



The Austi-Mate Journal

Ostomy Association of Austin Quarterly Publication

P. O. Box 143383 Austin, Texas 78714

www.austinostomy.org

Gethsemane Lutheran Church

200 West Anderson Lane, Austin, Texas 78752

Upcoming 7-8 pm In-Person & Virtual Meetings:
April 3rd ~ May 1st ~ June 5th

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President, Website, Newsletter

Amy Sloan Nichols, Ph.D.

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Wound Ostomy Nurses

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This Quarterly newsletter is available
online at www.austinostomy.org

Have you paid your dues?

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.



Spring: a lovely reminder of
how beautiful change
can truly be.

In March, **Emily Brooke**, Licensed Clinical Social Worker at Digestive Health/UT Health Austin, Ascension Seton gave an outstanding presentation on Body, Mind, Exercise and Ostomies. See her presentation on our website.

In April, Karen Hollis, retired RN, began the topic of Dehydration Part 1 and its importance as the temperatures begin to heat up in Texas. Part 2 in May.

Amy & Carol are stepping down from their roles on the Ostomy Board.

The following people have stepped up and are running for Board Positions - we will vote at our May Meeting.

- **President: JT Boone**
- **Vice President:**
- **Technology & Newsletter Manager: Blaze Calahan**
- **Treasurer: John Duncanson**
- **Membership Manager: Suzanne Good**

With Kind Regards & A Warm Goodbye

By Amy Sloan Nichols, Ph.D.

In June 2025, I will be stepping away and passing the torch to the next generation of leadership. I have been involved with the Ostomy Association of Austin (OAA) Non-Profit Support Group since relocating here from Michigan in 2005. I have been a member, Vice President and am currently the President since 2017.

It has been a wonderfully rewarding experience. Meeting, listening to & supporting Ostomates on their personal journeys, collaborating with medical communities, becoming involved with national level initiatives, and bringing technology to our group to improve OAA's digital outreach.

When we relocated to Austin (from Michigan), I came with a J-Pouch (obtained in 1990) due to Ulcerative Colitis. Within my first six months in Austin, my J-pouch was failing and I soon had my second Ileostomy. This was a very similar experience we had when we moved to Michigan; we were in a new state (relocated from Upstate NY as Newlyweds), had new jobs, new Drs., and no extended family to help support me or my husband, Jon. It was a very difficult start to our new life in Texas. Ultimately, I ended up having surgery at the Cleveland Clinic where I received a Koch Pouch to replace my failing J Pouch. Here is [my story](#) that was published in the 2007 Phoenix Magazine. I wrote it while healing from my surgery.

***The last paragraph of my story is outdated.** Jon and I will celebrate our 36th Anniversary this July. I am grateful for experiencing & having unconditional love in my life. I also continue to run ~ 40+ years and still counting! Thank you for all the memories and the many people that have enriched my life as I continue to write my life story and transition towards retirement. Warmly, Amy



Is Coffee Good for Your Gut Health?

Roxana Ehsani, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN, March 9, 2025

Scientists Just Discovered a Huge Health Benefit of Coffee

Recent research found a surprising link between coffee and gut health, and the findings are eye-opening. As if coffee drinkers needed another excuse to keep brewing their favorite cup, new research suggests that coffee is beneficial for gut health.

Known for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, coffee has long been touted for its many health benefits. In fact, thousands of compounds are packed into every cup, helping to improve mental alertness, reduce inflammation, support heart health, and even ease post-workout pain. A recent study published in [Nature Microbiology](#) reveals a new benefit of coffee: It supports the growth of beneficial gut bacteria.

What did researchers discover? In this study, researchers analyzed stool samples from 22,867 participants to understand the impact of coffee on gut bacteria. They categorized participants into three groups: the “never” group (those who drink fewer than three cups per month), “moderate” coffee drinkers (those who consumed at least three cups per month up to three cups a day), and “heavy” coffee drinkers (those who drink three or more cups per day).

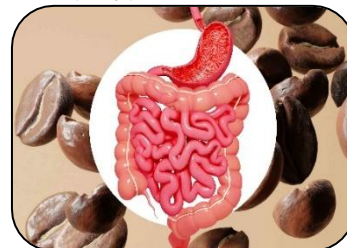
The researchers found that coffee drinkers had high levels of one specific bacteria strain, *L. asaccharolyticus*. The results suggest that drinking coffee can have a positive effect on your gut by helping the growth of good bacteria — an exciting win for coffee drinkers.

