



Houston Chapter United Ostomy Association

A Health Support Group

March 2004

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 two locations for member convenience.

Central Group

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

Meeting: Apr. 19, Monday evening

Program: Sterling Medical Services Rep

Jenny M. Jansson-Smith, RN, WOCN, with Sterling Medical will present our April program. Time permitting, we will also view a short video by Friends of Ostomates Worldwide.

NOTE: Due to the Anniversary Dinner on March 9th, there will not be a regular meeting in March.

Northwest Group

Monthly: Tuesday following the third Monday
Time: 7:00 PM
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: Mar. 16, Tuesday evening

Program: "Ask The ET"

Join us for this video presentation followed by a question and answer time.

J-Pouch Group

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

Meeting: Mar. 15, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Ulcerative colitis and the J-Pouch connection.

Happy
St.
Patrick's
Day!!



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

The Houston Chapter met on February 16 with 26 in attendance. We welcomed two first time attendees, Judy Darby and Zelda Goldman. We hope to see them at our next meeting. The husbands of two members of our group renewed their acquaintance that began in junior high. We wish a speedy recovery to Charlotte Block and Betty Barrett.

Our February speaker was Mr. Thomas Mathew, M. S., P. T. Mr. Mathew reminded us of the benefits of consistent exercise. He emphasized a need to maintain our maximum lung capacity and demonstrated exercises to deter us from having a slumping posture which can impair breathing capacity. He also demonstrated many beneficial exercises for maintaining good muscle tone. Many of these exercises can be found under the "article" icon on our website, www.uoahouston.org. We appreciate permission to post them. Helping him to model some of the exercises was Dorothy Andrews, one of our members. He said that she provided an excellent example for all of us. Mr. Mathew is associated with the Northeast Rehabilitation Center in Humble, Texas. He informed us that there are now two other locations in the city. Their address is 1000 First Street, Suite E in Humble (281-540-2001).

Dorothy is the Visitation Chairman for our Chapter. She organizes the visitation training that occurs every other February. Our next training will be in February, 2005. When this date draws near please consider participating in the training so that you might help others. Dorothy reports that the Houston Central and Northwest groups had on average 30 visit requests each of the last three years. So far this year there have been around 12 requests. In February Dorothy represented the Houston Chapter of UOA when she once again spoke at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's Wound, Ostomy Continence Nurse Education Program. She does this talk at least four times a year. This last class had 25 students including 3 from outside the USA. In general the students learn what the life of an ostomate is like and are given the opportunity to ask questions at the conclusion of the presentation. Part of the discussion includes the benefits of being a member of a UOA chapter as well as the importance of UOA's Certified Visitation Program. The Houston Chapter is fortunate to have Dorothy as a member. We appreciate her dedication and willingness to serve wherever needed.

As age creeps up, I have become increasingly more interested in items like the following that was in a recent newsletter from the National United Ostomy Association:

On October 7, 2003, Government Affairs Chair Linda Aukett and Consultant Colin Cooke met Bristol-Meyers Squibb Government Affairs staff to discuss the collection of evidence that might convince the Secretary of Health and Human Services that ostomy supplies should be

exempt from the competitive bidding procurement process that may well be imposed on all medical equipment and supplies when Medicare expands to provide pharmaceutical drugs. Subsequent to that meeting there has been data collection and analysis, pending the actual passage of the Drug Bill, along with continued communication from UOA's online advocates seeking the elimination of competitive bidding from the bill prior to passage.

In December, Government Affairs Consultant Colin Cooke had discussions with a Pricing Analyst responsible for the calculation of Medicare ostomy reimbursement fees. We are pleased to report that as the result of these discussions and clarification of some categorization issues, the reimbursement fees for 5 groups of items have been substantially improved.

Our speaker in April will be Jenny Jansson-Smith from Sterling Medical Services. She may be able to tell us how some of the items mentioned above now stand in the bill.

Later this year we are looking forward to hearing presentations about kidney stones and skin care. May is election time and most of that meeting will concern our national and local UOA elections. Our Nominating committee, Mary Harle and Mary Lou Hartranft, report the following nominations for the Houston Chapter of UOA: First Vice President-Floyd Swinger and Treasurer-to be announced. This would be their first two-year term. This announcement will also appear in the April and May newsletters. We will have forthcoming information, either in the newsletter or on the website, about the candidates for the national offices.

We appreciate the work of our telephone coordinator Shirley Mucasey. Our attendance has averaged in the upper 20's for the past several months. Also, because of Shirley's efforts, we have been able to keep up with the illnesses and concerns of our members.

