



Houston Chapter United Ostomy Association

January 2005

Houston Chapter UOA
PO Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164
www.uoahouston.org

"We help ourselves by helping others to help themselves."

"UOA is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing education, information, support and advocacy for people who have had or will have intestinal or urinary diversions."

Monthly support and information meetings are held in three locations for member convenience.

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ed Wood 281-493-5015
(ewood6@houston.rr.com)

Meeting: January 17th, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us as we meet to discuss programs and plans for the new year and discuss items of interest to members.

Northwest Group

Monthly: Tuesday following the third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: NW Medical Professional Bldg. (The Cali Bldg.)
17117 Cali Drive (This location is just off of
1960 and West of I-45. Turn north on Cali
Drive from 1960. At the stop sign turn left on
Judiwood and left again to park behind the Cali
Building.)
Contact: Bill Propst 281-320-8005 propst@neosoft.com

Meeting: January 18th, Tuesday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us as we meet to discuss programs and plans for the new year and any other items of interest to members.

Happy New Year!!

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

Meeting: Jan. 17, 2005 Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Ulcerative colitis and the J-Pouch connection. See you in January.

Baytown Group

Monthly: Second Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Cancer Center Community Room
4021 Garth Road, Baytown
Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-420-8671

Meeting: January 10th, Monday evening

Program: Hollister Product Updates

Chris Robison from Hollister will be with us to discuss their products. Please join us!

Patient Visiting and Support Services

Doctors and ET Nurses please note: Upon request from a doctor or nurse, a specially trained visitor will be sent to visit an ostomy patient before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. There is no charge for this service. The visitor does not give medical advice.

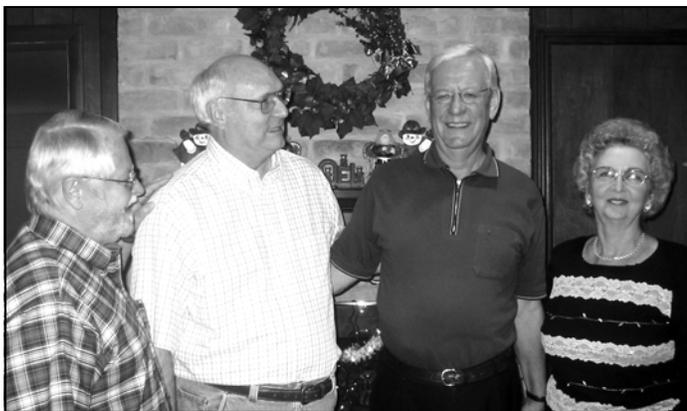
Please contact our Visitor Coordinator, Dorothy Andrews at 713-789-4049.

We are a health support group, a non-profit, tax-exempt, organization of volunteers whose purpose is to provide mutual aid and education to persons who have ostomies and to their families. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Chapter News

Twenty-six members and guests of the Central and Northwest Satellite groups enjoyed our December 9th Holiday Dinner at the beautifully decorated Pine Forest Country Club. It was great to see some first-time attendees and we hope they will come back next year. We are always appreciative of Tom and Dorothy Andrews who are hosts at the event. We have reserved December 6, 2005 for next year's dinner. We appreciate Judy Swinger, Clarice Kennedy, and Barbara Bouse who provided the door prizes for the dinner this year. We also are grateful for Tom Green's generous support each year. We had in attendance, from Medical Center Surgical Shop, Mary Icenhower, Mary Henson, and Sandra Garza. Clarice Kennedy recognized Mrs. Icenhower's many years of support of the Houston Chapter, and she was presented an angel that was crafted by Barbara Bouse. Judy Swinger was recognized for her much appreciated contribution to the Houston Chapter.

In the first part of December, Mr. Alf Melling, from Kristiansand, Norway, emailed that he and his wife were going to be in Houston to visit with his son and family. Mr. Melling had been the leader of the local ostomy group in Kristiansand. The national leader of the Norway Ostomy Association also lives in Kristiansand and had contact with Ken and Linda Aukett, who work at the national level of the United Ostomy Association. Ken and Linda gave Alf our website address. Alf expressed interest in meeting and exchanging information about our respective organizations.



