



The ileostomy & internal pouch

Support Group

Registered Charity

Pouch Surgery Experiences – Phill Roberts

Phill Roberts, 38 from Cardiff.

I was diagnosed with UC in February 2001. I first noticed something was wrong the previous month. I was losing weight rapidly and having stomach pains. A GP had at first prescribed Cocodamol, which did nothing for me. Two weeks later I returned to be given Codine, which seemed to make things worse. Now blood was passing on a large scale and a third GP referred me to a specialist at Llandough Hospital in Penarth.

Following an unpleasant examination with a camera, they kept me in and did more tests. A few days later my surgeon explained that I had to have an emergency operation. By this time I was on so many steroids and drugs, I didn't know what was going on. A couple of days later I was laying in ICU, with drips and machines everywhere. I had dropped down to 9½ stone.

Recovery was difficult, and I was in hospital for 5 weeks. After 3 months off, I finally went back to work (as a retail manager) and regained strength and weight. At first people including close friends couldn't recognise me as I was a shadow of my former self.

In April of 2001, I had an appointment with my surgeon and stoma nurse who discussed 'reversal' to which I said yes – the sooner the better, and I was put on the waiting list. I hated the stoma, it brought me down and wanted rid of it from day one.

Two years later, I finally got a date for my pouch formation. I went in but was diagnosed with high blood pressure and the operation was postponed. Then in May 2005, I was due for takedown, when I was called in and went through all of the preparation, only to be told at the last minute they could not fit me in. I was distraught, but they did it two weeks later. I had the pouch formed, which I recovered from within weeks and was only in hospital for one week. I did not require pills and everything went fine.

Finally in 2006, a year later, I had takedown. I had a very low potassium level and remained in hospital for 9 days. Afterwards, I had trouble sleeping and was very tired, going 3-4 times at night. This lasted about 2 months.

A year I've had my pouch now, and have not had any (real) troubles, and I don't take any medication. I sleep fine (maybe once in a while I have to empty) and even though I go about 8 times a day, I go when convenient rather than through necessity and have no problem holding on. I even fart without worrying.

Overall, although the surgery was a struggle, life with a pouch is wonderful and I advise those with the choice to go for it!

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