



# The Austi-Mate Journal

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

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

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



**Upcoming 7-8 pm In-Person & Virtual Meetings:**

**No July Meeting**

**August 1**

## **Executive Committee**

### **President, Website, Newsletter**

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This Bi-monthly newsletter is available  
online at [www.austinostomy.org](http://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.

## **Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network Walk to End Bladder Cancer**



Thanks to your generous donations, our Walk to End Bladder Cancer excelled in fundraising and participation. Our ATX Bag Lady team, lead by members **Dorothy & John De La Garza raised more than \$7,000 of the Austin \$22,000 total.** The enthusiastic crowd of walkers -- survivors, family, friends, and the medical community far exceeded the previous turn-out in 2022 and 2023.

Beyond numbers, John and I are grateful for your caring, generous friendship on the medical marathon of bladder cancer.

**Have you paid your dues?**

Our June meeting addressed travel & summer hints & ideas. No July meeting. In August, Holister Rep Travis Hudson will join us in person.

\*Our Emails have a new look ~ stay tuned!



## Swim Confidently with an Ostomy

UOAA Online Article



After healing from ostomy surgery, people of all ages and types enjoy swimming, surfing scuba diving or just relaxing in a hot tub. We understand the anxiety from worrying about leaks can keep some people out of the pool. There are no ostomy specific restrictions to swimming in public places. "Swimming has made me stronger both physically and emotionally. It is a great outlet and has made me even healthier. I feel and look more beautiful" says Lynn Wolfson of Florida. Lynn has two ostomies and swims in triathlons. Here are some solutions to common concerns.

### I'm afraid that my pouch will leak or my wafer will loosen while I'm in the water.

Remember, your pouching system is resistant to water and with a proper fit, it is designed not to leak. If you have output concerns, eat a few hours before swimming. A good habit is to empty your pouch before taking a dip. If you are hesitant about how your wafer will hold, take a practice soak in your bathtub. It is best to avoid applying a new skin barrier/wafer or pouch right before swimming. The WOCN Society recommends allowing 12 hours for proper adhesion. Using waterproof tape or water-specific barrier strips are not necessary for most, but can provide peace of mind. There are a wide variety of ostomy supplies on the market for swimming and you should be able to find a solution that works best for you. If your pouch has a vent, use the provided sticker over the air hole so that the filter remains effective.

### What can I wear or do to help conceal my pouch and keep it secure?

Wearing a patterned or darker color is less transparent than a light-colored swim garment. Options for women include patterned and boyleg one-piece suits. For a two-piece suit, consider a mix and match of tankini tops, high-waisted bottoms or boy shorts. You can also look for a suit with a concealing ruffle or skirt. Men often favor a higher cut waist for trunks, or suits with longer legs. Stretch fabric undergarments and swim or surf shirts also provide support. Ostomy bands and wraps are also commonly used. On the beach or poolside don't be surprised to know that some ostomates are comfortable with simply wearing the swimsuit of their choice- with swim fabric pouch covers or just an opaque pouch. There is also swimwear and accessories specifically made for ostomates by a variety of manufacturers.

### What do I do if I am approached by pool personnel concerned that my ostomy is an open wound or believe ostomy pouches are not allowed in pools?

The best approach here is to stay calm and try to educate. However, unless you or another person tell pool personnel, no one should know you have an ostomy.

Contact **UOAA Advocacy Manager, Jeanine Gleba** if this is a recurring issue at your swim location. The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures your right to pool access and most disagreements can be solved through education before exploring any legal recourse. Some scuba diving operations also incorrectly list having an ostomy as an exclusion on pre-dive paperwork.

Contacting **PADI (800) 729-7234** can help educate them that there is no reason to avoid diving if you have an ostomy pouch.

Meet with a WOC nurse for questions about what supplies may work best for you and stop by your local UOAA Affiliated Support Group or visit our discussion board at [ostomy.org](http://ostomy.org) to ask what your peers do to feel confident and secure while swimming.



## Drink Those Fluids!!

Pay attention to your body this summer! Some symptoms of dehydration include headache, fatigue, dark or decreased urine, lack of concentration, dry mouth, feeling disoriented, shortness of breath, dry skin, stomach cramps. Additionally, leg cramps, loss of appetite, drowsiness, tingling in fingertips and muscle weakness are all concomitant to dehydration.





