



The Austi-Mate Journal

Ostomy Association of Austin Monthly Publication
P. O. Box 143383 Austin, Texas 78714

www.austinostomy.org

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
200 West Anderson Lane, Austin, Texas 78752

Upcoming In-Person & Virtual Meetings ~ 7- 8:00 pm:

Thursday, November 3rd

Thursday, December 1st

The Ostomy Association of Austin is a volunteer based Non-Profit Health Support group dedicated to providing mutual aid and education, information and advocacy for persons and their families who have had or will have ostomy surgery. It is our vision to educate, empower and inspire through information and mutual support in all phases of life.



We had our first two in person and virtual combination meetings this Fall with a good turnout of people on both venues. In September, we were excited to see people in person and facilitated an open Question and Answer session among our members.



In October, Shelby Moss, Coloplast Representative & Territory Manager, shared their newest products and innovations for Ostomates. She demonstrated how to apply some of their products, the latest stretchable and breathable materials and answered questions from the group. You can access the [My Ostomy Life App](#) here and a Care Resource for support & free materials on our website.

Join us in November when JT Boone, one of our members, will share his incredibly challenging and inspirational health journey from nearly hopeless to a holistic, healthy approach to living.



Our December meeting will be a general Question and Answer session along with some holiday fun.

***Please bring a small snack to share if you're joining us in person for both meetings.**

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This Bi-monthly newsletter is available online at

www.austinostomy.org

Have you paid your dues?

Living Well with Bladder Cancer

Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN) online article



Many patients and their families want to know what they can do to help prevent bladder cancer from recurring and to live well after a diagnosis. There are many different ways that people can live well after a diagnosis. Good nutrition is one way to live well, and is important for everyone, but balanced, healthy diets are strongly recommended for those living with a bladder cancer diagnosis.

Another essential part of living well is surrounding yourself with a support system and knowing when to ask for help. People want to know what they can do to help, and it is important to let them. You can ask them to make you a meal, come visit with you, or take up an activity with you.

There are many other people living with a bladder cancer diagnosis and there are [support groups around the country](#). There is also an [online BCAN Support](#) Forum with over 30,000 members, who know exactly what you are going through.

Living well can also mean becoming and staying physically active by getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. Physical activity can be anything that gets your heart rate up, such as walking, gardening, swimming, weight lifting, or dancing. Talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

What you should know about eating healthily with bladder cancer (edited from website)

Many patients and their families want to know what they can do to help prevent bladder cancer or prepare their bodies for treatment. Good nutrition is important for everyone, but balanced, healthy diets are strongly recommended for those undergoing bladder cancer treatments. Everyone can benefit from knowing more about how good nutrition impacts bladder cancer prevention, treatment, and survivorship.

BCAN's 2018 Young Investigator Awardee, Dr. Eugene Lee from the University of Kansas, produced a series of videos that provide important information and nutrition tips. These include how to prepare tasty, healthy recipes, what you can do to manage treatment side effects with your diet, and how to incorporate a healthy diet into your lifestyle. You can find great tips and recipes in our "[Nutrition during Bladder Cancer](#)" and "[Living Well with Bladder Cancer](#)" sections.

Many patients also experience some less than pleasant side effects during treatment, such as a metal taste in their mouth, or diarrhea. Experts suggest foods that have a lemon or lime juice as part of the seasoning to help take away the metallic taste and make sure that there is enough fiber to help ease diarrhea. Find out more about other common issues and tips on how to deal with them in our "Overcoming Issues Section."

What You Should Know About Eating Healthy with Bladder Cancer

Eating healthy and having good nutrition during your bladder cancer journey can be hard, but there are several things that you can do to stay healthy and well-nourished.

- Follow a heart-healthy diet. A heart-healthy diet generally includes eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, skinless poultry and fish, low-fat dairy products, nuts and legumes, and non-tropical oils.
- Eat foods with plenty of fiber. This will help ease some of the symptoms associated with bladder cancer treatment.
- Stay hydrated. Each person needs a different amount of water, so talk to your doctor about how much water you should be drinking every day. If you are having trouble drinking plain water, you can stay hydrated with water flavorings such as lemon or lime slices, or unsweetened herbal teas.

Flu and an Ostomy

By Anne Marie Knudsen, CWON, MN,CNS,CFCN



FACTS ABOUT THE FLU: The Flu is caused by a virus spreading from an infected person to the nose and throat of others. Symptoms usually appear within 2-3 days after being infected and a person with a fever is considered contagious for another 3-4 days. Here in the US the flu season generally run from November to April. Flu symptoms include chills, fever, dry irritated cough, nasal congestion, a sore throat, muscle aches, pain and a headache. For a frail susceptible and elderly person, complications can lead to hospitalization related to pneumonia and rarely death can occur.

