



The Austi-Mate Journal

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

www.austinstomy.org

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

No January Meeting

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 6, 2020 @ 7:00 pm

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This Bi-monthly newsletter is available online at

www.austinstomy.org

Printing Courtesy:
The American Cancer Society

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 hope you had a nice holiday celebration as we welcome 2020.



In November, Ali Wiser from The Spring Center, Natural Medicines presented on Natural Approaches to Health. Great conversations and questions.

We hosted our annual Holiday Party in December. While the turnout was smaller than years past, fun & friendship was shared by all! Wine gifts were VERY popular! See pictures on page 3.

February 6, 2020 Mtg:

Karen Hollis, Wound Ostomy Nurse, will present The Hero Within, an inspirational session to empower & embrace our own personal strength. **Refreshments:** Board Members

March 5, 2020 Mtg

Hollister Representative James DeYoung will be our guest. He'll share product line updates, answer questions, and have samples for the taking.

Have you paid your dues?

How to Keep the Skin Around Your Stoma Healthy

Convatec Online Article



Keeping the skin around your stoma, or peristomal skin, healthy is important. You can steer clear of many complications by following these simple suggestions:

Bath and Shower Tips:

- You can bathe and shower just as you did before surgery, with your pouch on or off—the choice is up to you.
- Because soap residue can cause your skin barrier to lift, avoid oil-based and moisturizing soaps.
- Soap and water will not flow into the stoma and cannot damage it.

Choose a Well-fitted Ostomy Barrier:

- To help keep the skin around your stoma healthy, it is important that your skin barrier fits properly. Choose a well-fitting pouching system to help prevent irritating stoma contents from coming into contact with your skin.
- Your ostomy nurse can teach you how to use a measuring guide to determine the size of your stoma and select a cut-to-fit, pre-cut moldable barrier.
- Your stoma size will change up to 10 weeks after surgery, so you will need to measure it periodically.
- Changes to the abdomen caused by pregnancy, exercise, weight gain/loss or certain medical conditions may also require a new pouching system and/or size.

Changing Your Pouching System:

- Make an easy-to-follow schedule for your pouching system. This will ensure your skin barrier is changed before the adhesive has eroded, reducing the chance of urine or feces coming into contact with your skin. Your schedule should be personalized based on your system type and the advice of your doctor or ostomy nurse.
- At each skin barrier and pouch change, make a habit of looking at the skin around your stoma. Redness, swelling or a rash are signs of irritation. If you see any of these, or other signs of irritation, notify your healthcare provider.
- Never rip or tear off your skin barrier. Instead, remove the skin barrier gently by beginning with one corner of the barrier and slowly pulling off the remaining adhesive. Adhesive releaser spray and remover wipes can make pouch changes easier and ensure clean skin, ready for your next skin barrier.
- Make sure your peristomal skin is completely dry before replacing your pouch and skin barrier. Dry skin ensures a good adhesive seal and helps reduce the risk of fungal infection.
- A skincare routine including skin barrier foam, spray or wipes can help ensure healthy, comfortable peristomal skin for years to come.
- In hot, humid locations, consider using a pouch with a fabric backing. This will keep the pouch from sticking to your skin and causing skin irritation.



Did you know...

- ✓ The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.
- ✓ Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.
- ✓ Drinking water after eating reduces the acid in your mouth by 61 percent.
- ✓ When a person is dying, hearing is the last sense to go. The first sense lost is sight.

Borders:

All Ostomy types

Colostomy-related

Ileostomy-related

Urostomy related



Holiday Party 2019



Body Image and the Ostomate: From Imperfection to Perfection

by Ellyn Manrell, September 2018

My parents came in two different sizes...my father was extra large and my mother was narrow and slim. While it is not unusual for a daughter to model after her mother, I would say that my modeling was extreme. My mother not only was very weight conscious, she was very rigid and restricting of food and drink, and bingeing was a big part of her life, and as I found out later, unnamed bulimia. Her daily guidelines for foods to be consumed had a critique that usually ended with "remember, Ellyn," she would repeat, "a moment to the lips, a lifetime to the hips!"



Blueberries, watermelon, and oranges were on her DO NOT EAT list since they had too much sugar. Meat, potatoes, breads were all annotated with what could just as easily have been a skull and cross bone. So as long as I followed her dictum, I would be narrow and slim like her, or so I thought. The problem was, however, that although I inherited her very narrow and slim upper body, I inherited my father's larger and rounder lower body. Regardless of how much I tried, I was never to be lithe in my legs and hips. College not only brought the "freshman 15," it brought anorexia and eventually, bulimia. So I lived with an eating disorder that lasted for years, and the reality of body dysmorphia that plagued me for decades. And now, as an ostomate, I am finally grateful and humbled by my beautiful body...because it is an incredibly resilient organism and I am so proud to own it!

For over two decades my strong little body fought through surgeries, hospitalizations, PICC lines, infections, abscesses and lack of bowel motility. And yet, regardless of my physical state, I would expect it to be thin and attractive, fitting into whatever garment I wanted to wear. I never questioned its strength, its ability to weather weeks in the hospitals or the most grueling of tests and procedures. It was never an issue of can I travel alone to Rochester, Minnesota to the Mayo Clinic by myself and stay for two weeks to have bowel retraining. I just wanted to be certain I could exercise, eat "normally" and not put on weight. Regardless of how many scars I had down and across my abdomen from 23 abdominal surgeries, the goal was to fit into my clothes and like what I saw on the scale. Enduring an enteroclysis study (a wire inserted down the nose to be able to see into the small intestine), I steadily focused on what I would allow myself to eat once I was finished. In retrospect, my expectation of my infirmed body to be perfect was abominable, and I would never, ever support anyone I love put that expectation on their body.

