



Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

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

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

P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164
www.ostomyhouston.org

5 Reasons Why I'm Finally Returning to an Ostomy Support Group

by Rena Münster

This past Sunday I attended my first ostomy support group with the Metro Maryland Ostomy Association. The bar was set low going into it. In the past I have gone to other support groups and have been tremendously disappointed. I didn't feel like they were run by volunteers who were suited to lead such a group and the time was spent letting everyone go around the circle and tell their sob story. I know this can be helpful to some people, but it is not what I needed. I found that there was nothing productive or informative about the sessions. But this past Sunday's meeting was pleasantly surprising, and here is why:

1. I was the youngest person in the room by 30 to 40 years.

I was given a heads up by my ostomy nurse before going that many young ostomates are turned off and never return, because when they get there they realize they have walked into a room of their grandparents' peers. I went into it knowing this would be the case and was happy to be greeted by very friendly people. I stood out like a sore thumb but people came up to me and introduced themselves. Many of the people there have had ostomies for much longer than me. I find this a plus and will continue to look to them for guidance and inspiration. I do have hope that if I continue to go I will catch new young ostomates and will convince them to keep coming back. My long-term goal would be to recruit enough young people to start our own group.

2. The session was professional and organized.

Beyond standing up and quickly introducing myself to the well-attended group of about 30 people, there was no sob fest. The

meeting was kicked off by one of the board members (they have a board!) and they introduced the speaker for the day. This week they had a representative from a company that manufactures ostomy products in Germany. These products are brand new to the American market. We got to learn about their products, ask questions and sign up for free samples. My impression is that for every session they either have a professional speaker or they break out into small groups based on the type of ostomy you have, and you can talk with an ostomy nurse and ask each other questions.



3. They have a WOC Nurse (Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurse) there at your disposal.

I have only been able to see my ostomy nurse when I have follow-up appointments with my surgeon. These appointments are about to end (I only have one more...knock on wood) and I'm not sure

(Continued on page 3)

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. We are a Texas non-profit corporation. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

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

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Patient Visiting and Support Services
Doctors and WOC Nurses, please note:
Upon request from a doctor, nurse, or social worker, a specially trained visitor will be asked to contact an ostomy patient by phone or visit them in person before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. The visitor does not give medical advice, and there is no charge for this service. Please contact our Visitation Coordinator, Marian Newman at 713-392-5768, or newmarian@gmail.com.

Central Group News

We had T.J. McLaughlin with Byram Healthcare as our speaker at our February meeting. He provided us with catalogs and lots of good information about this important medical supply company. If you are interested in seeing if Byram is a good fit for you, you can reach T.J. at tmclaughlin@byramhealthcare.com or 281-740-3018.

Our next meeting is on March 20. Our speaker will be Blake Kelting of B. Braun Medical.

Please put April 29, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the Tracy Gee Community Center on your calendar for our visitor training. It's a new program, and we think we'll be done before lunch. Look for additional information below.

Regards,

Lorette Bauarschi, President, OAHA, 713-582-0718

Visitor Training—April 29, 2017

9:00 a.m.

Tracy Gee Community Center

3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042

Visitor training is offered every two years to people who have had their ostomies for at least a year. This training is important so we can provide a support system for people considering ostomy surgery, having just had the surgery or post surgery. Support for new ostomates during the first six months is critical to their successful recovery and affects their future quality of life. Visitor training builds personal confidence to deal with an array of ostomy-related issues. It can teach you how to tell new friends, family members or co-workers about your ostomy, train you how to share basic ostomy information with new people at meetings and provide an opportunity to answer those small questions you may have. The training is interactive and fun. Please RSVP to Lorette Bauarschi at lorette@bauarschilaw.com or 713-582-0718.



The **United Ostomy Associations**

of America (UOAA)

can be contacted at:

www.ostomy.org or **800-826-0826**

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.

Baytown Group News

Blake Kelting, Chronic Care Specialist in the Outpatient Markets Division of B. Braun was the presenter for February. Blake shared that the B. Braun group has manufactured and sold ostomy products around the world and now Flexima® 3S is being launched in the US and Canada.

Two piece **Flexima® 3S** is **SIMPLE**—guides into position, easy to fit, easy to clean and intuitive use. Multiple orientation with possibility of 3 pouch positions according to body configuration and preference; **SOFT**—flexible for comfort: floating flange minimizes pressure on the abdomen at application; **SECURE**—Leak-proof due to the low profile mechanical coupling system with audible 'click'. Optional belt fixation for more stability with 3 belt hooks on the pouch.

Base plates (wafers) are available in convex, flat standard wear and flat extended wear. Pouches are available in closed end, drainable, high flow and urostomy styles. There are small, medium and large sizes as well as beige and transparent options. Filter is engineered to be leak-proof and permeable to gases for optimal gas release and deodorizing. Blake offered samples to all in attendance and encouraged participants to visit their website at www.bbraunusa.com.

