



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 7-8 pm Meetings:

November 7th - In-Person & Virtual

December 5th - In-Person & Virtual



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This Bi-monthly newsletter is available
online at www.austinostomy.org

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.



The Holiday Season is here ~ a time to be both reflective and grateful. We are thankful for our dedicated and loyal members over the years and welcome support for newcomers who are on their own personal journeys.

As we begin the 2025 Calendar Year, our Newsletters will now be published quarterly & by the season and no longer bi-monthly. We launched our new email communications platform to inform of you of monthly meetings and website postings.

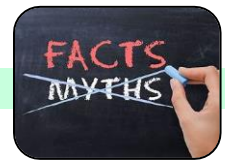
We continue to look for Board Members who will carry on Carol Laubach's legacy of our volunteer non-profit support group. Currently only Carol, Karen Hollis, and I, Amy Nichols, oversee everything and we would love some support. Newsletter ideas/articles, help in securing guest presenters, community outreach, etc. Contact any one of us if you are interested.



Have you paid your dues?

Bladder Cancer Food and Drink Myths

BCAN Online Information edited



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.

Bladder Cancer Food and Drink Myths

Myth 1: Eating Sugar Will Cause Bladder Cancer to Grow

False! Our bodies are made up of healthy and cancer cells that convert sugar, or glucose, into energy. There haven't been any studies that show sugar consumption makes cancer worse. There also hasn't been evidence that shows avoiding sugars will help the cancer go away. However, overeating sugar can contribute to gaining weight or obesity, which are major risk factors for cancer. A sweet treat occasionally will not ruin your bladder cancer diet!

Myth 2: Artificial Sweeteners Can Increase the Likelihood of Bladder Cancer

Artificial sweeteners are sugar-free substitutes you add to food to make it sweeter without added calories. Former studies from the 70's have shown that certain additives that have been removed from the food market, led to bladder cancer in some lab animals. However, this did not seem to happen with humans. While they are not all the best option, they will not increase the risk of bladder cancer.

Constipation or Diarrhea

Constipation is another symptom those with bladder cancer may encounter. It's very important to keep your liquid intake up by drinking at least eight cups of fluids a day, or more if possible! Tracking your intake of water can also help ensure you are meeting this goal. Some hot liquids like tea, coffee, broths and soup can move the contents through your gut more quickly. Diarrhea is also associated with bladder cancer treatment. As mentioned above, stay hydrated as much as possible to replace the fluid loss that comes with diarrhea.

Consuming smaller meals and replacing your electrolytes like potassium and sodium through apricots, bananas, broth and nuts can help ensure you avoid this discomfort. Consume low-fiber, lower-residue foods too.

Drink your beverages and eat foods at room temperature, and try to avoid:

- Greasy and spicy foods
- Dairy products
- Sugary drinks
- Caffeine
- Sugar-free candy and gum
- Alcohol



Nausea

Nausea is another common symptom during bladder cancer. Eating small meals throughout the day when you have an appetite is really important to make sure you avoid overeating when you get too hungry. Stay on top of your liquids and try to eat things at room temperature and avoid foods that are greasy, sugary and spicy when you are on a bladder cancer diet.

Talk to your doctor before starting any new diet.



Finding Ostomy Care is Not Easy: New Resource from UOAA Will Help Patients

News provided by United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA), Sep 11, 2024

United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. (UOAA) announces the release of the first-ever online Outpatient Ostomy Services locator to improve access to ostomy care. This underserved patient population of people living with an ostomy or continent diversion, estimated to be up to 1 million in the United States, now has a new way to find outpatient services that are critical to healthy outcomes.



Biddeford, Maine, Sept. 11, 2024 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ -- United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. (UOAA) today announced the unveiling of their latest resource, the first-ever online [Outpatient Ostomy Services locator](#) to improve access to ostomy care. UOAA is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote quality of life for people with ostomies and continent diversions through information, support, advocacy and collaboration. This new directory allows medical professionals, patients and caregivers to locate outpatient ostomy services near their specified geographical area. Nowhere else can the ostomy community find this type of user-friendly comprehensive list.

As the leading organization advocating for this underserved patient population, UOAA believes that access to outpatient ostomy services improves quality of life and ensures an ostomate can achieve goals of care for prosthetic function to maintain physical, emotional, and financial health and wellness.

According to Guy Orangio, MD, FACS, FASCRS, Emeritus Professor of Surgery LSU Health Science Center, "This "new" Directory for outpatient ostomy services is another milestone for UOAA and their advocacy program's mission of patient-centered care for all ostomates with their ongoing quality improvement [initiative](#) to ensure high quality ostomy care. The Directory will assist surgeons in locating preoperatively, these "local resource areas" that may assist with care of their post-discharged ostomates."

