



Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

"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

Improvising or Fixing a Leak in a Hurry

via UOAA Update, September 2015

If you happen to spring a leak, especially when away from home, it can be a cause of panic. Being prepared can help you keep your cool. Wearing an appliance cover can provide extra protection. One person noted that when he had a leak near the seal, he was able to stuff several folded tissues between the pouch and the cover. This absorbed the leakage and kept him going for 90 minutes until he was able to get back home and change.

Also, a pouch cover has the advantage of soaking up perspiration on a hot day. Perspiration can quickly undermine the best adhesives. A good ostomy powder can help soak up moisture too. Lacking this, cornstarch or baby powder is equally effective.

Some people carry Band-Aids with them which can be used to mend a small tear in the pouch. Some say that it works so well, they forget about the makeshift repair until their regular time to change pouches!

You may want to keep individually packaged alcohol wipes or towelettes. They are easily carried and are great helpers in cleaning up an emergency. Best of all though, take precautions to try to avoid having an emergency.

Running Out of Brain Space

Reuters; via UOAA Update, September 2015

There could be a simple reason that people tend to forget things as they grow older. They run out of mental storage space. An article published in the Journal of Developmental Psychology says age-related memory loss may not be due to a decline in information-processing abilities, as a commonly held theory goes, but rather to limited information-storing space in our brains.



Researchers from the University of California at Riverside examined 778 healthy subjects aged 6 to 76. They were given tests to assess their working memory, verbal recall and visual/spatial tasks. In these tests, they were asked to recall information learned recently or to process information by categorizing it.

They found that memory-processing ability was not linked to age, but their simple recall abilities were. Based on the subjects' test scores, the study suggests that our ability to store and retrieve information from memory improves throughout childhood, but peaks at about age 45 and goes downhill from there on. In other words, we have a limited amount of space for storing memories and at a certain point we just run out of room. However, the researchers point out that memory storage capacity varies from person to person, so declines in recall ability may occur later for some people than others.

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.

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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.

Central Group News

Unfortunately, our scheduled speaker, Laura Cox, the Ostomy Lifestyle Specialist with Shield HealthCare, was unable to attend our meeting due to illness. We wish her a speedy recovery and will look forward to seeing her next year. Shelby Sanchez with Shield gave a short presentation instead. Shelby told us that while Shield has been around since 1957, they are new to the Houston area. But, they are committed to this market and already have three representatives here. Shield can provide most ostomy supplies that you need, and if for some reason they don't carry a certain product, they will find out for you who does carry it. For more information, please look at their ad in this newsletter. Shield is our newest advertiser and also has generously sponsored one month printing of our newsletter.

We also had a brief roundtable discussion. We focused on how much support we can provide our fellow ostomates, especially those who are new to their surgery. As was brought home to me by a recent visit I made to a new ileostomate in the hospital, we can help just by showing up and demonstrating how our surgery doesn't limit us from living the lives we want to live. An ostomate can do pretty much anything—we just do it without a portion of our intestinal tract! You can help too—by attending our support group meetings. We always have new ostomates or those who are considering surgery attend our meetings. They truly benefit from hearing from those of us who have “been there, done that.”

We will have our annual Holiday Party on Saturday, December 5, instead of a regular meeting in December. It promises to be a festive event and we'll tell you all about it next month.

The move date for the American Cancer Society has been postponed again—to the end of January 2016. So, we will have our January 18 meeting at the building on Richmond. After that, we anticipate having our meetings at their new location at 2500 Fondren, Houston, Texas 77063. We will keep you posted with the details as we find out about them.

Regards,

Lorette Bauarschi

President, OAHA, 713-582-0718

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

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.

Northwest Group News

Tabatha from Coloplast provided a very good presentation on the new Mio wafer including convexity and pouches. Those in attendance advised it was very informative. We had a lively discussion about wear time.

