



Houston Chapter United Ostomy Association

A Health Support Group

May 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: May 17, Monday evening

Program: Election of Officers

Join us as we elect our 1st Vice President and Treasurer as well as vote for the 5 open positions as Director of the National UOA. Round table discussion will be held if time permits.

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: May 18, Tuesday evening

Program: ConvaTec

ConvaTec representative, Tabitha, will be present to demonstrate ConvaTec's latest products and answer questions.

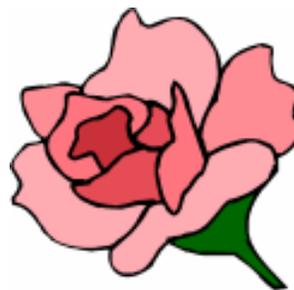
J-Pouch Group

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

Meeting: May 17, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Ulcerative colitis and the J-Pouch connection.



*Happy
Mother'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

We had 19 in attendance at our April meeting. Our thanks to Jenny Jansson-Smith, formerly nurse at MD Anderson, for being our speaker. She now represents Sterling Medical Services and explained the various services that her company offers. The company is a full participant in Medicare assignment and has no shipping charges.

We had three new visitors Kathleen Duplessi, who runs marathons, and her husband. Also in attendance was Ricky Cassel who we wish the very best with his surgery the first part of May.

The members voted to place a paid greeting in the National UOA Conference program for the summer meeting.

Thanks to Mary Harle, Dan Del Homme, Mary Lou Hartranft, and Ed Wood for their help in placing stickers on our brochures so that they would be updated. This allowed us to send 100 brochures to the Wound Care and Ostomy Nurses at MD Anderson. We still have well over 1000 brochures that we eventually hope to update with the stickers.

The month of May will be our month for 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-Chuck Bouse. This would be their first two year terms of office. Chuck is currently our able newsletter distributor, and Floyd has served outstandingly for one year in an expired term as the First Vice President in charge of programs. We thank Chuck and Floyd for volunteering to serve in these positions. There are seven people running for the 5 positions on the Board of Directors of the National UOA. At the May meeting we must choose the five that we wish to vote for. At the April meeting, information about them was distributed. The Spring 2004 Ostomy Quarterly has that same information starting on page 66. Please read the information about the individuals and be prepared to vote for five of the candidates at our meeting.

I would like to thank our partners at the American Cancer Society. Diana Burkett has been so helpful in our room assignments for our meetings, and has provided the audio visual aids that we have needed. Janet Pickens and Maria Avelar have relayed calls for visitations desired by ostomy patients. Diana introduced Ed and Denise Parsons to Kimberly

Pellicore who helps write ACS's grant applications. She was very helpful in assisting Houston UOA's first attempt at writing a grant proposal. Although we are just in the first stages, Kimberly encouraged us to consider the grant to encompass all of the elements of communication that deals with our group and the ostomy world-brochures, website, newsletter, information booklets, and correspondence materials. She encouraged us to think bigger.

We were sorry to hear of the passing of Charlotte Block. She was an upbeat and courageous lady. Dorothy Andrews said that she was an excellent golf and tennis player. She continued to play through her times of chemotherapy. Our sympathy goes to her husband, Harold. We hope for the continued recovery of Tom and Dorothy Andrews who were in an automobile accident in April. We also hope for a rebound for Clarice Kennedy from her illness.

You may have noticed the letter in the "Dear Abby" column concerning an ostomy patient. The response to the letter gave the National UOA's 800-number. We have had two referrals so far from people in the Houston area.

Ed Wood showed the Northwest Group the video that Friends of Ostomates Worldwide provides for viewing. It was an informative video about their organization. The Northwest Group appears to be leaning to providing some monetary support to the Friends group. It was good to see some "old" friends and to meet new member James Lewis and his wife Barbara. James attended his first meeting three weeks after his operation. Bill and Margot just recently completed a visit to New Zealand.

We have received inquiries from Kathleen McClane, who is at Texas Childrens Hospital, about sponsoring a girl to the youth rally this summer in San Diego. We hope that this will come to pass.

See you on May 17th!