Floyd Swinger, Ed Wood, Alf Melling and Clarice Kennedy

The week before Christmas, Ed and Gladys Wood hosted Alf and some officers of the Houston Chapter at a get-acquainted snack and dessert party. Everyone enjoyed sharing and getting to know him. He asked to remain in contact and has invited us to visit in Norway.

Floyd Swinger and John Flowers have agreed to be on our nominating committee and to find candidates for the two positions to be voted on at our regular May meeting. The nominees' names will be published in the March,

April, and May newsletters. The offices which we will fill are the Second Vice-President and Secretary. The duties of the two officers, from the By-laws are as follows:

Second Vice-President: "The Second Vice-President shall be responsible for greeting and hospitality." (As you can see, attendance at meetings is important. Part of the duties involves constructing a list of volunteers for providing refreshments at the monthly meetings.)

Secretary: "The Secretary shall record minutes of all proceedings, keep a record of attendance and handle correspondence of the Houston Chapter."

Starting in December, 2004 the National UOA office will send a **national** dues notice directly to each members' address for annual dues of \$17.50. This will be the amount to pay the National UOA *if* you pay local dues. If you do not pay local dues, then the National UOA will bill you as an associate member at an annual rate of \$25. The first part of next year our Chapter Treasurer, Chuck Bouse, will send a **local** dues notice for \$10.50, to those whose membership renews during the first six months of the year. The \$10.50 is to be sent to Chuck. In June or July, Chuck will send a local dues notice to those who are due to renew in the second half of the year. We anticipate questions as we change over to this new of billing procedure. If you have any question about any dues billing that you receive through the mail, at anytime during the year, you can call Ed Wood at 281-493-5015 or Chuck Bouse at 281-495-1840.

On Saturday, February 12, the Houston Chapter will have their biannual Visitor Training at the American Cancer Society building at 6301 Richmond Ave. This will train new visitors and will renew for another two years those visitors who previously have been trained. We will use the new training video that was produced by the Fort Worth Chapter of UOA. Training will take place from 9 AM to 12 noon. For more information call Ed Wood or Dorothy Andrews.

We would like to thank all of you who have donated to the Memorial Fund, donated supplies, and have used our

Please see "Chapter News", Page 4

*"To love and be loved—this
on earth is the highest bliss."*

- Heinrich Heine

ANNIVERSARY GIFT

After seeing the following suggestion in the Tyler Chapter newsletter, it was decided to offer the same to members of the Houston Chapter.

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Houston Chapter UOA. A gift of \$1.00 for each year you have had your ostomy is a guideline; however, each person determines the amount, if any, he/she wishes to give. If you desire to make such a gift, make your check payable to Houston Chapter, UOA and please send it to:

Houston Chapter, UOA
Attn: Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164

We encourage you to bring your spouse or significant other and members of your immediate family to our meetings.

MEMORIAL FUND

The Houston Chapter of UOA has established a Memorial Fund. Donations can be made to the fund to memorialize or honor individuals. All donations should be made payable to the Houston Chapter, UOA and sent to:

Mary Harle
9643 Winsome Lane
Houston, TX 77063-3725

When sending a donation, be sure to include the name of the person being honored so that appropriate acknowledgement can be sent.

ASK THE ET. . .

by Clarice Kennedy

MYTH: "I can't take a bath with a pouch."

TRUTH: You can bathe, shower, and swim with your pouch if you have a secure seal, however, soaking for an extended time could cause the adhesive to loosen.

For a one-piece system, just pat it dry after your bath/shower. With a two-piece system, replace the damp pouch after bathing, clean it, let it dry, and use it later.

You can also bathe without your pouch. Do it when your stoma is inactive, such as early morning or several hours after your last meal. If you plan to change the wafer that day, remove the entire pouching system before bathing. Be careful to thoroughly cleanse the area around your stoma to remove any soap residue and dry completely before applying a new appliance.

Donation of Supplies

If you have ostomy supplies that you no longer use, please consider donating them. The Houston Chapter of UOA is contacted on a regular basis by individuals who are in need of donated supplies of all kinds. This is one way that you can assist your fellow ostomates in the Houston area. Please contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015 with any questions.