## Why Watermelon Should be Part of Your Diet

Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials Online (edited) 2/2023

Sweet and juicy watermelon is a symbol of summer. At a glance, you might assume it's mostly sugar and water. But once you dig in and discover its vast array of nutrients, you'll be surprised how many potential health benefits it has. "We think of watermelon as a fun, seasonal food for barbecues and the beach, but it's also really good for you," says registered dietitian Lara Whitson, RD, LD. "It's low in calories, keeps you hydrated and provides many other nutrients that can help you maintain good health."

### Is watermelon good for you?

Though it lacks protein and iron, the nutritional value of watermelon shouldn't be underestimated. It also lacks fat, sodium and cholesterol and is American Heart Association Heart-Check Certified. Even watermelon seeds have benefits, with magnesium, iron, healthy fats and zinc.

One cup of diced watermelon has only 46 calories and:

- 0 g of fat; 1 mg of sodium; 9 g of sugar; 10 mg of calcium.
- 12 mg of vitamin C; 15 mg of magnesium; 139 g of water. (Source: USDA)

Even more impressive, it has 170 milligrams of potassium, an essential mineral that supports nerve and muscle function, and the fluid balance in your body. And in addition to vitamin C, it contains good amounts of vitamin A. Disease-fighting antioxidants in watermelon like lycopene and cucurbitacin E, may help protect you from diseases such as cancer or diabetes. Lycopene also gives watermelon its red color.

### 1. Helps you stay hydrated

Even a little dehydration can take a toll, causing fatigue, muscle cramps and headaches. Watermelon is 92% water, so it's an easy way to hydrate and support your body.

Try eating a little watermelon sprinkled with salt after physical activity or a strenuous workout to replenish your body's electrolytes and carbohydrates. "It's amazing what it can do to restore your energy and quench your thirst," says Whitson.

### 2. Maintain a healthy weight

Watermelon can be a great option if you are trying to maintain or achieve a healthy weight, and resist the temptation of higher-calorie sweet snacks. Because it contains so much water, watermelon has few calories and can make you feel full for longer. A 2019 study of 33 people who were considered overweight or had obesity showed that those who ate watermelon instead of low-fat cookies daily for four weeks reported lower hunger and less desire to eat. Eating watermelon was associated with lower body weight, body mass index (BMI) and waist-to-hip ratio, and reduced blood pressure.



### 3. Protects against disease

Early evidence suggests that regularly eating watermelon promotes good health and may reduce your risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and cancer. This is likely thanks, in part, to its antioxidants, which help protect your body from stress and prevent or slow cell damage. In fact, watermelon has more lycopene than any other fruit or vegetable — including tomatoes. It's also the highest source of the amino acid citrulline, which produces a molecule called nitric oxide that helps relax blood vessels. The nutritional benefits of watermelon may help you combat blood pressure, cholesterol and inflammation that can lead to disease. In one small study, researchers found watermelon extract lowered ankle blood pressure in middle-aged adults with early hypertension (high blood pressure) and obesity.

"We know that people who eat a well-balanced, nutritious diet can have better health outcomes, in combination with lifestyle choices and other factors," notes Whitson. "Watermelon could be a part of that equation, keeping you healthier, longer."

#### 4. Supports eye health

The nutrients in watermelon serve an especially useful purpose when it comes to your eyes. Antioxidants may help prevent or delay the formation of cataracts. They might even reduce your risk of developing age-related macular degeneration, which can cause blindness. The vitamin A in watermelon also supports the health of your corneas. And it doesn't take much: Just one medium slice of watermelon contains up to 11% of the vitamin A you need each day.



#### 5. Boosts your immune system

Watermelon's generous dose of vitamin C (ascorbic acid) supports your immune system, which fights germs and infection. It may also help reduce your risk of developing cancer.

#### 6. Relieves muscle soreness

A benefit of watermelon and watermelon juice may be helping your body recover and feel better after exercise. This may be thanks to citrulline, which helps produce nitric oxide to improve blood flow and muscle function. Citrulline also removes ammonia from your body. This reduces the amount of a substance called lactate that builds up in your body during exercise and can lead to muscle soreness.

#### 7. Aids skin health

Vitamin C in watermelon helps your body produce collagen, which supports your immune system, the health of your cells and your ability to heal from injuries. Collagen gives strength and elasticity to your skin and helps replace dead skin cells. This means eating watermelon could improve your skin and slow age-related effects. Vitamin A produced by the beta-carotene in watermelon helps repair skin cells, preventing dry skin and flaking. Its vitamin B6 may help prevent acne. You aren't off the mark if you're thinking watermelon might even be a good ingredient for a face mask — it is.



#### 8. Improves digestion

Plant compounds (polyphenols) in watermelon fuel good bacteria in your gut. This not only eases digestion, but may also boost your immune system and your gut's production of essential nutrients.