Ed Wood
President

*"Happiness is a perfume which
you cannot pour on someone
without getting some on yourself."*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

HOW WEIGHT LOSS AFFECTS YOUR STOMA

From ConvaTec's Health & Vitality Magazine

Whenever you gain or lose weight, your abdominal contours change, and you may have problems with your ostomy appliances. "If pouching doesn't fit the way it used to, see your CWOC nurse; you may need to be refitted," says Carol Coker, ARNP, CWOCN, of UM-Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, FL. Even a gain or loss of 5 to 10 pounds can cause problems. Here's what to watch for:

- ◆ Leaking
- ◆ New pressure areas
- ◆ Any change in your skin or stoma
- ◆ Change in pouch-emptying frequency

"ONLY A MOTHER KNOWS"

How many cares does a Mother's heart know?

How many joys does a mother bestow?

How many heartwarming things has she said?

How many tears has she secretly shed?

How many kindnesses day after day?

How many prayers has she prayed?

Nobody really knows.....except a mother!!

-Author Unkown

FYI

**CWOCN is an abbreviation for:
Certified Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse.**

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.

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.

FUN FACTS & TRIVIA

- Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying.
- Apples are more efficient than caffeine in keeping people awake in the morning.
- It requires use of 72 muscles to speak a single word.

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.

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 your condition.

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
or e-mail info@uoa.org

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.

I AM A STOMA!!

By Mary Lou Thomas, RN, ET, North Arundel Hospital via Charlotte, NC UOA

Hi, I'm a stoma! I am great when you think about it. I must admit I have upset many people. Some people even consider me crude, rude and socially unacceptable. Well, excuse me!!

Just about everyone gets bent out of shape when their doctor says, "It may be necessary to create a stoma". Me!! They make it sound like a dirty word. Listen, it isn't the greatest for me either. I'm usually created from a piece of your intestines. I guess you know all about that. And then, just maybe you don't. So I will tell you.

Becoming a stoma wasn't my original function. No sirree!!! I used to just lie there in your abdomen, minding my own business. Then boom!! Some surgeon decided—let's make a stoma. He had a nerve! Why? How could he consider such a thing? Well, I guess it was because you hurt so much, because you were very sick from a disease like Ulcerative Colitis or Cancer, from a trauma like that automobile accident or from a birth defect. Your surgeon knew that by putting me to work, you could be free of discomfort and problems. In truth, so you could get on with living.

If that is why I was created, then why do so many people complain about me? Did you know that I am not given to just anyone? You see, there is a lot of planning and evaluation of each human being before I am created. So I know you can say only a "chosen" million or so are lucky enough to have me. You see—my people are special. My people are not like the normal run-of-the-mill people. I must say it takes them a while to recognize that fact. And, sad to say, there are a few who never do.

It isn't easy being a stoma! Some of you just don't understand what a miracle I am! Listen, before creation, I just lay quiet and usually content in your abdomen. Now I work! It's rather easy when fecal waste comes through because that's what I'm used to. But some character decided, why not water as well? We then found out that character was very wise because that works also.

You think YOU have problems adjusting! Phooey. Did you realize that I am a delicate mucus membrane? Yet I am durable... but some people think I am asphalt tile! Thank God I don't have feelings. But my friend, skin, does. You want complaints? Give a listen to her sometime. She really gets upset because of ulcers, fungus, irritants, barriers, etc. We are a team! And a darn good one. I'm moist, she is dry. I'm pink red, she is natural. I'm smooth, she is a little bumpy.

One of my biggest problems is my size. I am not always the same size from one human to the next. I am not always round. I don't always protrude nicely. Then why do some of you insist that my pouch opening is always the same? You need to check my size once in a while and fit me appropriately. Your shoes fit, don't they?

Some of you complain because I'm not pretty. Well, your anus wasn't Miss America! I think I am attractive. I am red like a rose. I am always moist if I am healthy. And, I don't smell. My discharge can't help what you put in your mouth. If you care for me with thought and keep my equipment clean, that just about takes care of it.

In closing, let me say you can live a good life, a productive life. It's up to you. Believe me, I do not deserve a pedestal life. I am just part of you trying to do my job. All I ask is that you be honest about me. The doctors, special nurses, other professionals and your Ostomy Association are always ready, willing and able to help you.