SPICED CIDER

The spices in this heart-warming grog are high in healthy antioxidants.

- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ½ gal. apple juice or cider

Combine ingredients in a slow cooker, and cook at least 30 minutes.

Makes 8 servings. Per serving: 120 calories, 1 g protein, 29 g carbohydrates, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 g fiber, 10 mg sodium.

ATTENTION... Ostomates and Medical Personnel

Clarice E. Kennedy, Certified Enterostomal Therapist and Immediate Past President of the Houston Chapter, UOA, is available for consultations by appointment only at Spring Branch Medical Supply at 8700 Long Point Road, Houston, Texas. Clarice is an ostomate herself and has over 30 years of knowledge and experience to share with anyone who has questions about, or needs assistance with, the care of an ostomy both prior to and following surgery. The Houston area is fortunate to have such a dedicated individual available for personal consultations. Appointments can be made by calling Clarice at 713-647-8029.

Disclaimer: The information contained within this newsletter is presented expressly for informational purposes only and may not be applicable to everyone. It should not be substituted for professional medical care or attention by a qualified practitioner. Always check with your doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your condition.

Chapter News

Continued from Page 2

cards and charity number while shopping at either Krogers or Randalls. We expect to receive checks from each of these stores for this quarter which contained both of the holiday periods. They donate 1% of sales to our local organization. We have received \$134 from Randalls in 2004. Should you want additional Kroger cards or the Randall's number you can contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015.

For ostomates in the Baytown area, there is a group now meeting each 2nd Monday of the month. Look in the newsletter for more information and also the contact number of Cindy Barefield. We appreciate Cindy working with the group. Cindy starts additional training in January and we wish her well in her studies.

We are now working with Veronica Okere, RN, BSN, CWCN, who works at Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital. She will be distributing newsletters and brochures telling her patients about our organization. She hopes to attend some of our meetings also.

In January, we will discuss plans for the upcoming year. We will also break in two groups for a roundtable discussion and questions.

The 49th Anniversary of the Houston Chapter will be celebrated with a potluck dinner at the American Cancer Society Building on Monday evening March 21st.

We wish Kathleen Duplessis a speedy recovery following her recent surgery.

I look forward to seeing you at the January meeting and getting 2005 off to a good start.

Hope you have had a very happy holiday season.

Ed Wood
President

MEDICARE USUAL MAXIMUM QUANTITIES

Closed-end pouches: up to 60/month

Drainable pouches: up to 20/month

Urostomy pouches: up to 20/month

Stoma caps: up to 31/month

TIDBITS AND HINTS . . .

- It is not necessary to use sterile supplies. Wash cloths and cotton balls can substitute for gauze pads. The stoma and surrounding skin is not sterile and only requires the same sort of cleanliness as the rest of the body exterior.
- Antihistamines in allergy medications can slow down bowel motility and cause constipation.



Visitor Training is coming soon...

On Saturday, February 12, the Houston Chapter will have their biannual Visitor Training at the American Cancer Society building at 6301 Richmond Ave. This will train new visitors and will renew for another two years those visitors who previously have been trained. We will use the new training video that was produced by the Fort Worth Chapter of UOA. Training will take place from 9 AM to 12 noon. For more information call Ed Wood 281-493-5015 or Dorothy Andrews 713-789-4049.

"MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD"...The Value of an Ostomy Visitor

via Rose City Ostomy News, Tyler, Texas Chapter

There are times when a particular person can make a difference that no one else can make...so it is with the ostomy visitor. Your value is literally beyond measure. It's like dropping a pebble into a pool. It may seem like a small thing to those of us who volunteer...yet the rippling effect is expansive. Who knows how far it might go. You help someone at a time when they are very vulnerable. They in turn might be the visitors of the future.

Do you remember your ostomy visitor? Just when you thought that you couldn't possibly deal with this operation, a friendly face appeared at your hospital door (or home). The person assured you that he or she had once been the patient in the bed. They could also empathize with your aches and pains, your depression, and your fear of the future.

