



Oostomy Association of the Houston Area

October 2005

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

"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."

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

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ed Wood 281-493-5015
(ewood6@houston.rr.com)

Meeting: October 17th, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us for a discussion of ostomy concerns and for information about the new UOAA.

Northwest Group

Monthly: Tuesday following the third Monday
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: Tony Romeo 281-537-0681 (sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net)

Meeting: October 18th, Tuesday evening

Program: Barbecue "Picnic"

Bring a side dish and join us as we eat and socialize. We'll also have samples of various ostomy products and supplies for you to check out.



Happy Halloween

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: October 17th, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us for a discussion about ulcerative colitis and the J-Pouch connection.

Baytown Group

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

Meeting: October 24th, Monday evening

Program: To Be Announced

We will be meeting on the 24th and look forward to seeing everyone!

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 of volunteers whose purpose is to provide mutual aid and education to persons who have ostomies and their families. We are a Texas non-profit corporation. Our application for tax exempt status is pending.

Our September speakers were Colleen Reeves and Christian Zela. At the UOA Youth Rally, Colleen was a nurse and Christian served as a counselor. We were honored to sponsor Colleen, as well as Erika Daniel, who was attending her first Youth Rally, at Colorado University in Boulder. With a PowerPoint presentation coordinated by Kelly Price, Colleen and Christian gave us an excellent summary of the Rally and the many activities provided. We appreciate them giving their time and talents in support of those attending the Youth Rally. We are hopeful that the Youth Rally will continue to meet in the future as we know how much the kids look forward to being together.

There were 22 in attendance at our September meeting. We welcomed Cameron Lewis as a visitor and hope to see him next month. Shirley gave a medical report and our thoughts continue to be with Harold, Bryan, and Meyers.

Chuck Bouse reported that we had a positive response to the dues notices for the second six months of the year. Chuck and Ed will be working on a budget for the 2006 year. We expect to bring to the October meeting a proposal for changing the amount of our dues starting in 2006. We will have discussions of the proposal in October and vote at the November meetings.

Our intention to incorporate as the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area has been sent to the state. Our initial board of directors will include our present officers together with Lorette Bauarschi, Kathleen Duplessis, and Chuck Bayens. Lorette, Kathleen, and Chuck have agreed to be responsible for fund raising, membership, and donated supplies, respectively. New bylaws for the organization have been adopted and can be made available to those who are interested.

We have received additional information about the new national organization, United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. (UOAA). Look on page 5 for additional information.

In December, we will have our annual Holiday Dinner at Pine Forest Country Club. To reserve your seat at this enjoyable event, please send your check, made payable to Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, to Chuck Bouse, 12427 Millbanks, Houston, TX 77031. Your check is your reservation. **One change this year is that your entrée choice must be made at the time of your reservation. Please call Ed Wood at 281-493-5015 to make your choice.** More information about the dinner can be found on page 7.

I hope that you, your friends and family survived relatively unscathed after the two recent hurricanes. After Katrina, we received offers to help with supplies for the victims from ostomy groups in Orange County, CA, Fort Lauderdale, FL, and the Friends of Ostomates Worldwide. I talked to the support group leaders in the Alexandria and New Orleans areas. The Friday that evacuees started to arrive at the Astrodome, Charlene Randall took some supplies to the center. The next week I took some supplies that we had received from the FOW and MD Anderson to the George R. Brown Convention Center. I was very much impressed with the setup and organization at George R. Brown. The nurses called me when they were to close operation of the center, and I was able to retrieve the supplies that had not been used.

We were delighted to learn that Jerry and Adelin Hammack will be traveling to Nice, France where Jerry will accept an international award for his work during his career at NASA. We congratulate Jerry and wish them a great trip.

Your directors continue to make the transition into our new future. We are exploring the possibility of having a product fair sometime next year. I hope to see you at our October 17th meeting.

Ed Wood
President



Flu season is around the corner. Be sure to have your flu shot as soon as possible if you are in an "at risk" category.

"I still find each day too short for all the thoughts I want to think, all the walks I want to take, all the books I want to read, and all the friends I want to see."

- John Burroughs

ANNIVERSARY GIFT

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Ostomy Association. 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 the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area and please send it to:

*Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
Attn: Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164*



CANDY CORN FACTS

- 35 Million pounds of candy corn are produced each year.
- 9 Billion candy corn pieces are produced.
- These pieces would wrap around the moon 4 times if laid end-to-end.

**CONTRIBUTE WHEREVER
AND HOWEVER YOU CAN FOR
ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY
THE HURRICANES.**

ATTENTION...