How important is it to have a healthy gut in the first place? “It turns out that the microbiome in the gut is probably way more important than we even ever expected,” says [Michael Caplan, MD](#), clinical professor at the University of Chicago and chief scientific officer at Endeavor Health. He explains that the beneficial bacteria in our gut are essential to our overall health, and having a diverse microbiome is crucial. A healthy gut can help prevent traveler's diarrhea, antibiotic-induced diarrhea, and may even play a role in managing obesity, heart disease, and chemotherapy outcomes, according to Caplan. Our

gut also houses the majority of our immune cells, making it vital to protect and maintain its strength. A healthy gut also supports digestion, reduces inflammation, and influences our thoughts. Have you ever felt nervous and noticed your gut starting to feel uneasy? Our gut and brain are closely intertwined.

How exactly does coffee boost beneficial bacteria? Dr. Chaplan points out that it's actually not only the caffeine that boosts the beneficial bacteria, as even drinking decaf coffee has a positive effect on our gut. The key contributors are likely the polyphenols, including chlorogenic acid and quinic acid, found in coffee, which help boost the growth of this beneficial bacteria. [Science](#) suggests that polyphenols act like prebiotics. They feed and encourage the growth of beneficial gut bacteria.

Are there limitations to the study findings? As with any new discovery, further research is needed, especially when it comes to the potential of *L. saccharolytic*. Dr. Chaplan explains that this bacteria strain has only been identified in the past five years, so we don't yet fully understand how it contributes to health benefits. Could it help reduce mortality or improve outcomes in heart disease or cancer? More research is needed to understand how this bacteria could contribute to reducing disease and improving health.



How much coffee does one need to drink to gain these benefits? "It's very safe to have one or two cups of coffee a day, and that would be enough to stimulate your intestinal flora to be poised to help you improve your long-term health," says Dr. Caplan. This aligns with [FDA recommendations](#), which keep caffeine intake to no more than 400 milligrams a day or about four cups of brewed coffee.

Why is my Poop Green?

Health Essential, Celevleand Clinic January 2025 (Edited)

There's an expectation as to what you'll see in the toilet after pooping. So, when you look down into the water and spot green poop ... well, it's safe to say a few questions might enter your mind. For answers, we turn to gastroenterologist [Christine Lee, MD](#).

What does green poop mean?: Let's start with a basic fact: You're not alone when you find an unexpectedly brilliant dash of color in the toilet bowl following a splashdown - and green is just one of the many [unusual stool shades](#) you may see. But a surprise color on its own usually isn't a reason to be alarmed. It does signal that something different is happening deep in your innards, but odds are that "something different" isn't something bad. "The color and shade of a bowel movement can vary day by day," says Dr. Lee. "It's like life - always changing and never exactly the same."

Potential causes of green poop? So, what might make your poop turn green? Let's look at some potential Technicolor® triggers.

Food: What you're eating is the most likely explanation for green poop, especially if you tend to nibble on garden fare such as broccoli, kale and spinach. The chlorophyll that gives those vegetables their green color can do the same to your poop. Other potential food and drink sources that could make you "go green" include:

- Blueberries or other blue or purple fruits and vegetables
- Green fruits like avocados, green apples and honeydew melon
- Hemp seeds
- Herbs such as basil, cilantro and parsley
- Matcha (powdered green tea)
- Pistachios



A food-fueled tint should disappear within a day or two once the source is flushed out of your system, notes Dr. Lee.

Food dye: A less organic force — green food dye — could also be behind a Hulk-like hue on a No. 2, suggests Dr. Lee. (Consider this a consequence of eating a St. Patrick's Day cupcake with unnaturally bright green frosting.) Blue or purple food dyes also may turn your output a bit greenish as your digestive juices mix with the color additives. Your poop color should return to a more boring brown once a dye source leaves your system.

Medications: Antibiotics can lead to small - and potentially colorful - changes to the way your body digests food. The reason? The medication can alter the bacteria flora in your gut, which can add a greenish tint to what comes out. Some medications may upset your stomach, too, resulting in bile-filled diarrhea that looks a bit green, says Dr. Lee.

