

# A Dansac Case Study- A Patient's Perspective



## Introduction and Medical History

I am a 27 year old female with an ileostomy formed due to slow gut transit and gastric emptying. My stoma was created laparoscopically in February of 2017. I was initially diagnosed with a rare cancer which led to multiple surgical procedures for division of abdominal adhesions. The adhesions trapped a piece of my small bowel which required removal causing further intestinal issues. My procedure is reversible, but due to a recent diagnosis of diversion colitis the decision has been made to have a full colectomy planned for September 2018.

## Patient Background

Upon discharge from hospital my nurse commenced me on a one-piece flat pouch. Almost immediately my skin developed a rash. It was sore and itchy in certain places. In addition my pouch was leaking up to 6 times a day making daily activities extremely hard. This affected my mental well-being, as my confidence was low; I didn't want to socialise with friends and became depressed.

Approximately one week post-surgery, I met with my community stoma care nurse. We tried multiple options, eventually switching to a convex pouch, but due to my stoma retracting in certain positions, a previous laparotomy scar being very close to my stoma and also my stoma being placed exactly on my waist line, the leaking continued.

I initially contacted my local stoma nurse and attended multiple review appointments. We tried a range of bags and seals but nothing worked. This did little to restore my confidence, and I was becoming extremely frustrated. I ultimately decided to take control of my situation, and started doing online research to see what my options were and to find people who had suffered similarly, and what they did to address the problem. I began by replicating what they did; using extra seals to build up certain areas. At my next stoma nurse appointment I explained that by using multiple seals (and eventually paste), the leaks were manageable. These items were then placed on my prescription.

This process worked, and my confidence was restored. Unfortunately, four months later, my stoma again started to leak significantly. I contacted my stoma nurse directly for a next day appointment. I explained my situation had deteriorated and I was struggling to go out again. My nurse completely reassessed my stoma and gave me a different convex pouch to try. Unfortunately, it was confirmed that I was medically allergic to this barrier, so I was advised to remain on my current pouch with the introduction of the Dansac TRE seal.

## Has it Worked?

I apply one and a half seals. The first seal is cut and stretched to fit around my stoma ensuring the larger section is directly on the area on my abdomen that is retracted. I then use the smaller size seal, which I cut in half and place directly on the larger section of the first seal. I found them extremely easy to use, very easy to remove but also when handling, they don't lose the adhesive quickly allowing me to stretch them and to remove if necessary if I don't initially place them correctly. I also found the larger section excellent, particularly in my case for my stoma retraction but this was also very helpful when I initially started using the Dansac TRE seals to help maintain healthy skin.

I am currently changing my pouch every 3-4 days which is a huge improvement in my experience. My life has changed dramatically as I am no longer on medication and am able to go about my normal life as I was prior to surgery. I no longer live with fear my stoma will leak. In addition, I have also reduced my prescriptions. Previously I was requesting 6 boxes of seals and 4 tubes of stoma paste a month plus adhesive remover. I no longer use multiple seals, pastes, flange extenders and powder, and I no longer experience itching. My skin around the stoma now appears to be clear and healthy, and I have had no leaks. This has given me full confidence in the products I am using, I am now able to go out and socialise and enjoy myself again which I felt I just couldn't do before. In addition, I no longer suffer from interrupted sleep. I now wake feeling refreshed and ready for the day ahead; the days of feeling tired and frustrated are now a thing of the past.

Pre TRE Seal Application



Post TRE Seal Application 2 weeks



## What Lessons Have I Learnt?

After the operation I felt very frustrated and angry. I was told by my surgeon that once the operation was completed, and I had fully recovered I would feel great, they said that surgery was the hard part. I didn't find this to be true. It has been a tough journey, and I found the online world vital in helping me find a temporary solution to the issues I was having with my stoma. I was able to connect with other people who were having similar issues and trial what they were doing, such as filling in areas that were retracted with stoma paste, rings etc.

I also learnt I was able to contact manufacturers directly and trial different pouches. This was information I did not know and was vital to finding a solution.

I have now been using Dansac TRE seals as part of my stoma care routine since December 2017, and have had no further skin issues or leaks. Whilst my issues have now been resolved I still regularly use the forums/social media to connect with other people. I have messaged people and explained what has worked for me in the hope it will aid others.