Hints For All From Everywhere

via Metro Maryland & Charlotte, NC UOA

Don't be afraid to take a shower without your appliance. Soap cannot hurt the stoma. Just rinse well.

If your stoma bleeds during cleaning and appliance change, don't panic! A healthy blood supply is what keeps your stoma a bright red color. Tiny capillaries are easily damaged and just as easily repair themselves. If bleeding continues long after the appliance has been changed, check with your doctor.

Excessively oily skin can affect adhesion. Wiping the skin around the stoma with alcohol is helpful, but be careful that the alcohol does not contain glycerin, as this will hinder adhesion.

Two or three tablespoons of plain baking soda in water when washing around the stoma will not only help heal the skin, but relieve itching too.

It is not necessary to use sterile supplies. Wash cloths and cotton balls can substitute for gauze pads. The stoma and surrounding skin are not sterile and only require the same sort of cleanliness that the rest of the exterior body does.

Time-release pills will dissolve all at once if alcohol is taken with, or shortly after, taking the pill and will give a heavy dosage of medication all at once. Persons with ileostomies should NEVER take time-release or enteric-coated pills.

Vitamins should be taken on a full stomach. Otherwise, they irritate the living of the stomach and produce the sensation of feeling hungry.

Try strong-brewed tea before the purchase of a "diuretic". Hot tea twice a day will wake your sluggish kidneys.

Increase fluids during colds and flu. Ostomates lose liquids more quickly than non-ostomates. If you have diarrhea and vomiting, contact your doctor for something to stop it. Remind him of your ostomy and fluid loss.

If you have cramps, try running a hot shower on your back. It will relax the muscles and help hurry the food through the digestive tract.

Drink more fluids when exercising and also in hot weather to replace fluid lost through perspiration. A good rule is to never pass a water fountain without taking a drink.

If you want medicines to work quickly, drown them! They dissolve and absorb faster with lots of water.

As he hammered siding into the house, Clem would reach into his nail pouch, pull out a nail, and then either toss it away or pound it into the house.

"Hey, Clem, why are you throwing those nails away?" yelled Lem, the foreman.

"If I pull a nail out of my pouch and it's pointed toward the house, then I nail it into the siding," said Clem. "If it's pointed toward me, I throw it away 'cause it's defective."

"You moron!" yelled Lem. "The nails pointed toward you aren't defective. They're for the other side of the house."

NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

We appreciate Ed Wood's time and effort in not only attending our April meeting but showing us the video about Friends-Ostomates-Worldwide (FOW). We had twelve attendees at this meeting. FOW is an organization that collects donated ostomy supplies and distributes them to undeveloped countries around the world. Our chapter and our NW group has supported the FOW for years by sending boxes of surplus ostomy supplies. Maybe it is time to support the FOW in another way. They need money to pay shipping costs from their collecting sites to the final users. Maybe we, the Northwest group, can donate some money (we do have money, see paragraph below). Let's discuss and vote on it at the May meeting.

New income for the Northwest Group: Ed Wood presented us with a check for \$370. Part of that sum (\$250) is the final payment of the \$500 grant that Pat Thompson won from her hospital and donated to the Chapter/NW Group. The other part (\$120) is our share for the number of NW members we have. For your information, when we pay our annual dues to the National UOA a portion of that money comes back to the Houston Chapter and in turn the NW satellite group receives its proportionate share.

As reported in the March 2004 newsletter the Northwest group had \$540.72. With this new check for \$370 we now have \$910.72. We will soon have a small expenditure for shipping two boxes of surplus ostomy supplies to the FOW. These are supplies that Pat donated. And perhaps, as a group, we will decide to donate some money to the FOW.

See you at the May 18th meeting.

Regards,

Bill Propst

Coordinator Northwest Group

SPELL CZECH

Eye halve a spelling chequer. It came with my pea sea.
It plainly marques four my revue miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word and weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write. It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid, it nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite. Its rarely ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it, Eye am shore your pleased
two no.

Its letter perfect in it's weigh. My chequer tolled me sew.