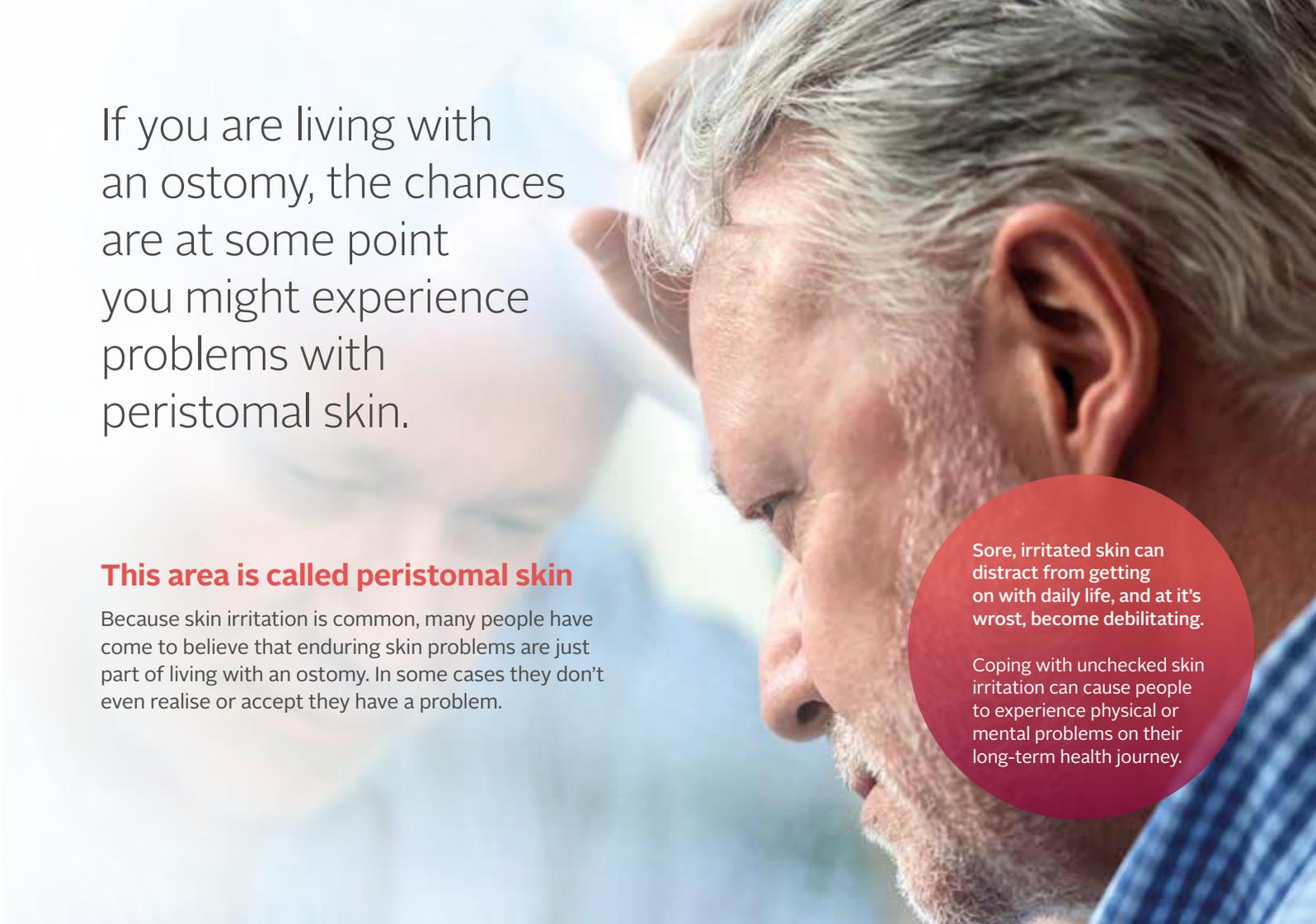


# A clear guide to healthy peristomal skin





If you are living with an ostomy, the chances are at some point you might experience problems with peristomal skin.

