Shaving Around a Stoma

Shaving around an ileostomy stoma requires care and precision to avoid irritating or injuring the stoma or the surrounding skin. Regular shaving creates a smoother surface for the pouch adhesive to stick to and may reduce trauma to the skin and hair follicles when the pouch is removed. An alternative is to use an electric clipper, but this guide covers the hair removal with a razor. Here is a step-by-step guide:

Preparation

1.Gather Your Supplies:

• Single-blade razor (preferably with a serrated or "comb" safety guard, also called a body prep razor). Don't use multi-blade razors as they pull hair from below the skin surface and may lead to ingrown hairs or an infection of the hair follicle (folliculitis)

• Unscented shaving cream, mild soap or gel designed for sensitive skin.

Some people may opt to use ostomy friendly barrier cream or ostomy powder. Talk with your ostomy nurse if this may be an option for you.

• Warm water.

• Soft washcloth or towel.

• Mirror (optional, for a clearer view of the area).

• Moisturizing skin barrier cream (optional, for post-shave care). Talk with your ostomy nurse if this may be an option for you.

2.Wash Your Hands:

• Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water to reduce the risk of infection.

3.Prepare the Skin:

• Carefully remove the ostomy appliance.

• Clean the area around the stoma with warm water and paper towel. Use adhesive remover to clear away any product residue.

• Pat the skin dry with a paper towel.

4. Soften the Skin and Hair:

•Wet the area around the stoma with warm water, or hold a warm, damp cloth against it, for a few minutes to soften the hair and skin. This is ideal but optional if you are short on time.

5. Apply Cream or Cleanser:

• Gently apply a thin layer of shaving cream or gel around the stoma. It will not harm the stoma if some cream gets on it.

6. Stretch the Skin:

• With your free hand, gently stretch the skin around the stoma to create a smooth surface for shaving.

7. Shave with Care:

• Shave with gentle strokes in the direction of hair growth to reduce irritation.

• Rinse the razor frequently to prevent clogging.

•Take your time, and avoid shaving too close to the stoma to prevent nicks or cuts. You may position the razor to shave away from the stoma. If needed, place a folded piece of toilet paper or place around the stoma to help prevent nicks.

8. Clean the Area:

• Rinse off any remaining shaving cream or gel with warm water and paper towel or cloth.

• Gently pat the skin dry with a clean towel or cloth.

9. Inspect the Skin:

• Check the skin for cuts or irritation. If needed, crust the area with a small amount of ostomy powder and seal with barrier spray of wipe. Apply your pouching system as usual.

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