



The ileostomy & internal pouch
Support Group

Registered Charity 234472

What is IA?

IA is the national support group
specialising in the support of people
with an ileostomy or internal pouch.

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LISTEN • INFORM • SUPPORT

Established in 1956 as the Ileostomy Association by a group of people with ileostomies and some members of the medical profession, the organisation now has a network of member organisations in the UK and Ireland. These local groups are managed by volunteers, most of whom have an ileostomy or internal pouch.

Ileostomy

Certain inflammatory bowel diseases such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, sometimes cause such damage to the large intestine (colon) that it becomes necessary for this to be removed. The lower end of the small intestine which is called the ileum is then brought out through the abdominal wall, forming an ileostomy, so that bodily waste matter can be collected in an externally attached bag.

Ileo anal pouch

With the advances in modern surgical techniques some people now have an internal pouch formed. This surgery involves removing the colon and rectum and a reservoir (pouch) is constructed from small intestine. A temporary ileostomy may be necessary whilst healing of the pouch takes place.

Temporary ileostomy

This is often referred to as a 'loop' ileostomy, as it is formed by bringing a loop of small intestine out on to the abdominal wall. A temporary ileostomy may be formed to enable an ileo-anal pouch to heal, or to allow a join between two ends of large intestine to heal, when a section of intestine has been removed, most commonly for bowel cancer.

What does IA do?

Listen • Inform • Support

Although major surgery of this nature, with a change of bodily function, will disrupt a person's lifestyle, especially if the illness has lasted for many years, recovery will often be assisted by contact with people who have been through a similar experience.

The following core activities are provided by IA for people of all ages with an ileostomy or internal pouch:

- Visiting
- Members' meetings
- IA Journal
- Website
- Young IA
- Internal Pouch
- Advisory services
- Medical research

IA's core objectives are to help those facing these operations to return to a normal active lifestyle as soon as possible after surgery. IA is totally funded by donations and subscriptions and because most of the 10,000 members have either an ileostomy or an internal pouch we can use, with confidence, the strapline *"because we know, we care."*

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