"As a surgeon, I realize the difficulty my "new" ostomy patients and their families go through in the first few months after surgery. The post-operative recovery including not only the physical but emotional stress can be difficult. This Directory, a resource that will enhance their recovery and get them back to their life, is just what the doctor ordered," Orangio says.

"Ostomy management skills education and patient-centered care should not end when they leave the hospital after surgery," says UOAA President Cheryl Ory. "With this new tool we are meeting an unmet patient need for the ostomy community. This Directory highlights our commitment to improving access to ostomy care," Ory adds. Nathan Hadlock of UOAA's Patient Advisory Board knows about patient challenges first hand. "Navigating the world of ostomies can be difficult and confusing. I live in a fairly isolated area. There have been times when I simply didn't know where I could go or who I could, or should talk to for help when it came to getting checkups on my stoma, or having tests and procedures done. I'm so glad that UOAA has created yet another way for ostomates to get proper care by finding and connecting with nearby medical providers that understand our needs," Hadlock says.

UOAA strives to be the premier trusted resource in the United States for all things ostomy-related including educational materials, advocacy tools, a virtual ostomy clinic in partnership with The Wound Company and over 275 Affiliated Support Groups across the United States. Visit [ostomy.org](#).

Additionally, UOAA has the [Support Group Finder](#) on their website. The Ostomy Association of Austin is located here as a resource. We added both of these links to our website.



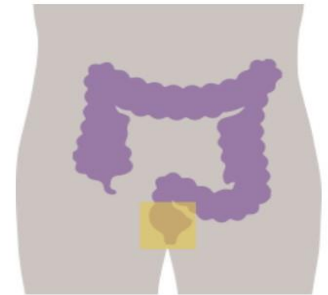
Happy Holidays Dear Ostomates, we wish you good cheer. May your health-cares lessen in the coming New Year. We carry extra baggage but we do it with Grace. Even embarrassing accidents won't make us lose face. With the support of our friends whose similar problems we share, we're there for each other and 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 a fresh start!

Texas Colon & Rectal Specialists: Hemorrhoids, Anal Abscess & Fistulas

What are Hemorrhoids

Hemorrhoids, also known as piles, are swollen or inflamed veins in the anal canal. Internal hemorrhoids form inside the anal canal, while external hemorrhoids swell near the opening of the anus.

The exact cause of hemorrhoids remains unknown, but several known factors contribute to their development, including chronic constipation, diarrhea, pregnancy, aging, straining during bowel movements, overuse of laxatives or enemas, prolonged sitting on the toilet (e.g., reading, etc.) and obesity. Preventative methods include limiting prolonged sitting on the toilet, avoiding the overuse of laxatives and enemas, and keeping a healthy diet rich in fresh vegetables, fruits and whole grains. The first step toward treatment and relief is recognizing the symptoms: rectal bleeding, pain, protrusion during bowel movements, sensitive lump(s), and unusual itching

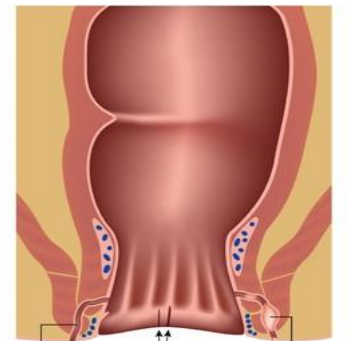


What Is an Anal Abscess?

An anal abscess is an infected cavity filled with pus, located near the opening of the anal canal. Symptoms of an anal abscess can include constant pain and swelling, fever, and drainage of pus. The providers at Texas Colon & Rectal Specialists can treat an abscess by draining the pus from the infected cavity, oftentimes in our office using local anesthetic. Drainage of a large or deep abscess may take place in an operating room.

What Is an Anal Fistula?

An anal fistula occurs in up to 40 percent of all abscess cases (American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons). Many times, an anal fistula is the result of a previous abscess acting as a persistent abnormal passage or tunnel between the interior of the anal canal/rectum and the skin surface where the abscess drained. If the outside opening of the tunnel heals, recurrent abscesses develop. Texas Colon & Rectal Specialists recommend surgical intervention to cure an anal fistula to limit damage to the sphincter muscles. A complicated fistula may require repair using a flap of tissue or the use of a newer product called Surgis AFP™ Anal Fistula Plug.



Anal fistula Anal fissures Anal abscess



Holiday Cheer and Ostomy Care: A Guide for Enjoying the Season

December 7, 2023 by [Cymed](#)

The holiday season is a time of joy, celebration, and togetherness. For individuals with an ostomy, navigating this festive period requires extra planning and consideration. Whether traveling to visit loved ones or hosting gatherings at home, [managing an ostomy](#) during the holidays can present unique challenges. However, with careful preparation and a positive mindset, these challenges can become opportunities for a joyful and fulfilling holiday experience. Here is what you need to do:

Plan Ahead

Meticulous planning is the key to a seamless holiday season with an ostomy. First, it ensures the consistent timing of ostomy care routines, promoting good health and averting potential complications. Aligning holiday events with these routines enables full participation and enjoyment without worrying about interruptions or discomfort.