You can reflect on your questions when you first had surgery. Am I still lovable? How will I ever wear clothes? Will there be an odor? Won't the pouch leak at an embarrassing moment? How well you probably remember these feelings. The visitor somehow made you feel lovable. The idea dawned that if he or she could make it, you would too.

The possibility of participating in your own ostomy care didn't seem quite so overwhelming. Perhaps you could begin learning...one small step at a time. Yes, you might be thinking, wasn't that visit the beginning of a turning point! There was much to be done and perhaps miles to go, but that was the first step. You are living proof that life goes on. You are out there doing the very thing that the new patient wonders about. You are indeed a symbol of hope in the midst of their pain, confusion and fear. Making a visit may seem like a small thing to you. It is like lighting a candle in the midst of darkness. It is helping them to help themselves. Your generosity of time and caring is indeed "More Precious Than Gold."

If you weren't blessed with an ostomy visitor, then remember the struggle you had to find the answers to your questions before you could become one who can be "More Precious Than Gold" to the person with a new ostomy.

BAYTOWN SUPPORT GROUP

Our January 10th meeting will be presented by Chris Robison from *Hollister*.

Please plan to join us in the Cancer Center Community Room at 4021 Garth Road in front of San Jacinto Methodist Hospital. Ostomates and their families are invited to attend.

Cindy Barefield
281-420-8671

"Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments slip away and a sunny spirit takes their place."

- Mark Twain

There once was...

When I was recovering from my surgery, I challenged my friends to an ostomy limerick contest. This was the winning entry:

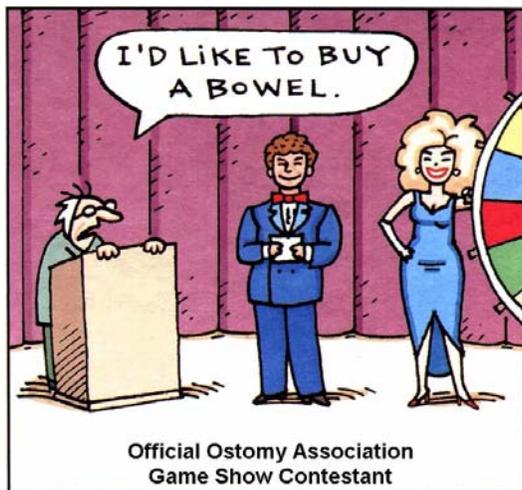
A man once had surgery..OUCH,
He awoke from post-op with a pouch.
It blew up to its limit
From the flatus within it
And floated him up off the couch!

—Dale A.

And you thought YOU had it bad...

I have two very close friends who are also my neighbors. Right after my surgery, when I still couldn't even sit comfortably, one of my friends was complaining about how rough her day was. I just looked at her and said, "Well, I don't have a rectum." We all burst out laughing, and she said, "Okay, you win, but you can't use that all of the time." To this day, when any of us gets stressed, we just say, "Well, I don't have a rectum."

—Colleen M.



NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

Our January meeting will be a round table discussion on Tuesday evening, January 18th, 2005.

Join us as we discuss plans for the coming year as well as have a group discussion to answer any questions pertaining to your ostomy.

Regards,
Bill Propst

WHY SKIN IS DRIER IN WINTER

When temperatures drop, your skin's outer layer, the epidermis, changes. It produces fewer lipids—the cells that keep skin supple and flexible. That sets skin up for drying and cracking.

Going from the warm indoors to the cold outdoors causes circulatory changes. When it's cold, blood vessels constrict to maintain body temperature. Less blood flows to the skin and it takes longer for skin to replace dead cells. When you're in a heated room, the low humidity causes skin moisture to evaporate more quickly, leading to dryness.

The ABCs of Ostomy Care

(Continued from last month)

From ConvaTec's *Health & Vitality* publication

U IS FOR UNDERWEAR

You don't have to buy a special wardrobe. Depending on the location of your stoma, you may find that underwear with a stretchy waist gives your pouch system a little extra support and security. If your stoma is near the waistline, choose underclothes that don't put uncomfortable pressure on your stoma.