See you at our April meeting.



THE OSTOMATE'S PRAYER

Via UOA Chapters in Oakland Co., MI, Indianapolis, IN, and Charlotte, NC

Oh Lord, as we have been reborn, let us multiply our good fortune and share it with those ostomates who do not know how good the life you have given us can be. Let us vow in the years ahead to renew the work of our group, as you have renewed our lives. We thank you for our lives, for the mutual support of each other and for the chance you have given us to help others. Amen.

"Mingle a little folly with your wisdom; a little nonsense now and then is pleasant."

- Horace Mann

ILEOSTOMY

Ileostomy and Salt

The salt output from an ileostomy is very high, around one teaspoon per day, as opposed to almost none in the feces of a person with an intact colon. Therefore, the proper intake of salt by an ileostomate is very important. The body, however seems to compensate for the salt and water loss by discharging less salt than normal through the urinary tract and through perspiration. Therefore, it would be advisable for an ileostomate to increase his water intake above normal so as to increase urine output. In this way, the possibility of kidney stone development can be kept to a minimum.

DRINK LOTS OF WATER!!



The Phantom Phenomenon

“Phantom rectum” is similar to the “phantom limb” of amputees. A person may feel their limb is still there. For ileostomates, it is normal to feel the need to evacuate.

This can occur years after surgery. Explanation of this sensation helps the ostomate understand it is a normal mechanism related to spinal nerve control.

Simply stated, the spine supplies nerves to the rectum. These nerves are responsible for rectal continence and continue to respond even after the rectum is removed.

If the rectum has not been removed, one may also have this feeling and may pass mucus when sitting on the toilet. Some who have had their rectums removed say the feeling is relieved somewhat by sitting on the toilet and acting as if an evacuation is taking place.



A physician claims these are actual comments from his patients made while he was performing colonoscopies:

- ♣ “Take it easy, Doc, you’re boldly going where no man has gone before.”
- ♣ “Can you hear me NOW?”
- ♣ “Any sign of the trapped miners, Chief?”
- ♣ “Hey! Now I know how a Muppet feels!”
- ♣ “Are we there yet? Are we there yet?”
- ♣ “You used to be an executive at Enron, didn’t you?”

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 of 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.

Donation of Supplies

If you have ostomy supplies that you no longer use, please consider donating them. The Houston Chapter of UOA is being 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.

Free Supplies for those in need.....

The Nevada County Ostomy Support group in Grass Valley, CA, receives donated supplies from manufacturers, distributors, pharmacies, UOA chapters and ostomates or their families and makes them available to needy ostomates at no cost other than shipping. To view available supplies, click www.ostomysupport.com. Contact Bob Pleski at pleski@calis.com to donate excess products or apply for free supplies.

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

JOIN UOA IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE



**42nd National Conference
United Ostomy Association, Inc.
August 4-7 • Louisville, KY**

Louisville, KY is the proud host for the 2004 national event. Expect a modern, clean and convenient downtown location with plenty of southern hospitality. The second annual Young Adult Conference will be held jointly with the national event and don't forget the sessions for kids, spouses, continent diversions and much more.

*Don't pass up this opportunity to learn,
share and support fellow ostomates—
plan to attend now!*

For more information, call 800-826-0826

Men usually don't carry purses slung over their shoulders, but a camera case never causes a second look. So if you are needing something to carry some extra ostomy supplies with you wherever you go—try a camera bag.

ATTENTION...

Ostomates and Medical Personnel

Clarice E. Kennedy, Certified Enterstomal 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.

IS YOUR APPLIANCE SHOWING?

Via The Right Connection, San Diego, CA and The Ostogram, Dayton, OH

Are you worried about your appliance showing under your clothes? Or your stoma protruding enough to show? People today lead busy lives at a fast pace. Everyone is concerned with his or her happenings. Aren't you? By the way, what is the color of your bus driver's hair? Did the sales clerk wear a dress or slacks today? What color was the bank teller's tie? Give up? Forget about the uncalled for worries and enjoy each day. Remember that your attitude about your image will affect the attitude of your family and friends.