Infection: “Turning green” has long been a phrase used to describe someone showing signs of an illness. The same can be said of your poop, too, explains Dr. Lee. Greenish stool could indicate that you have a bacterial infection (*Salmonella* or *E. coli*, for example), viral infection (norovirus) or a parasite (*Giardia*) causing a rapid transit “gush” of unabsorbed bile in diarrhea.

GI conditions: In some cases, green poop also could be a symptom of:

- [Irritable bowel syndrome](#)
- [Ulcerative colitis](#)
- [Crohn's disease](#)



Removal of your gall bladder also may temporarily send more bile into your digestive tract, which can lead to greenish diarrhea.

But one word of caution before you start fretting. “All of these issues are possible, but they’re not the norm,” clarifies Dr. Lee. “If you feel perfectly fine and don’t have diarrhea, a different color bowel movement is most likely linked to something you ate.”

When should you contact a doctor? As mentioned, colorful poop isn’t all that unique and is usually connected to something you ate. Think about what recently passed through your lips and you’ll probably come up with a simple reason for the burst of color. That being said, oddly colored poop might indicate something needs attention - particularly if it lingers or comes with symptoms such as abdominal pain, weight loss, bleeding, fever and vomiting. Pale poop or blood-tinged stool is of particular concern, too.



Call a doctor if symptoms fail to improve or resolve completely. “Pay attention to your bowel movements, but don’t worry too much if you see something unusual for a day,” reinforces Dr. Lee. “There’s usually a very clear explanation that involves something you ate.”

Managing Humidity and Extending Pouch Wear Times with an Ostomy

UOAA Online Article

For people living with an ostomy, humid climates and certain situations may cause concern in pouch wear time. [The me+ support](#) team has put together some useful tips just for you to help optimize your pouch wear time. Feel more confident when facing humidity with these tips:

- Review your peristomal cleaning routine. Using baby wipes or cleaners that include moisturizers may affect your pouch seal in hot, humid weather. Clean your peristomal skin with warm water and a simple bar of soap.
- Try a barrier wipe or spray before applying your pouch. Barrier wipes create a film that protects the skin from the damaging effects of adhesives, body waste and enzyme attack. Using barrier wipes in combination with a protective powder may help extend overall pouch wear time.
- If you are having an issue with tape collars starting to peel, try adding strips around the skin barrier where it meets the skin for extra security.
- Using a seal with your pouching system may help absorb additional moisture. Seals can help prevent leaks and skin irritation by forming an absorptive barrier around your stoma.
- Try using an ostomy belt or wearing an ostomy wrap to help keep your pouch secure and supported against your body, which may help increase wear time.
- You may find in humid climates and situations that you need to change your pouch more often.

Austin Ostomy Spring Picnic

Host: Maria Hayes, Member
Where: 16000 Meuer Lane, Dell Valle (her ranch)
When: Sunday, May 18th from 2pm - ?
What to bring: Dish to pass, yourself and spouse/partner/friend



While bladder cancer is among the most commonly diagnosed cancers, it can feel lonely during the bladder cancer journey. The Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network's (BCAN's) Survivor 2 Survivor (S2S) program connects newly diagnosed bladder cancer patients and caregivers with survivors and co-survivors who have gone through similar experiences. This program matches bladder cancer patients with trained volunteers who offer a sympathetic ear and share their own experiences as well as insight about their own bladder cancer diagnosis, treatment and survivorship.

Ask to be Matched with a Survivor

Support for bladder cancer patients: If you would like to be matched with a bladder cancer survivor, please call 301-215-9099 and leave a message in the general mailbox or send an email to survivor@bcan.org. We will match you to a volunteer and all information is kept confidential. We will do our best to return your or email call as soon as possible.

For survivors looking to give back: If you are a bladder cancer survivor and caregiver, you can volunteer for this program, sharing your experience, answering patient questions and, most important, offering hope. To volunteer, please **send an email** with the subject line: Survivor to Survivor Volunteer.

BCAN's only requirement is that volunteers are not actively going through treatment. The Survivor-to-Survivor program is available only to patients and survivors in the United States.