And then four years ago, I had my ileostomy, and suddenly, my now very obedient body gave way to an imperfection I was forced to acknowledge. The first time I saw my reflection in the mirror after the surgery, I was horrified. My high-output bag, which is transparent, was reaching down my short frame to my right mid-thigh. But after the shock of my appliance and pouch, I began to relax and look at the possibility that I could have a new life, free of hospitals, surgeries and worry. I began to see the beauty in my stoma, and named it, as many do. Her name is Lily because my mother, Lillian, gave me my first life, and Lily has given me my second.



No longer striving toward an unrealistic goal, I am no so proud of the ability I have to live and love my life. My little body is strong enough to advocate for others; it is strong enough to lead my support group; it is strong enough to visit those suffering in the hospital, and it is strong enough to start a grassroots movement to open our ostomy center, one of the few in New Jersey! On a personal note, I am strong enough to enjoy my beautiful family, my wonderful circle of friends and celebrate each and every day. And I have learned that perfection may never really have been a possibility for me or others, but imperfection makes me very, very happy!

Life is so much
brighter when we
focus on what truly
matters.....
<http://www.annettapowellonline.com>

Your Outlook on Life May Affect How You Age!

Cleveland Clinic May 2019

Want to feel 65 when you're 85? Or 45 when you're 65? Who wouldn't! Well, it's possible—and you don't have to find the mythical Fountain of Youth. You can be your own genetic engineer and turn on your slow-down aging genes. You already know the basic steps to take: eat a nutritious, plant-filled diet and get regular exercise. And there are a whole lot of "softer" factors as well. In a recent study of older adults, being optimistic and self-compassionate, sleeping well, and experiencing lower levels of loneliness were all shown to be linked to better health. This study did not look at cause and effect, and many of these factors interact in complex ways. What's clear, though, is that our bodily and emotional health are deeply intertwined—and that there are many ways to start moving in the direction of better health. If you're isolated or lonely, push yourself to rekindle old connections or seek out new ones. Optimism may seem like an inherent trait, but it can be learned. Mindfulness meditation can help to untangle negative-thinking patterns and lower stress, for instance, and practicing gratitude can help to shift you into a positive mindset. We can all learn self-compassion, the essence of which is treating yourself the way you'd treat a beloved friend. As for sleep, make it a top priority, whether that means saying no to midnight social-media scrolling, limiting caffeine and alcohol, or seeing your doctor if you think you may have a sleep disorder.

Feeling Blue? Smiling Can Help!

Cleveland Clinic May 2019



"Put on a happy face!" may be the last thing you want to hear when you're feeling frustrated or blue. But it just might help. Besides being a spontaneous expression of happiness or pleasure, smiling can also help to shift your mood in a positive direction, according to a new analysis of research. Scientists have long debated whether facial expressions, rather than simply reflecting how we feel, can also prompt us to feel the emotions linked to those expressions. Studies have offered conflicting results, but when scientists looked at 50 years' worth of data from 138 studies, they concluded that smiling can indeed boost your mood. The effect was small, though, so don't expect smiling to take you from grumpy to elated. For long-term happiness, social connections are key, so tend to your close relationships like the treasures they are—or cultivate new ones. Setting attainable goals is also linked to long-term well-being, so think about what you'd like to accomplish (run or walk a 5K? learn a language? take a class in something you're passionate about?) and set a plan in motion.

[Free Problem-Solving Clinic](#)

Our free Problem-Solving Clinic is available for Ostomates thanks to Karen Hollis, RN, CWON.

Where: Gethsemane Lutheran Church

When: First Thursday of the month (same day as meeting),

Hours: 1 to 5 pm

How: Call **512-785-7448** and leave a message with following information:

- Ostomy type, approximate age of your ostomy, problem you're experiencing, and current supplies.
- Be sure to leave a name & phone number, with area code.
- Our WOC Nurse will contact you and schedule an appointment.
- ***You must have an appointment to be seen ~ no walk-ins**

This is a free clinic; donations to the Ostomy Association of Austin are accepted.

CELEBRATE!

2020 Yearly Anniversaries

January

Joan Wertzberger 20
Sammie Buchanan 15
John Duncanson 15
James Chandler 16

February

Lou O'Hanlon 51
Bob Guidry 37
Vernan Empken 6



Thursday Meetings

No January Mtg
February 6
March 5
April 2
May 7
June 4
No July Mtg



"Hurry! Our New Year's resolutions start in ten minutes."



Don't just...

- Don't just learn, experience.
 - Don't just read, absorb.
 - Don't just change, transform.
 - Don't just relate, advocate.
 - Don't just promise, prove.
 - Don't just criticize, encourage.
 - Don't just think, ponder.
 - Don't just take, give.
 - Don't just see, feel.
 - Don't just dream, do.
 - Don't just hear, listen.
 - Don't just talk, act.
 - Don't just tell, show.
 - Don't just exist, live
- averstu.com

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



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We accept Medicare and all other Insurances like Blue Cross Blue Shield, Sterling Insurance, Pacificare, United, and Texas Medicaid, Secure Horizon and all other Private Insurances. If you have any insurance question contact us at

1-800-866-3002

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<http://www.usostomy.com>



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