### **This area is called peristomal skin**

Because skin irritation is common, many people have come to believe that enduring skin problems are just part of living with an ostomy. In some cases they don't even realise or accept they have a problem.

Sore, irritated skin can distract from getting on with daily life, and at it's worst, become debilitating.

Coping with unchecked skin irritation can cause people to experience physical or mental problems on their long-term health journey.

# So what should healthy skin look and feel like to you?

Peristomal skin should look and feel no different than the skin on the rest of your stomach.

“

Some studies report that **67%** of people with a mild skin issues and **56%** with severe skin issues didn't even realize they had a problem and therefore didn't ask for help from their Ostomy Nurse or Doctor!<sup>1</sup>

”

## Try taking a closer look.

Use a mirror if it's easier or take a picture with your mobile device, to check and track the health of your skin close-up.

Call the me+ team

1-800-422-8811



# How to spot if you have peristomal skin issues



## Feel

**Do you feel** itching or soreness under your baseplate?

**Does your skin** feel moist, warm or have a wet appearance?



## Look

**Compared to** your full body skin tone, does it look pink, red or inflamed? Blistering or weeping?

**Does the color** return to its usual tone, after you remove the wafer after a short time?



## Did you know?

Some medications can affect peristomal skin by causing ulcers. Check with your nurse for more information.

**Andrea Benn<sup>2</sup>**

# Tips for taking better care of peristomal skin



- Change your pouch routinely.
- Gently remove the wafer from top to bottom – people find an adhesive remover helps.
- Clean the skin around the stoma with a wipe soaked in warm water.
- Dry your skin thoroughly before applying your next bag.
- Inspect your skin every time you change your wafer.
- Apply a skin barrier if required.
- Check the hole cut in your wafer is the right size for your stoma.
- Apply the wafer securely around your stoma ensuring there are no gaps or folds in the wafer.



- Use soap or other solutions to wash skin.
- Over complicate your pouch changing routine.
- Wait for your pouch to leak before changing it.
- Pull your bag off too quickly.
- Ignore any changes in the skin around your stoma.
- Try to manage skin problems on your own, always seek help from an ostomy nurse.

**Are you experiencing problems now? Keep a photo record of your peristomal skin, it's useful to monitor or identify if changes are happening.**