2025 Walk to End Bladder Cancer

Each year, the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN) hosts a spring fundraiser to support their resources, research, and patient support. Once again, t raising funds at BCAN's nationwide event. Austin will host the only BCAN Walk held in Texas. John & Dorothy De La Garza invite you to join them on **Saturday, May 17**. All will gather at **Pease Park in the Kingsbury Commons for 9 a.m.** The opening ceremony and Walk begin at 10 a.m. Dorothy's team is called the ATX Bag Lady, a humorous reference to wearing an ostomy bag since her bladder was removed in 2016.



Vincent Van Gogh's Family Tree

- The brother who ate prunes
- His magician uncle
- The cousin who worked at a convenience store.
- The dizzy aunt
- The bird loving daughter
- His constipated wife
- The ballroom dancing niece
- His nephew who loved disco
- The cousin who taught positive thinking
- The sister who traveled the country in an RV
- I saw you smiling

Gotta Gogh
Where-diddy Gogh
Stop N Gogh
Verti Gogh
Flamin Gogh
Can't Gogh
Tang Gogh
Go Gogh
Way to Gogh
Winnie Bay Gogh
Way to Gogh!





Spring 2025 Anniversaries

Dan Boswell, Linda Broadbent & Steve McCourt



**First Thursday
of the month
Meetings: 7- 8 pm
Combined
Virtual & In-Person**

April 3

May 1

June 5

No July Meeting

August 7

September 4

October 2

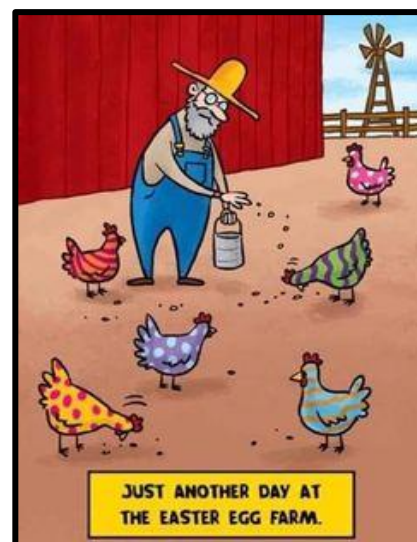
November 6

December 4

No January Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

(click on live link)



Are you in need of donated supplies?

We have plenty available to get you through until your personal supplies arrive.

Please contact Karen Hollis (512-785-7448) and indicate what type of ostomy you have, brand preference, size, and whether it is a one or two piece. This will help to get you the best fitting supplies possible. You can also email us at info@austinosstomy.org.

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

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly support & informational meetings
- The Austi-Mate Quarterly Newsletter

Newsletter Preference: Check one

_____ Printed version via US mail

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



The Phoenix magazine is the official publication of the United Ostomy Associations of America. The Phoenix magazine is published quarterly.

<https://phoenixuoaa.org/>

Toll-free 800-750-9311.

Free Problem -Solving Clinic

This free clinic is open on the first Thursday of the month at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church from 1-4:00 pm

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

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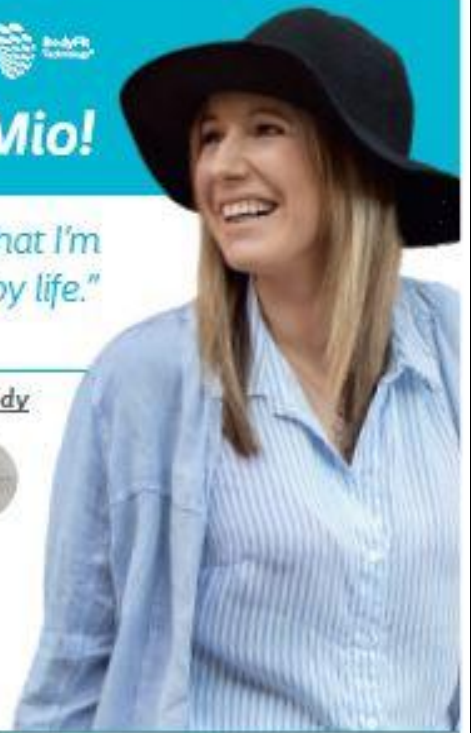
Rachel*, SenSura[®] Mio Convex Flip user

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Heinrich Köberle, Germany



Jonathan Mendez, USA