Beyond routine considerations, planning provides a buffer against stress by minimizing uncertainties and offering efficient problem resolution in case of issues. The confidence instilled by a well-thought-out plan positively impacts overall well-being, fostering adaptability in various situations. This proactive approach also saves time and energy, allowing for a more relaxed and enjoyable holiday experience with loved ones.

Choose Appropriate Holiday Meals

The holiday table is often laden with various tempting dishes, but mindful choices are essential for those with an ostomy. Opt for well-cooked, easily digestible foods, and be cautious about items that may cause gas or discomfort. While savoring the festive flavors is important, keeping an eye on portion sizes can help prevent digestive issues. Remember, a balanced diet is key to supporting overall health and ensuring a harmonious experience during the holiday season.

Stay Hydrated

Proper hydration is vital for individuals with an ostomy, contributing to a comfortable and trouble-free experience. Whether at home or traveling, monitor your fluid intake, opting for gentle, ostomy-friendly beverages. Set daily hydration goals, recognize signs of dehydration, and incorporate water-rich foods into your diet.



Timing matters; you should spread your fluid intake throughout the day. Individual factors like age and climate influence your hydration needs, so adjust accordingly. Always consult your healthcare professional for personalized advice, ensuring a tailored approach to staying hydrated and maintaining your ostomy's well-being.

Communicate with Hosts and Guests

Open communication is critical when managing an ostomy during holiday events. Educate your hosts and close friends about your needs, including dietary restrictions and the importance of accessing a restroom when necessary.

Most people are understanding and eager to create a supportive environment for their guests, so don't hesitate to share your requirements. Clear communication can alleviate potential discomfort and ensure a more enjoyable holiday experience.

Manage Stress and Emotional Well-being

The holiday season can be emotionally charged, and managing an ostomy adds an extra layer of complexity. Recognizing the [emotional impact of holidays on ostomy patients](#) is crucial.

Develop coping strategies for handling stress through mindfulness, deep breathing exercises, or seeking support from friends, family, or online ostomy communities. Prioritizing your emotional well-being is essential to navigating the holidays with resilience.



Traveling with Confidence

Embarking on a journey with an ostomy requires a combination of preparation and confidence, ensuring you can easily navigate travel challenges and enjoy your trip to the fullest. Here are a few travel tips you can adopt to enjoy the holidays with an ostomy:

- **Pack Ample Supplies:** Ensure you have more than enough ostomy supplies for your trip, including extras for unexpected delays. Pack them in a carry-on bag for easy access.
- **Carry a Medical Travel Kit:** Create a travel kit that includes essential medical supplies, such as adhesive removers, skin barrier wipes, and disposable bags. Having these on hand can be crucial in maintaining your ostomy care routine.
- **Inform Security Personnel:** If you're flying, inform security personnel about your ostomy and supplies. It can help expedite the security screening process and avoid any unnecessary delays.
- **Choose Comfortable Clothing:** Opt for loose, comfortable clothing, especially during long journeys. This can reduce any potential irritation or discomfort around the stoma site.
- **Plan Rest Stops:** Plan regular rest stops on a road trip. This provides an opportunity to stretch your legs and ensures you have access to restroom facilities when needed.

Celebrating Mindfully

Embracing the holiday season with an ostomy involves a delicate balance of celebration and self-care. Seek joy in the festivities, and don't be afraid to establish new traditions that align with your needs. Whether participating in activities you enjoy or simply taking a moment, mindful celebration allows you to fully engage in the holiday spirit without compromising your well-being. The benefits of mindfulness

extend to individuals with an ostomy, offering a heightened awareness that can reduce stress, enhance emotional resilience, and improve a sense of well-being during the holiday season and beyond.

Empower Your Ostomy Journey With Us

Getting through the holidays with an ostomy requires thoughtful planning, effective communication, and focusing on physical and emotional well-being. Individuals with an ostomy can confidently navigate the festivities by planning, making informed choices, and embracing the season with mindfulness.

Remember, the holiday season is about joy and connection; with the right strategies, you can enjoy this special time to the fullest.



Yearly Anniversaries ~ November & December 2024
Amy Nichols, 34 & Pablo del Río, 14



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

November 7

December 5

No January Meeting

February 6

March 6

April 3

May 1

June 5

No July Meeting

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(click on live link)

Meeting ID: 886 3266 6521

Passcode: Welcome!

"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough."

— OPRAH WINFREY

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@austinostomy.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
- Social events
- The Austi-Mate Bi-Monthly Newsletters

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 - Annual subscriptions are \$19.95. <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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"It just fits around the stoma. I don't have to worry that I'm going to have an accident. I can be free and just enjoy life."

Rachel^{*}, SenSura[®] Mio Convex Flip user

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