There is no December meeting. Members are encouraged to attend the Holiday Party.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 20, 2016. We will be discussing the 2016 programs as well as participating in a “Let's Make A Deal” styled second chance gift exchange; so bring something you received that you wouldn't mind trading for what's behind door #2.

Tony Romeo

936-588-4031

Baytown Group News

Ostomy Support Group in November was an opportunity for the passionate few to press on! Tony Thompson from Liberty Medical had to cancel unexpectedly and this allowed the group an opportunity for Roundtable. With ostomates of only a few months and those with years of experience, it provided an opportunity for an interesting discussion. Cindy facilitated the group with basic questions such as “The good thing about having an ostomy is...” and “The most important thing I would tell a person with a new ostomy is...” A wish list of sorts was developed for the coming year on possible topics that included a presentation by a surgeon on how stomas are created and how to avoid hernias. We will be moving our meeting date to the second Monday of each month in 2016. We hope to see you each month.

Our last meeting of the year is on Monday, December 7. Nick Gritzai with Cymed, will present “Living without Limitations”—you do not want to miss this!

Best regards,

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN

281-428-3033

Time to get your flu shot!

Remember: Ostomates run a greater risk of flu-related complications.



The **United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA)** can be contacted at:
www.ostomy.org OR **800-826-0826**

A Visit from St. Ostomy

by Marjorie Kaufman, Los Angeles (CA) Los Ostomy News; via Austin (TX) Austi-Mate

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the flat,
There was general confusion including the cat.

The bathroom was strewn with the ostomy ware,
That I had abandoned in utter despair.

The courage I'd had in the hospital bed,
To follow instructions, had suddenly fled.

It all looked so strange, and uncommonly new;
I swore I would never know quite what to do.

Now which goes to which, and what sticks to what?
I fumbled each step, with my nerves overwrought.
And then in my anguish,
I went to my room,

To settle my brains for a night full of gloom.

With a household a-flutter in holiday matter,
I shut out the sounds of excitement and chatter.
When out in the hallway I heard from below,
The sound of a voice with a jolly "Hello."

As I peeked through the door, up the stairway she came;
And she smiled when she saw me, and called me by name.
And I, in my wonder, just couldn't believe,

That ostomy visits were made Christmas Eve.

And then in a twinkling she put me at ease,
And said she could lessen my anxieties.

She was dressed all in white, in a form-fitting sheath,
With nary a sign of what lay underneath.

So trim and well-groomed, a delight to behold,
No one would suspect, unless they'd been told.

That standing before me so calm and serene,
Was the very first ostomate I'd ever seen.

Her manner so friendly, with faith and good cheer,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to fear.

My questions, like leaves in a hurricane flew;
And with each knowing answer, my confidence grew.
Then under her guidance each part fell in place,

As I conquered the problem I'd just failed to face.

And all of a sudden I knew I was free,

To live just as normal and happy as she.

For only an ostomate is really akin,

To the fears and frustrations that lie deep within.

Her time and her friendship so willing to give,

Will keep me remembering as long as I live.

And my family was grateful for what she had done,
For once more the evening was festive and fun.

Now each time I meet her, more clearly I see

The "Saint" who came calling with blessings for me!!



Caring For Your Ostomy

by Pat Murphy, RN, CETN, Middle GA Ostomy Rumble; via UOAA Update May 2015

Here are some simple pointers for ostomy care. They may not be new, but sometimes it is good to be reminded of them. Good ostomy care habits can catch and nip problems in the bud—the rosebud that is.



Inspect your stoma and skin each time you change your skin barrier. Your stoma should be bright red, smooth and shiny. Inspect the lower edge especially well. Use a mirror if necessary. Look for any signs of irritation or bleeding. These signs may mean your skin barrier is rubbing there.

Your skin should not be pink, purple or gray, even right next to the stoma. You may, however, notice some pink skin under pressure points when you first remove the skin barrier from your body. This is the same as when you take off your watch or a pair of stockings and is normal.