Ostomates and Medical Personnel

Clarice E. Kennedy, Certified Enterstomal Therapist, 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 Ostomy Association 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 Ostomy Association of the Houston Area 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. We are 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.



"No, I have nothing for an irritable bow-wow."

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.

NUTRITION

ARE YOU GETTING THE NUTRIENTS YOU NEED?

Everybody has trouble eating right. When you have an ostomy, though, the challenges can be especially trying. Attempts to control diarrhea, fluid balance, gas, and odor can stop you from eating enough healthy foods. And even if you do eat right, you may worry that your intestines don't absorb the vitamins and minerals you need. The first thing to know: people with an ostomy usually don't have any absorption problems unless significant portions of the small bowel have been removed. If you're not sure, ask your surgeon or physician about the location and extent of your surgery. And listen to the experts. They say nutrient deficiencies (in people living with an ostomy) are often self-inflicted.

FOOD CHALLENGES: "If people living with an ostomy have deficiencies, it's because they're afraid to eat, and they impose too many restrictions on themselves," says Claudia Mueller, RD, a colorectal dietician at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio. Trying to help each other, people with an ostomy often share war stories about the foods that bother them, creating a "do not eat" list of foods that can limit nutrient intake and compromise health. But it's important to try out these foods for yourself, since each digestive system reacts differently. Keep a food diary, testing one suspected food every 3 days. A registered dietician can help expand your food choices. Following are the two most common food concerns:

1. Fear of fiber—A clogged stoma is big, but fiber is usually only an issue for people who don't chew their food very well, Mueller contends, although corn, popcorn, and nuts may always be a problem for someone with an ileostomy. The solution: Take your time, and chew, chew, chew—at least 25 times with each bite of food you take.
2. Fear of odor—"Six to twelve months out, most people with an ostomy have achieved a good comfort level," says Leslie J. Bonci, RD, author of the American Dietetic Association Guide to Better Digestion, "and they're more concerned with odor." Fish, coffee, onions, garlic, chives, asparagus, and sometimes even poultry are the culprits. The solution...try smaller portions

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children...to leave the world a better place...to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

and include buttermilk or yogurt at the same meal to counter the odor-causing foods. Fresh parsley and spearmint help too—a reason to eat your garnishes. ♦

MARSHMALLOWS... AN ILEOSTOMATE'S BEST FRIEND

Excerpt from S NV's Town Karaya

Eat a couple of marshmallows up to 30 minutes before changing your appliance. One ostomate says: "I eat a couple of marshmallows just as I go into the shower, which takes me 10 to 15 minutes to complete. I also skip a meal before changing my appliance. Combining the marshmallow, lack of food and a blast of cold water on my stoma in the shower for about 20 seconds does a pretty good job of shutting me down before the process of changing." Another tip is to put an ice cube in a thin washcloth, and circle the stoma for about 20 seconds. This will shock the stoma into delaying output for awhile. ♦

FOOD AND YOUR OSTOMY...SOME HELPFUL HINTS

Celery: Choose the hearts. Always chew, chew, chew and drink lots of water.

Asparagus: Medium stalks are usually the most tender. Start at the tip and work down. As soon as the spear gets tough to cut, go to the next one. Asparagus causes odor in the urine, which can be particularly bothersome to a urostomate.

Broccoli: The same principle applies as to asparagus. Vegetables like broccoli (cauliflower and turnips) are considered "gas producers" and may require an extra trip to the restroom to relieve the pressure.

Fresh fruit: Apples, pears and peaches are great without their skins if you find them hard to digest. Fruit is a natural cathartic. Keep this in mind when you're eating at a picnic or the beach...or anywhere bathroom facilities are not readily available.

Oysters, clams, mussels: More difficult to digest than other types of seafood. Chew well. Seafood of all kinds can cause odor in the stool.

Nuts: Hard ones are the most difficult. Chew well and don't overindulge—no more than a handful at a setting.

Meat: Those with fat content or heavy casings can be more difficult for the bowel to handle. Cut into small pieces and chew well...limit your intake.

Corn on the cob, popcorn, dried foods and coconut: These are major offenders in obstruction behind the stoma.

Spices and carbonation: Heavily spiced foods and sauces can act as cathartics and can also produce gas. Carbonated beverages are gas producers, too. One way to get the bubbles out of a carbonated drink is with a dash of sugar. It'll cause a frenzy of fizz and leave the beverage (safely) flat. ♦

BAYTOWN SUPPORT GROUP

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hindered plans for the Baytown group to meet in September and yet, there were several activities going on behind the scenes! Special thanks go out to Mr. Herman vonRosenberg and Mr. Bob Gibson who responded to a call from the Red Cross. They were able to help an elderly gentleman at the Baytown Community Center with his ostomy needs.

