



How does stoma leakage impact a person's everyday life?

Worrying about leakage is one of the main challenges people with a stoma face. But how does this concern affect their daily life? That's what the [2019 Ostomy Life Study](#) wanted to find out. This article is a short summary of those findings.

Living with a stoma is challenging

For people living with a stoma, daily life can be a challenge. They worry about how the stoma will affect their social life; whether they can engage in sports like they used to; and how they're going to sleep without the pouch detaching from their body. But studies show that there's a concern that looms above all others.



Nearly everyone worries about leakage

Of the people surveyed in the Ostomy Life Study 2019, over 90% worried about leakage. For some of them, the concern was so great that they stayed at home, avoided people or limited contact with their family and friends. For those respondents who worked, 65% of them said that worrying about or experiencing leakage made it difficult for them to do their job. Some of them couldn't work at all.¹

The Ostomy Life Study 2019 looked at what it's like to live with a stoma

It used the Ostomy Leak Impact (OLI) tool¹ to measure the effect of living with a stoma on people's lives and well-being. The tool measures how leakage impacts people's daily lives in three areas: emotional impact; usual and social activities; and coping and control. The Ostomy Life Study 2019 includes responses from over 4,200 people living with a stoma in 17 countries.

The greater the worry, the greater the product use

Quite understandably, the risk of leakage is a worry for people living with a stoma. And some people take steps to try to alleviate both the risk and the worry. For example, more than half of the respondents said that they would change their pouch more often or use more supporting products, like rings, seals or tape.²

All of which simply increases the impact the stoma has on their daily life and routines, as well as healthcare costs.²

All this worry takes its toll emotionally

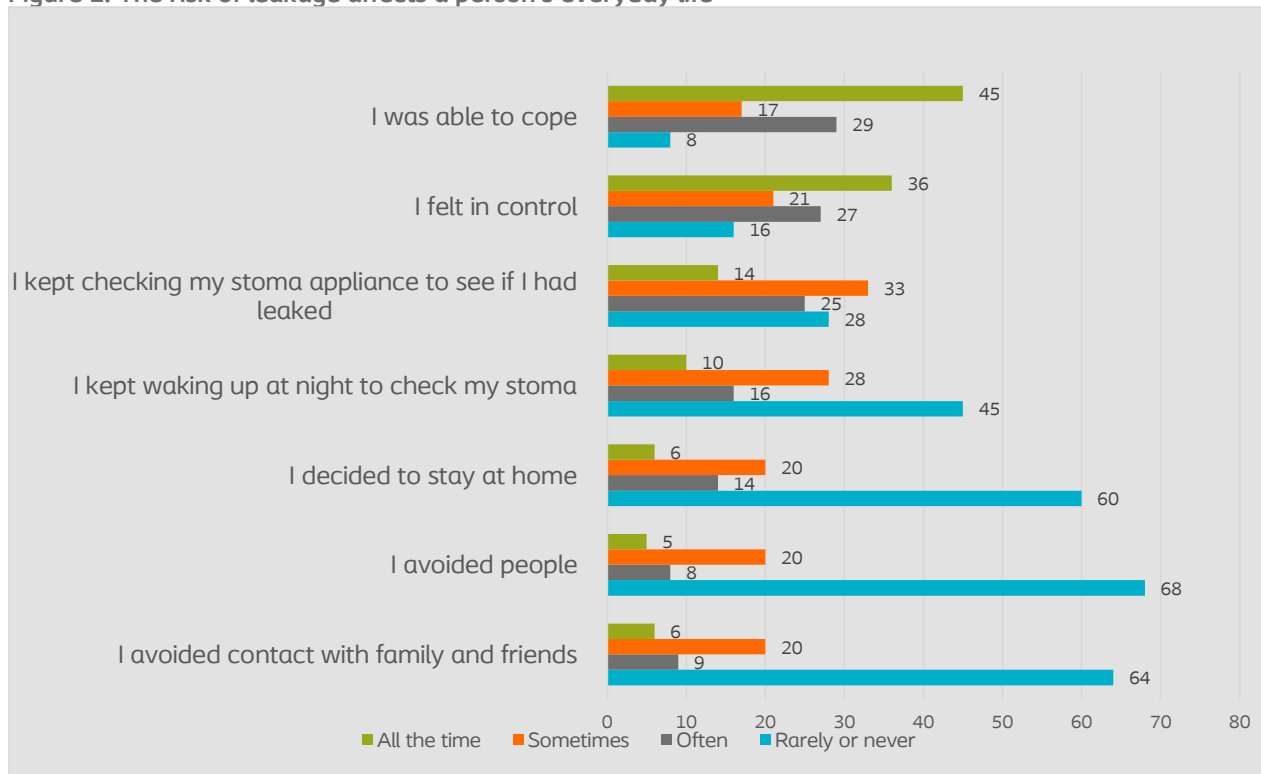
In addition to the impact on practical and economic implications, there's the effect leakage has on a person's emotional wellbeing. This is especially true for people who have had their stoma bag leak onto their clothes. The Ostomy Life Study showed that these experiences stayed with people, negatively affecting their emotional health, everyday activities, coping ability and sense of control. This effect was particularly strong in the first three months after a leakage incident.

Worry about leakage is a problem we still need to solve

Over the past ten years, multiple studies have looked at leakage and how it affects people living with a stoma. In every study, the answer has been nearly the same. The vast majority, over 90%, have said they worry about leakage.² Clearly, the current selection of stoma care products isn't doing enough to address this issue. We need new solutions that can help people with a stoma recognise leakage before it gets outside the baseplate, so they can change their pouch before its contents spill onto their clothes.

If you want to read the scientific one-pager or the full peer-reviewed published article, please go to [Coloplast Ostomy Care Compendium](#).

Figure 1: The risk of leakage affects a person's everyday life¹



¹Nafees B, Størting ZM, Hindsberger C, Lloyd A. The ostomy leak impact tool: development and validation of a new patient-reported tool to measure the burden of leakage in ostomy device users. Health Qual Life Outcomes. 2018;16(1):231. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-018-1054-0>

²Jeppesen, Vestergaard, Boisen, Ajslev. Impact of stoma leakage in everyday life: data from the Ostomy Life Study 2019. British Journal of Nursing, 2022, Vol 31, No 6 (Stoma Care Supplement)