Inspect your skin in a sitting position to see if creases or low areas form around the stoma. This will tell you where to take special steps to even out the area when you put on your skin barrier. Stretching the skin to make it smooth may be all you need to do, or you may need a dab of ostomy paste to help seal the area.

Remember: a new stoma can change size for up to a year. Re-measure your stoma every time you change the skin barrier for the first six months after surgery and every month thereafter. Always re-measure if you are having a leak. Measure the stoma at the base from side to side and from top to bottom.

Many stomas are oval. If you are cutting a skin barrier of a one-piece pouching system, no skin should show when it is in place. However, make sure the skin barrier doesn't touch the stoma unless it is an extended-wear skin barrier manufactured to be able to touch the stoma (these skin barriers are designed to "turtleneck" where they touch the stoma). Since it can be tricky to cut the opening to the correct shape without leaving gaps around the stoma, manufacturers have developed skin barrier seals and ostomy paste that can be used to fill the gaps.

If your stoma is not perfectly round, do not trace and cut a round circle. Instead, make the skin barrier fit exactly. Your ostomy nurse can show you how. It should just miss the stoma, sealing down on the skin right next to it. Your skin barrier should not go over any red, wet mucosal tissue, the kind that forms the stoma. If you wear a pouch with a Karaya ring on it, the ring should gently touch the stoma all around.



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WOC Nurse Directory

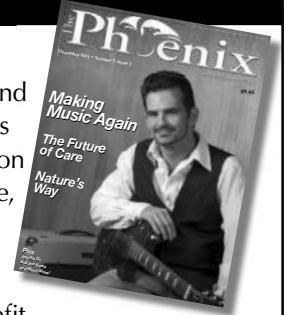
Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN (281) 428-3033
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Specialty Wound & Ostomy Nursing, Inc.
charlene@swoni.com

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

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The Phoenix is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Each issue contains 72 pages of inspiration, education and information including new products, medical advice, management techniques, personal stories and more.



Subscriptions directly fund the nonprofit United Ostomy Associations of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.



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Central Group

- Monthly:** Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
 6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841
 rockynme2@aol.com
Meeting: **No meeting this month. Members are encouraged to attend our Holiday Luncheon.**

Baytown Group

- Monthly:** First Monday
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
Meeting: **December 7, 2015**
Program: **Guest Speaker: Nick Gritzai** with Cymed, will present "Living without Limitations"

Northwest Group

- Monthly:** Third Wednesday of the month
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 936-588-4031
 sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net
Meeting: **No meeting this month. Members are encouraged to attend our Holiday Luncheon.**

J-Pouch Group

- Monthly:** Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment
Place: American Cancer Society Building
 6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311
 Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220
Meeting: **No meeting this month. Members are encouraged to attend our Holiday Luncheon.**

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.

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 Ron Cerreta, Treasurer, at 832-439-1311 or texasronc@aol.com 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: Ron Cerreta, Treasurer
 P. O. Box 25164
 Houston, TX 77265-5164

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

Sponsorship

You can sponsor a member of our ostomy support group with a tax-deductible donation to cover the cost of their membership. Please make the check in the amount of \$25.00 payable to ***Ostomy Association of the Houston Area*** and send to the treasurer's address above.



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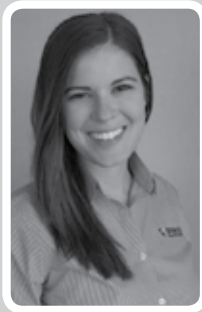
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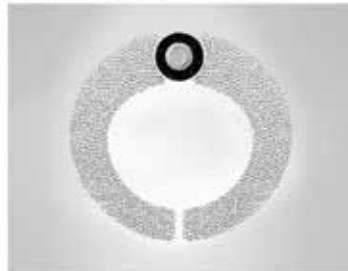
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Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area requires one easy payment. Please complete the following form and mail as directed with payment as shown. Dues of **\$25.00 per year** are payable to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, Attention: Treasurer

P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164

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Name: _____ Phone: _____

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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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*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.