Baytown Support Group also has plans to help Dan Hernandez, our local ConvaTec Representative. Dan serves the Baton Rouge/Lake Charles area and has been inundated with requests for assistance. He has literally given away every single box of ostomy supplies that he had on hand! Our members hope to help by donating extra supplies they have on hand which will allow Dan to get them to the folks who need them!

Plans are being made to reschedule the presentation by Laura Weldon on "Fun with Fitness" for later this year.

Hope to see everyone on Monday night, October 24th. Stay safe!

Cindy Barefield, RN, WOCN
281-420-8671
Pager 713-404-0296

Rearrange the letters...

(Someone either has too much spare time or is deadly at Scrabble)

DORMITORY = DIRTY ROOM
PRESBYTERIAN = BEST IN PRAYER
DESPERATION = A ROPE ENDS IT
GEORGE BUSH = HE BUGS GORE
THE MORSE CODE = HERE COME DOTS
SLOT MACHINES = CASH LOST IN ME
MOTHER-IN-LAW = WOMAN HITLER
SNOOZE ALARMS = ALAS! NO MORE Z'S
A DECIMAL POINT = I'M A DOT IN PLACE
THE EARTHQUAKES = THAT QUEER SHAKE
ELEVEN PLUS TWO = TWELVE PLUS ONE

LEND SUPPORT WHILE YOU SHOP...

Remember to use your Kroger and Randall's shopping cards. Both stores return a percentage of your purchase to the Ostomy Association on a quarterly basis. For card applications, contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015.

NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

Thank you Chris Robison for your presentation of Hollister's products on September 20th. In spite of worry and preparation for Hurricane Rita, we had a good turnout for our meeting. We enjoyed meeting Cameron Lewis, Bill Newbeitt and Patti Suler. Welcome!!

Our October "picnic" will be held at 7:00 p.m. on October 18th. Barbecue will be served. Please bring a side dish and join us to have a meal together and also look over samples of various ostomy products and supplies.

As always we welcome family and friends to attend our monthly meetings and especially invite one and all to come and get reacquainted with old friends on October 18th.

See you then!!!

Tony Romeo
281-537-0681

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT UOAA

The goal of UOAA is to provide a non-profit association that will serve to unify and strengthen the support groups in America that are organized for the benefit of people who have, or will have intestinal or urinary diversions, and for their care givers.

Membership in UOAA is open to any former UOA chapter, or support group that chooses to affiliate with it.

Individual members of affiliated support groups will be members of UOAA. UOAA will have no national members and will not compete with support groups for members.

UOAA will publish a quarterly magazine, the "PHOENIX", to which individuals may subscribe. A complimentary issue will be sent to all former UOA members by late December 2005 or early January 2006, together with information about UOAA, and an invitation to subscribe. The cost will be \$25.00 payable directly to the publisher.

UOAA will continue to serve as an Advocate for the ostomy community at local, State and national levels.

UOAA is establishing a comprehensive, interactive website, www.uoaa.org. Links will be established to all pertinent websites and to our industry supporters.

UOAA will send periodic electronic newsletters to the affiliated support group leaders.

UOAA conferences will be held annually, alternating between Regional Conferences one year, and an Annual Conference the next. UOAA will provide logistical support. Regional conferences will be held in 2006 and a national conference will be held in 2007. ♦

THE ART OF VISITING

By: Jean Moen, RN, MS (edited) Via: S. NV's Town Karaya

The definition of “art” is a specific skill or it’s application. Ostomy visitors have the skill of making a person that feels really down about their circumstances feel better about themselves and their outlook on life.

People view ostomies three ways: (1) an inconvenience; (2) a crisis; and, (3) total devastation. The visitor needs to be able to recognize how the person they are visiting views their ostomy. Most patients have three major concerns:

1. Concerns that are inner directed....which consist of control issues, dependency, self image and self esteem.
2. Concerns that are outer directed....such as social relationships, work relationships, and intimacy.
3. Concerns which are skill directed. These are concerns such as learning to take care of their ostomy and adapting to it emotionally.

The visitor must be aware of the main concern of the patient and focus on those needs that are important to the patient, not on their own needs. The visitor must also be aware of whether or not the patient is at high risk – patients with family conflict, limited social support, or maybe they distrust the medical team.

There are benefits and detriments to being a visitor. The benefits are being a role model, self gratification in knowing you have helped someone else and it helps you deal with your own experience. The detriments are too much responsibility (sometimes the patient will become too dependent on the visitor) which can cause burnout and stress.