WHO SHOULD GET THE FLU SHOT? All over 65, women pregnant or breastfeeding, healthcare givers and patients with chronic medical conditions like asthma; immune deficiency; heart disease. It is also recommended that students get the flu shot. It is a myth when people state they got the flu from the flu shot. Why do we need the flu shot every year? For the simple reason that the flu virus keeps changing and the vaccine must be replaced. Flu shots only protect for 1 year. Flu vaccine contains NO LIVE VIRUS which means it is impossible to get the flu from the flu shot. The flu shot is 90% effective against type A & B Influenza; but remember there can be different strands which means if one does get the flu the symptoms will be milder compared to not having gotten the flu shot.

THINGS TO DO IF YOU GET THE FLU: First of all drink plenty of fluids and rest. Take some Ibuprofen or Tylenol for fever and pain. Wash your hand frequently and use Kleenex versus a handkerchief. Keep your hands off your face except for eating and daily hygiene. Rinse the nasal cavities with warm salt water or a steam bath with chamomile since these are soothing and will open the nostrils and bring down the viral population. Boost the immune system with foods rich in vitamin C. You should take at least 1000 mg daily and supplement Zinc 15-20 mg. to boost the absorption of vitamin C. Finally drink as many warm liquids as possible as the warm liquid will produce a wash off, proliferating the virus from the throat to the stomach. Because of the high acidic content of the stomach the virus will not be able to survive.

WHAT TO DO AS AN OSTOMATE WITH THE FLU: Ostomates must take special care not to take any medication including laxatives without being prescribed by a doctor as they have no effect on viruses and can change the balance of the gut and cause severe diarrhea.

ILEOSTOMATES: Diarrhea presents a big problem. In addition to causing excessive discharge a person with an ileostomy can risk an electrolyte imbalance. Most importantly POTASSIUM must be kept within safe levels. If vomiting and dehydration becomes an issue the Ileostomate must go to the ER earlier than later. It cannot be stressed how important it is to go to the ER as an ileostomate cannot hydrate oneself fast enough. It is recommended to drink Ginger Ale, bouillon, and either Gatorade or Pedialyte. Always ensure the symptoms are related to the Flu and not Gastritis.

UROSTOMATES: Follow the same special care and make sure to protect the kidneys. Prompt attention of distress from the Flu will make a difference.

COLOSTOMATES: Always protect the abdominal muscles if coughing or sneezing as a peristomal hernia can develop and a support belt can make a difference. For the colostomate, the diet needs to change while recovering from the flu. Eat a fiber free diet and then gradually move towards a regular normal diet. Do not irrigate while having diarrhea and do not take laxatives. Some drugs and specific foods can cause constipation in colostomates. This can be prevented by increasing your fluid intake

Borders:

All Ostomy types

Colostomy-related

Ileostomy-related

Urostomy related



Thankful for My Ostomy Living with an Ostomy Since 2012

Convatec Contributor - Dana Marie Gatzolis,

Another year, another time to gather round the table. Another season beckoning us to slow down, reflect and let go. I've always thought that Thanksgiving is a beautiful time for gratitude. It's placed at the tail end of Autumn, a season naturally enticing us to let go of what no longer serves us. Just as the leaves change and fall to the ground, we are invited to put away our summer t-shirts and exchange them for cozy sweaters. We're invited to let go of what we don't need to make way for new, fresh (and crisp!) air.

Whether you're currently going through a health crisis, or you have overcome it all together, I want to invite you to join me in furthering your practice of gratitude this Thanksgiving. I hope that by sharing what I'm grateful for and what I'm releasing this year, you can be inspired to do the same. On December 7th, 2012, I underwent a 9-hour surgery that left me without a colon and with a permanent ileostomy bag. To say that I was faced with a HUGE mountain to climb is an understatement; a mountain that may sound familiar to you. At the time of my surgery, I was 24-years-old, single and completely overwhelmed.

I knew that I had a choice to make. Was I going to lead my life from a place of fear and feel like a victim to my ostomy? OR would I use this mess to create a message and transform my pain into purpose? I was determined to find meaning and let this battle propel me into helping other people. That decision has made ALL the difference. I let go, and a spirit of joy and purpose swept in.

This Thanksgiving, I am grateful for my ostomy because ...

1. It has given me the gift of health. Although my health isn't completely 100% after surgery, I can say that I actually have a life outside of my disease! I used to define myself by my Crohn's, because it truly seemed to take the starring role in my life. Constantly being in the hospital, not feeling well, undergoing different procedures and surgeries, I just could never seem to get ahead of myself without taking 3 steps back. I'm grateful that having an ostomy has given me so much relief from the constant hospital stays and scary health situations that I found myself in.

2. I can do more than I ever could pre-ostomy! Now that I am not nearly as sick as I was before my surgery, I can do the things that I always dreamt of, but didn't have the energy or health to be able to do. I had dreams of being a musician, writing, and recording my own album. After my surgery, I was able to move to Nashville to pursue this dream. I wasn't afraid to sing for hours on stages across Nashville, because my ostomy allowed me the ability to not have to be buckled over in pain or chained to the bathroom. It's amazing how much freedom I have when I don't have to worry about the location of the nearest girl's room! Without the constant fear taking up my brain space, I was able to tap into my creativity more than ever. I wrote and recorded my own music available on iTunes.