Group closed out the meeting with a check in by all in attendance. Everyone seems to be on track with wear time and skin care. Appreciate the unused ostomy supplies that were brought in for donation. These items come in handy for ostomates in our community who are not funded.

I hope you will mark your calendar to attend Support Group the second Monday of each month. We have some great presentations planned for the new few months that include the following:

- **March:** Managing the Ostomy Supply Process: Focus on Insurance and Reimbursement, Medicare Requirements and Allowances and Avoiding Delays— by: T.J. McLaughlin, Byram Healthcare (We will meet in the Garth Community Room)

For these next three months, we will temporarily relocate to the Conference Rooms 1 and 2 at the Alexander Campus.

(Community Room at Garth will be in use for our hospital's computer conversion.)

- **April:** Updates in the "Brava World"—Coloplast Ostomy Specialist, Tabatha Schroeder
- **May:** Updates with Hollister—Ostomy Sales Specialist, Kris McNeill
- **June:** ConvaTec Updates—Houston Territory Manager, Ostomy Care, Kerriane Pelzl

Sincerely,

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN

281-428-3033

Northwest Group News

Nearly a dozen mates showed up for Dietician Laura Brimer's presentation. Ms. Brimer provided detailed information on Probiotics and how they could benefit ostomates. A show of hands quickly revealed that although everyone was aware of probiotics, none were currently using them in their diets.

Everyone had questions about using probiotics and their possible benefits. We were assured that they were safe for ostomates. The bottom line was that probiotics could decrease diarrhea by slowing down the intestinal transit time which leads to more absorption of both water and nutrients. This could be a significant factor for those with short gut syndrome or problems absorbing nutrients.

The current recommended dosage for probiotics is a daily intake of 1–10 billion. It sounded like a lot, but Ms. Brimer advised that the bacteria was microscopic. Common probiotic strains are Lactobacillus or Bifidobacterium. Capsules are available for daily intake along with yogurt based or kombucha tea options.

All supplements, including probiotics, are not regulated by the FDA and research is very limited. If you are interested in researching them for yourself, Ms. Brimer recommended modifying your search query to include .edu and .org extensions on articles. This will reduce the amount of unsubstantiated opinion-based stories.

Ms. Brimer additionally took the time to address all dietary questions from attendees on subjects ranging from vitamins to special diets used by diabetics, heart patients and of course ostomates.

We missed Suzanne, Christy, Carol, Gen, Jane, Jay, Carlita, Beverly and Craig.

The March 15 program will be presented by Kerrienne Pelzl, Houston Territory Manager and Ostomy Specialist with Convatec.

Billy Locke
337-515-6354

5 Reasons Why I'm Finally Returning to an Ostomy Support Group *(Continued from page 1)*

I'll be schlepping out to Baltimore to see her again. While she is very responsive to my questions over email and phone, I get more from face-to-face interactions. At every meeting this group has a certified ostomy nurse. I got in line to talk to her at the end of the speech and was able to ask her my questions. She is a retired nurse and has many years of experience. I found her to be very knowledgeable, approachable and helpful. Too bad she doesn't do private consults in DC.

4. They have a sample table in the back filled with supplies.

I think my free sample radar noticed this table before anything else when I walked into the room. It was in the back and covered in all the various ostomy supplies you might need. Turns out it's there for the taking! When I spoke to the nurse and asked her my questions she pointed out specific products on the table I should take home and try. Before I left I went to get a close-up examination of what was there. I took a couple adhesive remover wipes and skin prep wipes out of the boxes and put them in my purse along with an entire bottle of stomahesive powder. This elderly man came up to me and asked why I took so few. I told him I wanted to make sure other people got to take some home. He looked me straight in the eye and with a very serious tone said, "If you see something you like, take it!" He then proceeded to take the two boxes that were basically full and shove them into my hands. I walked out of there with about \$90 worth of supplies my insurance doesn't cover but I actually need. Thank you sir for looking out for me!

5. I was in a room with other ostomates.

I found it refreshing to walk into the room and know everyone had an ostomy like me. Being in their presence made everything feel normal for two hours.

Read more by Rena on her Facebook page and website!

Facebook: @myintestinalfortitude

Blog: www.myintestinalfortitude.com

Plan Now to Attend the 6th UOAA National Conference!—August 22-26, 2017—Irvine, California

Conference-Related Information

This year's conference takes us to Irvine, CA a place that boasts on average 280 sunny days per year. Abundant area attractions (think Disney and Pacific Beaches) may inspire you to plan a vacation around the conference dates. After a day of inspiring talks, educational workshops and exhibits, lounge poolside under the palm trees while socializing with new friends from around the country, or explore all the area has to offer.

