

Prescribing of Stoma Hernia Support Belts - Levels 1-3

Introduction

A complication of stoma formation is the development of a parastomal hernia, which may occur in 40-50% of patients. A parastomal hernia can cause a decrease in a person's quality of life, due to physical discomfort, a highly visible bulge and poor appliance adhesion, leading to leakage of the stoma appliance. Limited research recommends that strengthening the abdominal wall by using exercises and support garments can dramatically reduce the incidence of herniation. Should a hernia occur, recommended management options include wearing a level 3 support garment.

- Hernia support belts are not the same as elastic belts.
- Level 3* hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear provide abdominal support to reduce the incidence and aid management of parastomal herniation.
- Level 3 belts should only be prescribed if patient has developed a parastomal hernia or is undertaking heavy manual work/strenuous activity, and at risk of developing hernia.
 - **These should only be prescribed if recommended by a stoma nurse.**
- There is no clinical evidence for the use of level 1 or 2 belts and do not offer any more support than support underwear that can be purchased from retail outlets. These include Briefs, Shorties, Boxers, Shorts, Pantie Girdles, Trunks, Pants, and Vests
- **Level 1 or 2 belts, garments or support underwear should not be prescribed on FP10 where patients request.**
- Elastic belts are used to support convex products and should not be confused with hernia support belts.

Recommendations

- Level 1 or 2 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands are not used for hernia support. Generally, these are used for comfort and discretion to hide the stoma appliance. Level 1 and 2 support garments offer little more support than general support underwear which can be purchased from a high street store, online or via mail order.
- If a parastomal hernia is suspected, please refer the patient to their local stoma care nurse.
 - Cambridge University Hospital: 01223 216505
add-tr.stomacare@nhs.net
 - Hinchingbrooke Hospital: 01480 442891
nwangliaft.stomacarehh@nhs.net
 - Peterborough City Hospital: 01733 677584
nwangliaft.stomacarepch@nhs.net
 - Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Kings Lynn: 01553 613613 or 01553 613234
gehkl-tr.stomacaredept@nhs.net
- Only level 3 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands or underwear should be prescribed for prevention and management of parastomal hernias.
- New patients should only be prescribed a hernia support belt, girdle, waistband or underwear after an assessment by a stoma care nurse.

- For newly initiated patients, one belt should be prescribed to ensure compliance before adding to the patients repeat template.
- For patients requiring on-going prescriptions, one belt is recommended to be added to the patients repeat template with a **maximum issue of three** for the **duration of 12 months**.
 - Maximum annual quantity of three is based on having one to wear, one in the wash and one for spare.
- Patients exceeding maximum annual quantities should be advised to purchase any additional garments from specialist ostomy manufacturers.

Stoma Belts Switch Matrix

For information on type and level of support as well as the most appropriate alternative or course of action refer to:

- [Stoma belts switch matrix](#)

Document Ratification Details

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