3. It has made me a better person. I always considered myself a kind and compassionate person, but I think that going through something so traumatic and painful has caused such a massive shift in how I perceive others and the world around me. I know that everyone I meet is either fighting a hard battle or they have in the past. I make an effort to look people in the eye, to ask with sincerity how they are doing, to treat my barista with kindness and a smile. I remember going out into the world after I left a weeklong stay at the hospital. I was shook by how fast the world was moving around me, and how the people I came across hardly took the time to look into my eyes. My family and friends knew what I had just gone through, but strangers had no idea. It made me think about how I interact with strangers, since I know the feeling of going through a traumatic experience and then being hustled through a line or yelled at in traffic. It made me softer, calmer, less ready to point the finger. It made me more present. I love that I can be a safe place for friends and family (and strangers for

that matter) to feel listened to, understood and held. I wouldn't be nearly as compassionate or present if it weren't for my ostomy.

4. It helps me to hold my loved ones close. Going through a major health battle made me think more introspectively than before. I know for a fact that life is precious, short, and not a day is to be taken for granted. Each and every day is a gift to me. Days when I feel good and have no pain are TREASURED. I know what it's like to wear Crohn's disease like a chain around my neck, and my ostomy has truly broken those chains. I'm no longer a slave to my disease. Freedom is an amazing teacher.

5. I can eat (pretty much) whatever I'd like! Last, but not least, I can now eat almost anything I want! When I was really sick, I would have to bring my own food to family Thanksgiving festivities. It was so sad, because I have a family of GREAT cooks! Now, I can eat pretty much anything, and boy, do I love it! I love to be able to celebrate with my family and not feel afraid that I am going to end up in a flare-up. Bring on the pumpkin pie!

A friend of mine once told me that "everyone has an ostomy," something that they are ashamed of or feel they have to hide in order to be accepted by the world. When we embrace our ostomies, the people around us are liberated to embrace their "ostomy," too.

I hope that this has inspired you to think about your ostomy in a whole new way, as a GIFT. Have a cozy, joyful, hug-filled Holiday with your loved ones.

Happy Holidays & New Year from All of Us to All of You!

May you and your families find peace, health, and prosperity!



**Happy Holidays Dear Ostomates,
We wish you good cheer,
May your health-cares lessen,
In the coming New Year.
We carry extra baggage,
But we do it with Grace,
Even embarrassing accidents,
Won't make us lose face.
With the support of our friends,
Whose similar problems we share,
We're there for each other,
We know that you care.
We're tough, we're survivors' and we're resilient!
Never give up!
Keep a prayer in your heart,
and the New Year's a fresh start!**





November & December 2022 Yearly Anniversaries

Amy Nichols, 32 Pablo del Rio, 12
Jim Walker, 20 Charles Wright, 40
Annette Perrone, 16



Meetings: 7- 8 pm
First Thursday of the month
Meetings will be combined in Person & Virtual

November 3
December 1
No January Mtg
February 2
March 2
April 6

[Join Zoom Meeting](#) (click on live link)

Meeting ID: 886 3266 6521

Passcode: Welcome!

*Must download the [Zoom App](#) prior to joining the link



Are you in need of donated supplies? We have **plenty** available!
Please contact Carol Laubach, (512-339-6388) and indicate what type of ostomy you have, brand preference, size, and whether it's a one or two piece. This will help to get you the best fitting supplies possible.

We are a health support group, a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), organization of volunteers whose purpose is to provide mutual aid and education to persons who have ostomies and their families. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

The information contained within our newsletters is for informational purposes only and may not be applicable to everyone. **Please do not follow any medical advice in our Newsletter without first checking with your physician or Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse.**

OAA Membership Application

Name _____
Ostomy Type _____ Surgery Date _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
Year of Birth _____ Email _____
Spouse/Relative/Partner/Friend Name _____

I do ____ I do not ____ give permission for my name to be included in our newsletter or membership directory.

Signature

Date

Annual Dues:

\$25 _____ Ostomate

\$15 _____ Spouse/Relative/Partner/Friend/Other

\$25 _____ Professional

Mail Application to:

Ostomy Association of Austin

P.O. Box 143383

Austin, TX 78714

Newsletter Preference: Check one

_____ Printed version via US mail

_____ Email notification/download to your computer via website www.austinstomy.org

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly support & informational meetings
- Social events
- The Austi-Mate Bi-Monthly Newsletters

Problem-Solving Clinic is Open

The Ostomy Problem Solving Clinic is open on the first Thursday of the month at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church from 1-4 pm

- Text or call Karen Hollis, RN, CWON, at **512-785-7448**
- Text/leave your name, number, type of ostomy and problem.
- Karen will contact you



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<https://phoenixuoaa.org/>

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