The major role of the visitor is to provide emotional support, social support, education and information and to be a problem solver. If we do these four things, we have provided the “Art of Visiting” for that patient. ♦



GOOD NEWS FOR OSTOMY TRAVELERS!

The Transportation Security Administration has removed ostomy scissors from the prohibited items list. Ostomy scissors up to four inches long with pointed tips are now permitted on board **if** accompanied by an ostomy supply kit. We also

recommend you keep your ostomy supplies—with the scissors visibly displayed—in a see-thru pouch/zip-lock bag and place it in a separate basket when going through security to speed the process. ♦

“Some people think it’s holding on that makes a person strong, but sometimes it’s letting go.”

- Unknown

TRAVEL TIPS

Your travel kit—before you pack:

- Make a note of the size, name, order number and manufacturer of your supplies and the supplier’s phone number.
- Colostomates: you may wish to order some drainable bags which can make coping with diarrhea a little easier
- Ask the airline about an extra hand luggage allowance for medical supplies.
- When you book your flight ask for an aisle seat near the bathroom.
- To counter dehydration (and jet lag) drink a glass of water or fruit juice every hour.
- Take your supplies in your hand luggage—that way, if you’re in Nice and your luggage is in Abu Dhabi, you’re still okay.

Packing:

- Your ostomy care supplies—take more than you think you’ll need.
- Pack twice as much as you would normally use.
- For easier packing you can take your supplies out of the box—as long as they are not convexity products.
- Disposal bags for used appliances.
- Wipes, tissues, scissors, sticky tape.
- Unscented deodorant.
- A diarrhea remedy like Immodium or Lomotil which is available without prescription.
- Any other medicines you need in their original packaging properly labeled with the unbranded name.
- Travel-wash for clothes.
- Bottled water for irrigation.
- And, if it would make you feel more confident when staying away from home, take a plastic sheet to protect the mattress (a plastic garbage bag works too).
- A small travel kit is also useful for short trips in the car or when sightseeing.
- Always carry an extra closure in your purse or on your person, in case the one that you are using breaks, or gets lost down a toilet.
- Carry tissues in case there is no toilet paper.
- If the door latch to the stall is defective, you may stuff paper towels or tissues in the doorjamb.
- Carry a product such as Purell, or antibacterial wipes, in case there is no soap or water with which to wash your hands. (Not for cleaning around stoma). Hand washing remains one of the easiest and most effective ways of preventing certain illnesses.
- Pre-prepare a kit which can be used for a single ostomy change. Include everything you need but not more. Be sure to replenish supplies as they are used. Include small plastic garbage bags and zip-lock bags for easy disposal.
- Chose a supply case with a handle, so it can be hung on a hook or doorknob if no surface is available.
- Place supplies in drawer or suitcase for safekeeping...don’t let them be mistaken for garbage.
- Know the names and dosages of medications you are taking; the dates and type of surgery you have had, the diagnosis that led to them, and the name of the surgeon/hospital. At the very least, carry a medical I.D. wallet card to hold basic information. ♦



Holiday Dinner Party

Date: Tuesday, December 6

Time: 6:30 p.m. - Hors d'oeuvres and Cash Bar
7:30 p.m. - Dinner

Place: Pine Forest Country Club
18003 Clay Road
Houston, Texas 77084

Menu: Entrée Choices: (Includes salad, dessert, coffee or tea)

1. Chicken Boursin (Chicken filled w/boursin cheese & prosciutto ham then wrapped in a puff pastry). Served with rice blended with cranberries and pecans and seasoned asparagus.
2. 6 Oz. Filet Mignon with Bernaise (Chargrilled). Served with Garlic Mashed Potatoes and seasoned asparagus.
3. Herbed Seared Salmon with light, lemon butter sauce. Served with rice blended with cranberries and pecans and seasoned asparagus.

Cost: \$25.00 per person (includes gratuity)

- Reservations can be made by sending your check (payable to Ostomy Association of the Houston Area) to Chuck Bouse, Treasurer, 12427 Millbanks, Houston, TX 77031.
- Your check will serve as your reservation.
- Also, please call Ed Wood, 281-493-5015, to make your Entrée selection. (This must be done at the time of your reservation.)

The Holiday Dinner is a wonderful way to start this joyous season.

Please join us to enjoy the beautiful surroundings, great food, good friends, and fun door prizes.

During an average week, diners at Crazy Otto's Restaurant in Lancaster, CA consume 22,000 eggs, 3,500 pounds of hash browns, 250 pounds of fresh ground coffee, 325 gallons of milk, 95 whole hams and 500 pounds of sausage.....hungry anyone??

Moving??