POINTERS FOR THE NEW OSTOMATE

Via UOA Chapters in Des Moines, IA, Oneonta, NY, Santa Barbara, CA and Charlotte, NC

1. There is no answer for "Why me?" but it is normal to ask the question and you do need to work through the answer to this.
2. Each person's ostomy is different, even as our fingerprints are different.
3. Support and information received from someone who has an ostomy can be helpful. Ask your doctor or ET nurse to arrange an ostomy visitor.
4. It is your ostomy; learn to manage it and don't let your ostomy manage you. In the beginning it is normal for your ostomy care to be the center of your existence; however, with time and practice your ostomy and its care will become just a normal part of your life.
5. Basic management skills can be learned, new experiences and problems that develop must be met and managed as they occur. With time and experience you will become comfortable with your ostomy care.
6. You are alive!! You will get better and stronger. Give yourself time to get over ostomy surgery and to adjust to this body change and adapt to your ostomy.

Don't Risk a Nasty Surprise About Pepto-Bismol

Via *The Re-Route, Evansville, IN and Rose City Ostomy News, Tyler, TX*

The Saratoga Herald Tribune column "People's Pharmacy" by Joe Gordon, recently contained some interesting information important to ostomates.

Someone had asked a question about Pepto-Bismol. This person had always considered it a helpful, harmless, household medicine for stopping diarrhea and settling a queasy stomach.

Recently, the reader had taken a bigger dose for a few days of upset, and hemorrhaged for nearly a week, until the physician asked her about the use of the pink liquid. The reader had been on Coumadin, a blood thinner, for four years. When prescribed, there was a warning about aspirin, because the combination could thin the blood too much, but nothing had been said about Pepto-Bismol.

The reader was wondering why the label hadn't carried such a warning. The answer was that the active ingredient in Pepto-Bismol is bismuth subsalicylate, which acts very much like aspirin once absorbed into the body. In fact, if you were to take the full dose, as directed on the label, it would be like swallowing 8 aspirin tablets.

People taking Coumadin or any other blood thinning medication are not the only ones who should avoid Pepto-Bismol. Check with your doctor if you are on gout medications or undergoing cancer chemotherapy.

Editor's Note: Be cautious about any preparation you take internally. Some assume that because a preparation is "over-the-counter" (OTC) and thus doesn't have to be dispensed by a doctor's prescription that they are all safe to take. As the article above points out, one must be especially cautious when taking any prescription drug to make sure the doctor knows everything else you're taking to ensure compatibility.

It is also important to know what the effects of ingredients in over-the-counter or herbal preparations will have given your particular condition(s). OTC and herbal products do contain potent ingredients that could be harmful if taken in combination with other preparations or prescription drugs or in incorrect dosages.

Ask your physician—or a pharmacist—about effects or combination effects of any item you are considering purchasing or taking. A copy of the "Physician's Desk Reference" (PDR) which pictures and describes prescription drugs may be a good addition for your library.

NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

We were deeply saddened to hear that Helen Lowry passed away last summer. Her neighbor told us she had complications from her heart condition and pneumonia. We especially regret that it took so long for us to hear about Helen. The Northwest group must do better in the future to keep up to date with each other.

Let's activate our phone calling again. We will call as both a reminder of the upcoming meeting and to keep in touch. Margo and I will start the phone calling for the next meeting or two and then maybe we can get a volunteer to take over.

Our thanks to Alfonso Benito from Coloplast for meeting with us even though he has been transferred to a different department within Coloplast. Alfonso will remain in Houston. He filled in for the new person who was unavailable for our meeting. We will miss Alfonso as he is always pleasant and informative.

The Northwest Satellite group received a check for \$250 from the main Houston chapter. This is the first of two equal payments representing the award made to Pat Thompson, E.T., last year in recognition of her work at the Houston Northwest Medical Center. The remaining \$250 will be received next month. Pat had the award made out to the Houston Chapter UOA.

The Northwest Satellite Group's Financial Report in the August, 2003 Newsletter stated we had funds totaling \$290.72. With the addition of the \$250.00 from Pat's award, we now have \$540.72 as of March 1, 2004.

Bill Propst

Coordinator Northwest Group

2004 YOUTH RALLY PLANS BEING MADE

San Diego State University (SDSU) will host the **2004 UOA Youth Rally** Saturday, July 10th through Wednesday, July 14th. Activities include formal and informal discussion groups, various sports, dances, picnics, crafts, sightseeing and other recreational activities.

The UOA's Annual Youth Rally provides the opportunity for 11 to 17 year-olds to be with others their age who have had ostomy or alternate-procedure surgery. Sessions on hygiene, self-care, sexuality and other suitable subjects are offered. The volunteer staff includes WOC(ET) nurses and UOA members. The rally usually is held in a university setting and teaches young people that the only thing limiting them is their attitude, not their ostomy. For more information, call 800-826-0826, ext. 104 or e-mail jsmith@uoa.org.