V IS FOR VACATION

You can travel wherever, whenever, and however you wish—camping trips and long plane flights included. Be sure to bring twice (or 3 times) as many supplies as you need, in case there's a change in your itinerary. Pack them in your hand luggage, since checked baggage might get lost or delayed. And always keep supplies in a cool place—so the adhesive won't melt.

W IS FOR WATERPROOF

Your stoma loves water, so it's perfectly fine to shower or bathe without a pouch or covering (just be sure to gently clean the stoma and surrounding skin while you're doing so).

XYZ IS FOR EXCITEMENT, YOUTHFULNESS, AND ZEAL

By now you get the idea that living with an ostomy isn't a sentence to a drab, isolated existence. Reach out to others with an ostomy, and you'll be rewarded with stories of how they didn't let their condition get in the way of their dreams. Then get out there and create some stories of your own!



2005 UOA National Conference

August 3 - 6 ■ Anaheim, CA

Anaheim Marriott

\$99.00 plus tax single or double*

Come join fellow ostomates this summer in sunny California. The hotel has great meeting space in one area, indoor and outdoor pools, a health club, plus several restaurants within a short walk. In 1985 and 1992, UOA hosted successful conferences at this hotel and this year's conference promises to be even more successful with great programming, exciting conference events, sight seeing and meeting old and new friends.

United Ostomy Association, Inc.
www.uoa.org, info@uoa.org
 or 800-826-0826 for more information.

**To reserve a room at the host hotel, please call 800-228-9290 and mention you are with the UOA to receive the conference rate. Everyone who reserves their room at the conference rate will be automatically entered into a drawing to win free conference registration for the 2006 UOA National Conference. Online reservations do not qualify.*

"Wearing an ostomy appliance is a small price for living a healthy life."

- Jude Ebbinghaus, Winner
 2004 Great Comebacks® Award



**HUG COUPON
 FREE HUG**

Good for one hug.

Redeemable from any participating human being.
 Does wonders as a morale booster!
 Expiration date: Never too late to get a hug.

IS IT NORMAL FOR MY STOMA TO BLEED?

What causes it?

by Gwen Turnbull, RN, BS, ET

It's normal to see a bit of blood on your washcloth as you cleanse around the stoma. The tissue from which the stoma is fashioned is very much like the lining inside your mouth. You know how easy it is to nick your gum with your toothbrush and cause it to bleed. It's the same with your stoma. If you injure your stoma, it will bleed. If you take blood thinners or other medications (such as aspirin or aspirin-containing medications), your stoma may bleed more than normal. If you have another condition, such as portal hypertension or cirrhosis of the liver or another liver condition, the stoma can bleed excessively. The bottom line is that if you can't stop stomal bleeding within 15 minutes or the bleeding is excessive, you should seek medical attention immediately.

ADHESIONS AND OTHER PAINS THAT CRAMP YOUR STYLE

via Rose City Ostomy News, Tyler, TX

Some people form adhesions more easily than others. Bands of tough, string-like fibrous tissue, adhesions may form spontaneously but are more common after surgery, where the disturbances caused by tissue manipulations may lead to healing in the form of fibrous tissue, i.e. adhesions.

If adhesions interfere with the normal motion of the intestines, a blockage or obstruction may occur, with food, liquid, or even air unable to pass the blocked area. Severe bloating, abdominal pain, vomiting and constipation occur. In such a serious situation, immediate surgery to cut the obstructive adhesion bands is often necessary.

In many cases the possibility of adhesions wrongly get the rap for abdominal pain. A frequent cause for cramping is a spasm of the muscles responsible for peristalsis, which propels the bolus through the intestine. A muscle spasm in the calf is referred to as a 'charley horse'. Spasms in your intestines are essentially the same thing but assume the name 'irritable intestine'.

The removal of the colon does not guarantee immunity from painful spasms in the small intestine. Thus, the ileostomate occasionally may suffer from pain that can't readily be explained on the basis of blockage, and may be told that adhesions are responsible when the cause may be a spasm.

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
 Give me the grace to see a joke,
 To get some humor out of life,
 And pass it on to other folk.