fistula Management

### Patient Goals

- Protect Skin
- Contain Output
- Measure Output
- Manage Costs
- Control Odor
- Patient Comfort

### Product Options

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| Premier High Output Pouches Stock No 80070 or 80110 | • Extended wear cut-to-fit skin barrier  
• Can be connected to bedside collector | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Wound Drainage Collectors Stock No 9773, 9776, or 9778 | • Standard wear cut-to-fit skin barrier  
• Can be connected to bedside collector | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Hollister Universal Catheter Access Port Stock No 9779 | • Optional  
• Accommodates tubes needing to exit a pouch | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pouchkins Pediatric Pouches Stock No 3786, 3796, 3795, 3797 | • Ideal for small, hard to pouch locations or where volume of output is low | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adapt Barrier Rings Stock No 7805, 7815, 7806, 8805, 8815 | • Use to caulk uneven skin contours  
• Use to prevent drainage from getting under skin barrier of pouch  
• More durable than paste | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adapt Paste Stock No 79300 | • Use to caulk uneven skin contours  
• Use to prevent drainage from getting under skin barrier of pouch | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| m9 Odor Eliminator Spray | • Room deodorizer | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adapt Odor Eliminator and Lubricant Stock No 78500 | • Eliminates odor when drainable pouch is emptied  
• Makes emptying drainable pouch easier | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adapt Medical Adhesive Spray Stock No 7730 | • Helps improve pouch seal in difficult locations  
• Spray on adhesive side of pouching system | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adapt Stoma Powder Stock No 7906 | • Helps to dry moist irritated skin for a better pouch seal | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Bedside Drainage Collector Stock No 9839 | • Ideal for high volume, liquid discharge  
• Provides larger container for collection of fluid | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

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For product questions, sampling needs, or detailed clinical questions concerning our products in the US, call **1.888.740.8999**. In Canada call **1.800.263.7400**.