



## The Austi-Mate Journal

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

[www.austinostomy.org](http://www.austinostomy.org)

**WE'VE MOVED!**

**Ascension Seton Northwest Hospital  
11113 Research Blvd, Austin, Texas  
Classroom A & B on the 3rd Floor**

**Upcoming 7-8 pm In-Person & Virtual Meetings:  
October 2 - November 6 - December 4 - No January Meeting**

### Executive Committee

**President**

JT Boone

**Vice President**

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Karen Hollis

**Digital Newsletter**

Blaze Calahan

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Karen Hollis, Retired RN, CWON

**Board Advisor and Guidance**

Amy Nichols

**Members at Large**

John Duncanson

**Medical Advisors**

April Fox, M.D.

Thiru Lakshman, MD

### **IMPORTANT INFO ABOUT THE NEW LOCATION**

Seton Northwest is being renovated. Enter the hospital through the Emergency Room entrance because the main entrance is closed and locked at 5 pm.

### **OAA Ostomy Problem Solving**

Text or call Karen Hollis, Retired RN, CWON

📞 512-785-7448

Please include your name, phone number, type of ostomy and a brief description of the problem.

Karen will contact you.

### **Contact Us**

Email: [info@austinostomy.org](mailto:info@austinostomy.org)

Can't join us in person? See page 8 for detailed instructions on logging in to our meetings via Zoom

This Quarterly newsletter is available online at:

[www.austinostomy.org](http://www.austinostomy.org)

## Ostomate Testimonial - JT Boone

*Editor's Note: Since we have a completely new board, we thought it might be interesting to share their stories with you. This is our first; the president of our board, JT Boone.*

JT: I was 22 and healthy when my journey with ulcerative colitis began out of nowhere. In September 2016, I noticed a small amount of blood when going to the bathroom. Within weeks, things escalated, and by November I was in the hospital for emergency surgery. I woke up to a new reality: my colon was gone, and an ostomy bag was now part of my life.

The next three years were a blur of over 20 surgeries and procedures at top hospitals, including the Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic. I faced one setback after another: a deep perianal abscess, a fistula, multiple scar tissues blockages, endless adhesions and complications. The financial toll was crushing: \$4.2 million billed to insurance and \$80,000 out of pocket. Emotionally, I was hanging by a thread. I tried everything the doctors suggested, from wound vacs to pelvic floor therapy, but nothing worked.

By October 2019, I was preparing for a permanent ostomy and a “Barbie butt” procedure at the Cleveland Clinic. The only thing I couldn't shake was the knowing that I would not be able to fully lift weights in the gym or dunk a basketball if I did this. Those two seemingly little things kept me trying to find a solution. So just days before my trip to Cleveland, I made a last attempt with a holistic coach, again spending a lot of money I didn't think I could spare. Miraculously, for the first time in three years, I was able to go to the bathroom almost normally. That moment changed everything. And led to me fixing every issue I had mentioned above and more, allowing me to keep my j-pouch.

My journey taught me something I'll never forget: even when it feels like you've tried everything and the road ahead looks impossibly dark, there's always a way forward. My ostomy is part of my story, but it doesn't define me. I don't consider or label myself an ostomate, or a warrior, or a survivor, or a loser of the genetic lottery. Instead, it gave me a second chance at life to learn from my mistakes, listen to what my body and soul was trying to teach me, and a mission to help others facing the same challenges get back to feeling normal again.

## Our New Location

We hope you'll be as impressed with our new location as we are! The room is well lit, and there are tables in front of the seats arranged in a rectangular pattern around the room. There is plenty of well-lit parking too. For those of you who have told us that you would not be able to attend without an online option, there are speakers and microphones installed in the ceiling that work quite well.

To get online, make sure you have Zoom on your desktop or smartphone. Then enter Meeting ID: **886 3266 6521**, and then the passcode: **Welcome!**

OR copy and past this link into your browser: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89953582490>

***Do you think your life is over? That you'll never have fun again?***

You wouldn't know it by looking at THIS crowd! Guess how many are ostomates? ALL BUT ONE (if memory serves). Thanks so much to Maria and her partner China for hosting us for a gathering for no particular reason at their ranch. There was food, drink, cows, a donkey (or was it a mule), more cows, and even a swimming pool -- which two brave souls ventured into.

Maria and China have once again given us an opportunity for a fun night at their ranch, this time for their **Halloween Party!** All the details and RSVP are at this link:

<https://evite.me/F6dXjDGTU1>



## From The Cleveland Clinic: Risks / Benefits

An ostomy can improve your quality of life. If you live with a chronic disease that causes you constant distress at the toilet or at other times, ostomy surgery can be a way out. The risks and complications of ostomies can range from mild to severe. They include:

**Skin irritation.** Irritation from pee or poop leaking around your stoma is the most common complication of having an ostomy. A better-fitting ostomy bag and more frequent emptying may help. You can also get products to treat and protect your skin.