A
D
D
R
E
S

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 you need to contact Chuck Bouse, Treasurer, at 281-495-1840 (dewitt@houston.rr.com) or Judy Swinger, Newsletter Editor, 281-463-0069 (swingcon@ev1.net). You may also send your request to the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, P.O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164.

C
H
A
N
G
E

NUMBERS FROM HERE & THERE

- 2058 - The year when everyone in the United States will be obese if obesity rates continue to rise as they have over the past 25 years.
- \$825 - The amount obese people saved on medical expenses the year after losing just 5% of their weight (9 pounds if you weigh 185).
- \$754 Billion - Total charges for U.S. hospital stays in 2003 (not including physician's fees).
- 11 - Percentage of the average American life spent watching television.
- 15,032 - Weight, in pounds, of the world's largest wedding cake.
- 40.6 - Median age of residents of Maine making it the nation's "oldest" state. Vermont and West Virginia tied for 2nd.
- 39 - Number of vacation days awarded to the average worker in France. In the U.S.: 12. ♦

FIGHTING THE FLU

Winter can be a time not only of celebration and good cheer, but also of incapacitating illness brought on by the dreaded flu. Here are a few tips:

Eat more vegetables. Disease fighting phytochemicals and vitamins found in vegetables may help ward off the flu before it takes hold of you....Exercise regularly to strengthen the immune system....Twenty minutes of aerobic exercise each day can help to bolster your immunity and increase antibody response when fighting illness....Take a daily vitamin supplement to boost immunity. Check with your physician for the best dietary supplements for you....Lose weight to reduce stress and depression. Stress and depression can make you more susceptible to the flu and other illnesses....Get a flu shot....Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap (antibacterial, if possible)....Avoid touching your eyes....Avoid putting your fingers around your mouth....Get plenty of sleep. ♦

OSTOMATES

*Ordinary people
Extraordinary lives
Coping with change.*

*Fearful at first
Hopeful at last
Helping others.*

*Building self-confidence
Concealing impairment
Sharing a voice.*

By Ann M. Favreau

OPPORTUNITY TO LEND A HELPING HAND

If you would like to sponsor a member of our ostomy support group with a tax-deductible donation to cover the cost of their membership, send your check in the amount of \$10.50 to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164

Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness

This site has been launched for people with IBD. Jennifer C. Jaff, author of "Know Your Rights: A Handbook for Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease," has inaugurated a new nonprofit corporation to advocate for patients with chronic illnesses, especially IBD. Visit www.advocacyforpatients.org to use this free service. ♦

INFLUENZA

Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know About "the Flu"

The flu is caused by a virus that spreads from infected people to the nose or throat of others. Symptoms usually appear within 2 to 4 days after being infected. A person is considered contagious for another 3 to 4 days after symptoms appear. The U.S. "flu season" generally runs from November to March/April every year.

Flu symptoms are fever, chills, dry cough, nasal congestion, sore throat, headache and muscle aches. Complications can lead to hospitalization and death. Twice as many Americans die from the flu every year as die from AIDS, breast cancer, or prostate cancer.

1. *Why do you need a flu shot every year?* Because the flu virus changes, at least one of the vaccine's viruses must be replaced with a newer one every year, so the shot only lasts about a year.
2. *When does a shot start working?* Protection develops one or two weeks after you get your flu shot.
3. *Who should get a flu shot?* Anyone over 6 months old who wants or needs to reduce their chance of getting the flu. Those over age 65 (a must!), everyone with a chronic medical condition, like heart disease or asthma (a must!), pregnant women, breast-feeding mothers, healthcare givers, students and everyone with special holiday plans as the flu season often hits the last week of December.
4. *When is the best time to get a flu shot?* Between September and mid-November.
5. *Can you get the flu from the flu shot?* Flu vaccines contain no live virus, so it's impossible to get the flu from a flu shot.
6. *How effective are flu shots?* The shot is almost 90% effective in preventing type A and Type B influenza. If you do manage to get the flu, it will be a milder case if you've had the shot. ♦

DOES THE FLU AFFECT AN OSTOMY?

When the flu prevails every ostomate should know what to expect. The flu usually causes diarrhea to different degrees which can be a great hazard to an ostomate, especially an ileostomate. Along with the excess of water discharge there is a loss of salt and vitamins necessary in maintaining good health. During this time, an excess fluid intake is mandatory to prevent dehydration. Weak tea and plain broth are beneficial and solid food should be eliminated. Do not try to change your appliance at this time if it can be avoided. The flu usually lasts about 24-48 hours. If it persists longer, then your doctor should be consulted. If ever in doubt, don't hesitate to call your doctor. ♦

**If at first you don't succeed,
then skydiving isn't for you.**