Inspirational Talks, Stoma Clinic, Educational Workshops, Social Events, ASG Leadership Academy, Exhibit Hall and more!

Please go to www.ostomy.org, the UOAA website, to register and view the educational programming that is planned for you. Information regarding conference registration will be posted here when available and will be published in the March 2017 issue of *The Phoenix* magazine.

http://www.ostomy.org/2017_National_Conference_Page.html



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WOC Nurse Directory

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN (281) 428-3033
Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital
cbarefield@houstonmethodist.org

Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN (713) 465-8497
Specialty Wound & Ostomy Nursing, Inc.
charlene@swoni.com

Pat Thompson RN, BSN, CWON (281) 397-2799
Pat.thompson@tenethealth.com

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Subscriptions directly fund the nonprofit United Ostomy Assoc. of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.



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Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: **March 20, 2017**
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841
 rockynme2@aol.com
Program: **Guest Speaker: Blake Kelting** of B. Braun Medical

Baytown Group

Monthly: Second Monday of the month
Date: **March 13, 2017**
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Community Room in Lobby of Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital
 4401 Garth Road, Baytown
Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-428-3033
Program: Managing the Ostomy Supply Process: Focus on Insurance and Reimbursement, Medicare Requirements and Allowances and Avoiding Delays—by: **T.J. McLaughlin**, Byram Healthcare

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Wednesday of the month
Date: **March 15, 2017**
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: NW Medical Professional Bldg., (The Cali Bldg.)
 17117 Cali Drive, Houston (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: Billy Locke 337-515-6354
Program: **Guest Speaker: Kerriane Pelzl**, Houston Territory Manager and Ostomy Specialist with Convatec

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: **Third Monday of the Month**
Date: **March 20, 2017**
Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment
Place: **Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193**
Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311
 Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

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

Opportunities and Announcements

Use Those Shopping Cards

Kroger and Randalls return a percentage of your purchases to the Ostomy Association on a quarterly basis. For information about shopping cards, please visit the website:
<http://www.ostomyhouston.org/>

Anniversary Gift

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Ostomy Association. Checks should be made payable to the ***Ostomy Association of the Houston Area*** and sent to the Treasurer at the address shown below.

AmazonSmile

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted to select a charitable organization from the list of organizations. You can change your selection at any time. To change your charitable organization: Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Select Ostomy Association of the Houston Area as your charity.

Memorial Fund

Donations can be made to our Memorial Fund to memorialize or honor individuals. Checks should be made payable to the ***Ostomy Association of the Houston Area*** and sent to the address below. When sending a donation, be sure to include the name of the person being honored so that acknowledgement can be sent.

Moving?

Our newsletter is sent by bulk mail, which the Post Office will not forward even if you fill out a forwarding request. To continue receiving the newsletter after a move, contact Tony Romeo, Treasurer, at 936-588-4031 or sal1mr@sbcglobal.net or send your request to the provided address below.

For Anniversary Gifts, Memorial Donations, Mailing Changes, or Sponsorships, please send all correspondence to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
 Attn: Tony Romeo, Treasurer
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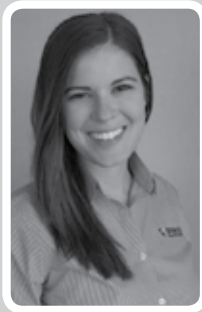
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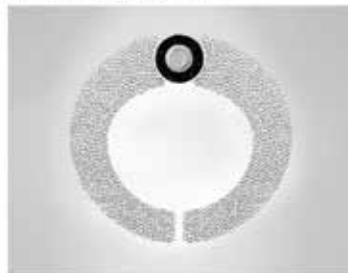
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Membership Application

Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area requires one easy payment. Please complete the following form and mail as directed with payment as shown. Dues of **\$25.00 per year** are payable to:
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P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164

Date: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ E-mail: _____

Surgery Date: _____ Birth Date: _____

Reason for surgery: Crohn's Ulcerative Colitis Cancer Birth Defects Other _____

Do you speak a foreign language? Yes No Foreign language spoken: _____

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<input type="checkbox"/> Urinary Diversion	<input type="checkbox"/> Pull-Through	<input type="checkbox"/> Physician
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Nurse

*Membership benefits include:
 Monthly Support/Information
 Meetings, Social Events,
 Monthly Newsletter*

I would like to attend meetings with the (**please circle one**):
 Central Group Baytown Group Northwest Group J-Pouch Group

I would like to become a member but cannot pay dues at this time. (*This will be kept confidential.*)

I learned about the Ostomy Association from
 WOC Nurse Physician Newsletter Surgical Shop Website Other: _____

I am interested in volunteering. Yes No

I have enclosed an additional \$_____ as a donation to support the association's mission of helping ostomates.