**Electrolyte imbalances.** Your large intestine absorbs water, electrolytes and nutrients from your food. If your ostomy bypasses your large intestine, it can cause dehydration or electrolyte imbalance. Your healthcare provider will explain how to prevent this.

**Obstruction.** Scar tissue in your bowel or ureters could make it more difficult for poop and pee to pass through. You might also find it more difficult to digest some foods after bowel surgery. Undigested foods can cause a temporary blockage in your bowel.

**Parastomal hernia.** If your abdominal wall becomes weak around your stoma, you could develop a hernia. That's when abdominal tissues bulge through the opening. A hernia could block your stoma's output. If this happens, you might need surgery to correct it.

**Prolapsed stoma.** Stoma prolapse is a complication of colostomy or ileostomy. It's a type of hernia where your bowel pushes itself out through the stoma. Often, your healthcare provider can push your bowel back into place. In rare cases, it needs surgery.

Your healthcare provider will explain how to recognize signs of possible ostomy complications.

It may take up to eight weeks to recover completely from ostomy surgery. Your bowel movements may take a few weeks to become regular again. Getting up and moving a little each day will help you recover faster.

After ostomy surgery, you'll wear an ostomy bag most or all of the time. A wound ostomy continence nurse (WOCN) will show you how to attach, empty and change the pouch. Most pouches include a disposable liner and a skin barrier.

How often should I change my ostomy bag? It depends on the type of pouching system you have. Most people will need to change their ostomy bags every three to seven days. Some need or prefer to change it daily. When changing your ostomy bag, be sure to:

- Wipe away any mucus on your stoma
- Use warm water, mild soap and a washcloth to clean the skin around your stoma
- Rinse your skin well
- Dry the area completely

In addition to keeping your stoma clean, be sure to examine it daily and notice any changes. If the size, shape or color looks different from normal, or it feels swollen or sore, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

For detailed info go to: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/procedures/22496-ostomy>



# Hollister

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Heinrich Köberle, Germany



Jonathan Mendez, USA

*SenSura® Mio*

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Rachel\*, *SenSura® Mio* Convex Flip user

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\*Rachel is a SenSura® Mio Convex Flip user who receives compensation from Coloplast to provide this information.

 **Coloplast**

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### OAA Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Ostomy Type \_\_\_\_\_ Surgery Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Relative/Partner/Friend Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues: Checks payable to: Ostomy Association of Austin

\$25  Ostomate

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

\$25  Professional

Find our quarterly newsletter at: [www.austinostomy.org](http://www.austinostomy.org)

Prefer a paper copy be mailed, check here

Mail Application to:

**Ostomy Association of Austin**  
P.O. Box 143383  
Austin, TX 78714

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly support / informational meetings
- Social events
- The Austi-Mate Journal  
Bi-Monthly Newsletter

UOAA has over 270 Affiliated Support Groups around the United States. Cancer survivors attend many of them and also serve as volunteers and leaders. Peer support and preparation can put you on the path to success in what may be a challenging time both emotionally and physically.

*Affiliated with....*



## Your Membership Includes:

\$25 Annual Membership:

- Monthly support meetings
- Informational presentations
- Access to ostomy nurse
- Product updates & free samples
- Austi-Mate Newsletters



## How We Can HELP:

If you are about to have an ostomy operation or if you have already had one, we extend our hand and offer our combined knowledge, experience and support.

We are among the millions of ostomates in the United States and the hundreds right here in the Austin area!

Let us share ways in which you may continue to lead a normal and active life and connect with others having similar experiences.

## Topics Include:

- Presentations by local professionals including Doctors, Therapists, Pharmacists
- Free Monthly Clinic with our Nurse
- Q & A with Nurses & Members
- Product Reps
- Nutrition, Diet, & Exercise
- Ostomy Appliance Management
- Skin Care
- Intimacy
- Travel Tips
- Quality of Life
- Care Giver & Family Support ... and much more!

## DETAILED ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

Meeting ID: 886 3266 6521 Passcode: Welcome!

### Download Zoom

The Zoom web browser client should download automatically when you start or join your first Zoom meeting. However, if that fails, or you want to download Zoom ahead of the meeting, you can do so manually.

Go to <https://zoom.us/download>

- Click "Download" under the "Zoom Workplace desktop app" heading.
- Once downloaded, click on "Open file" in the popup window in the upper right.
- You can then click on the "Open Meeting" link.

### How to Use Zoom

Click on the invitation link in the meeting announcement email.

- Click on "Open", then Launch Meeting
- Enter your name, then click "Join Meeting"
- Check that your microphone and sound are enabled.

Move the cursor to the bottom of the Zoom screen to display the icon menu bar.

There you'll find the mute icon & the chat icon. In the "Your Name" field, enter a display name

**IT'S STILL SUMMER! STAY HYDRATED!!**

### Our Vision:

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 are a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), health support 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.***