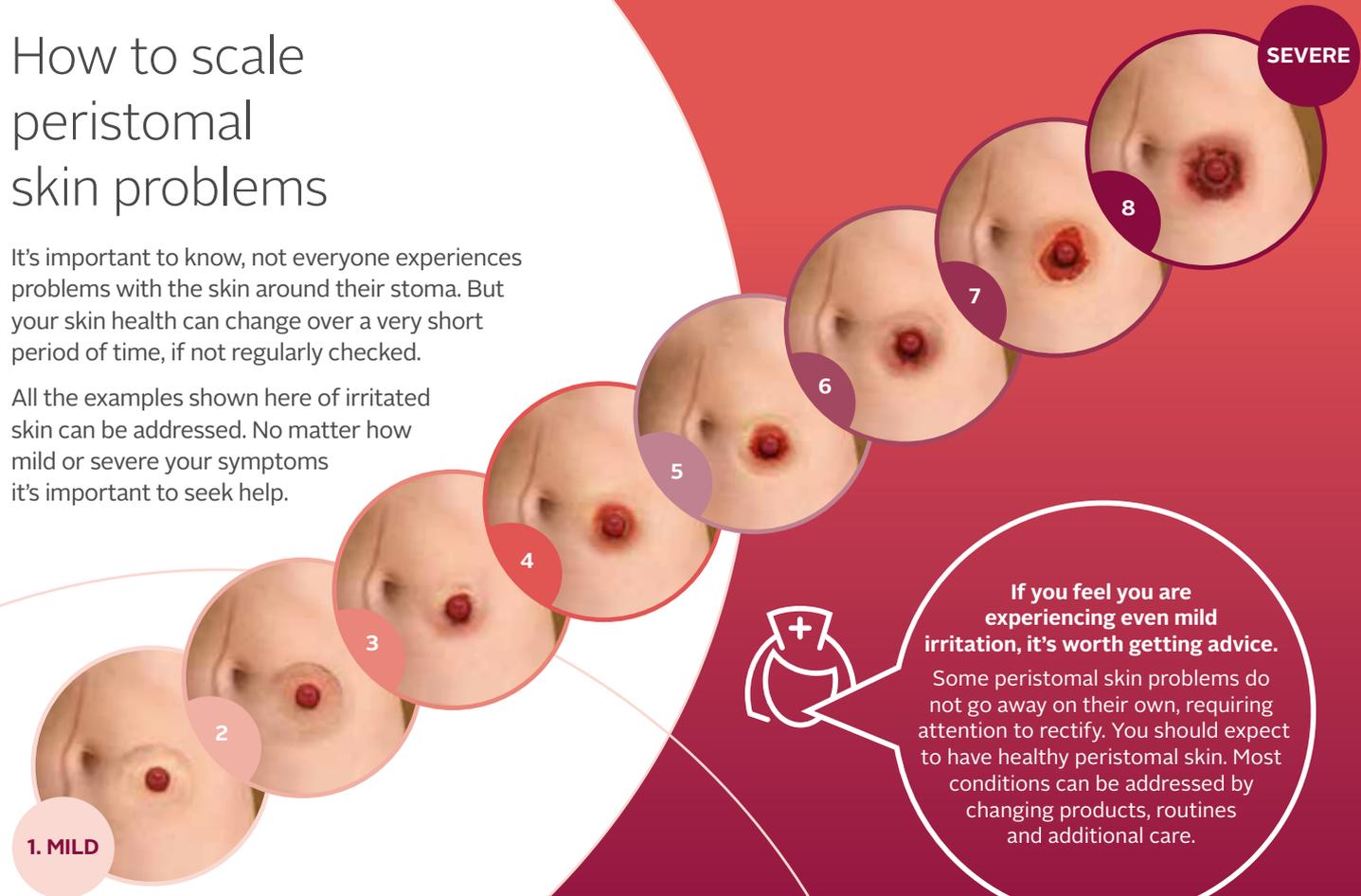
**Call the me+ team**

1-800-422-8811

# How to scale peristomal skin problems

It's important to know, not everyone experiences problems with the skin around their stoma. But your skin health can change over a very short period of time, if not regularly checked.

All the examples shown here of irritated skin can be addressed. No matter how mild or severe your symptoms it's important to seek help.



**If you feel you are experiencing even mild irritation, it's worth getting advice.**

Some peristomal skin problems do not go away on their own, requiring attention to rectify. You should expect to have healthy peristomal skin. Most conditions can be addressed by changing products, routines and additional care.

# Common causes of peristomal skin damage

- **Leakage** Healthy skin exposed to fecal or urine output under the wafer can break down quickly.
- **Pressure** Belts and some clothing may cause pressure on the stoma area.
- **Stoma Size** Ensure the wafer is cut to the right size. It should always fit closely around your stoma (1-2mm larger) to protect against leakage.
- **Skin Folds** Or creases, may prevent your wafer from sticking securely to your stomach and result in leakage. A different shaped product may be required if your stoma is flush or retracted.
- **Skin Stripping** Or friction by removing a wafer too quickly can pull the top layers of skin away. This is known as skin stripping. The more frequent it happens, the more the skin can be irritated.

- **Wafer Sensitivity** If the red area of the skin is the same shape as your wafer, then you may have developed an allergy and sensitivity.
- **Bag Changing** Your pouch change routine could be too frequent, or you could be using products that irritate the skin.

**Call the me+ Team**

1-800-422-8811

# Support and advice to help you live life more comfortably

**If you have a skin problem and would like support or advice,** contacting the me+ Team of ostomy nurses and product specialists could be a good first step. The me+ Team is available Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 7:00pm ET at **1-800-422-8811** or by email **cic@convatec.com**.



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