

Getting That Secure Feeling

Ostomy expert puts the latest stoma “security” devices to the test

By Cliff Kalibjian

Ever feel a little vulnerable around your stoma while moving about your day? Or feel that your pouching system could use a little extra support? Although not everyone has this need, some folks with ostomies prefer a little extra protection and/or support where it counts. Whether the need arises due to sports, pets or just peace of mind, people with ostomies have some good choices for products in this category.

I had the opportunity to test five such products recently and have shared my experiences below. Although I've been more of a “minimalist” in terms of using ostomy products beyond my basic pouch for the last 16 years, I'm always open to trying something new that has value for either me or my fellow ostomate.

BLO Solutions Ostomy Pocket

The Ostomy Pocket is not a protector, but rather a light-weight pouch pocket that provides support to your pouching system. It is very soft and delicate and is made from material that just about anyone would appreciate having next to his or her skin. I liked how the product is designed to attach to your own undergarments, so that you don't need to use any special underwear that might not be your style.

I didn't find the product itself to be very intuitive, but after reading the directions a couple of times, I finally got it. First, place your ostomy pouch in the pocket and then wear your underwear over that. Be sure the snaps on the pocket are facing

out. You then connect the pocket to the securing strip by lining up and connecting the “snaps” – see the inset photo.



My initial concern was how easily this snapping system would work. Where there is only one layer of material, it attached easily. However, there was no way for me to attach the pocket through only one layer of the fly area of my underwear area unless I placed the pocket significantly lower. This arrangement did not provide as good support, so it was best to place it in the upper area. Connecting the two parts together through two layers of material was more of a challenge, but with a few minutes of effort, I was successful.

Ostomates needing to align a snap through two layers or thick clothing may have a similar experience.

The good news was that once in place, all the snaps remained

securely connected, even during intense physical exercise. Overall, though, I'd say this product is designed to work best with undergarments made from thinner materials.

Because the Ostomy Pocket is designed to attach on the inside of one's undergarment, it's ideal for those whose stomas are below their beltline who would otherwise be keeping their pouch directly against their skin. It provides a nice degree of support, and its material is a much nicer feel against one's skin compared to the backing of any pouching system. The product may not be as ideal for someone who normally wears their pouch over their underwear. The pocket would still provide some pouch support for these people, though.

Lastly, because the product is made out of a thin material, it adds no extra bulk, so it can be worn with any style clothing – including tight – and won't show.

Stealth Belt Hybrid

The Stealth Belt Hybrid provides both pouch support and stoma protection in one. The pouch pocket and adjustable, wrap-around belt, secured by Velcro,[®] are all one piece. It is made from a synthetic material that dries quickly and wicks away moisture, thus making the product ideal to use during water sports or when the product might become wet.

Most ostomates will have to change their normal pouch placement from hanging down at a slight angle to horizontal across the abdomen to fit their pouch