#### 9. Manages blood sugar

Watermelon provides a great alternative if you're trying to keep your blood glucose levels steady or reduce your risk of diabetes. It has few carbs and a low glycemic load. That means watermelon enters your bloodstream and produces less glucose than other foods, so you can have a slice without a large spike in blood sugar.

#### What are the side effects of eating watermelon?

Most of the time, you can eat watermelon without experiencing any side effects. But you may want to avoid watermelon if you:

- **Are prone to migraine headaches:** Watermelon contains a high level of tyramine, an amino acid that could trigger migraines.
- **Have an allergy to certain pollens, including grass or ragweed:** Symptoms may include difficulty breathing, hives or swelling.
- **Have diabetes:** People with diabetes may want to moderate how much watermelon they eat due to its natural sugars.
- **Have digestive issues:** Watermelon is also considered a high [FODMAP](#), which means it contains sugars that can be difficult for some people with conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) to digest. Symptoms may include bloating, constipation or diarrhea.

#### Enjoy the health benefits of watermelon

Watermelon is affordable and easy to prepare. Use it in smoothies or a summer slushie, in a salad or even on the grill. You can also freeze it in popsicles, or add it to gazpacho or nonalcoholic drinks and colorful cocktails. With its refreshing flavor and healthy array of nutrients, watermelon is never out of season.







## Best Strategies To Reduce Your Risk of Skin Cancer

Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials Online 2/2023



\\Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Each year, more than 1 million people in the U.S. are diagnosed with it. And yet, when the sun's out, we're so often drawn to it and run outside without taking the proper precautions. It's no secret that the sun's rays can be harmful. Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which can cause [skin cancer](#). But you don't have to become a hermit and hide from sunlight like a vampire. Cancer care nurse Josette Snyder, RN, MSN, AOCN, offers steps you can take to reduce your risk of skin damage from the sun — as well as skin cancer.

**1. Use sunscreen:** Sunscreen is an important part of sun protection year-round, but should especially be a staple in your medicine cabinet during the summer months. Look for a product that provides a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. You also want a broad spectrum, which means it protects you from both UVA and UVB rays. “About 30 minutes before you go outside, apply a thick coating — and be sure to reapply frequently because all sunscreens break down in the sun after two to three hours,” explains Snyder.

If you go in the water, reapply sunscreen after you dry off, even if it's a water-resistant sunscreen. And it's a good rule of thumb to reapply sunscreen every two hours, even if it says “all-day protection.” Be sure to apply sunscreen in places often missed. These include your ears, the tops of your feet and your scalp.

**2. Avoid going outside during hours of peak sun strength:** Avoid the sun's rays, especially during the midday hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., when the sun is highest and its rays are most direct. You'll want to seek shelter under an umbrella, tree or other shade before you need relief from its rays. If you're in sunlight, keep an eye out for your skin turning pink or becoming sensitive. By this point, however, know that damage is already happening to your skin. Ultraviolet rays can still reach you in the shade when you're outside, so you need to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing no matter what.

**3. Wear protective clothing:** Long-sleeved shirts and long pants and skirts can protect you from UV rays. Although light-colored, loosely woven clothing is popular during the warm months, you may be surprised to learn that garments that are dark-colored or made from tightly woven fabric give more protection against the sun. Sun-protective clothing physically blocks the sun's rays, while the dark color absorbs them. Also, wet clothing offers much less UV protection than dry. “A typical T-shirt has an SPF rating lower than 15, so don't rely solely on clothing — use other types of protection as well, such as sunscreen,” advises Snyder. Several companies sell clothing with ultraviolet protection factor (UPF), a sun protective factor built into the clothing, which includes swimwear, T-shirts and hats.

**Wear a hat:** Choose a hat with a wide brim that goes all the way around your head to shade your face, ears and neck. A tightly woven fabric, such as canvas, is best, and a darker hat may offer more UV protection. Avoid straw hats with holes that let sunlight through. “If you wear a baseball cap, protect your ears and the back of your neck by wearing clothing that covers those areas, use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, or stay in the shade,” Snyder says.

**Wear sunglasses:** Sunglasses not only protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of [cataracts](#), but they also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure. Most sunglasses sold in the United States, regardless of cost, block UV rays.

“Wrap-around sunglasses work best because they block UV rays that can come in from the side,” notes Snyder.

**4. Check your skin regularly:** At the end of the day, in order to prevent skin cancer, you have to stay vigilant. This includes checking for changes in your skin tone and texture. If you're older than 30, you shouldn't be developing any new moles, so you'll want to [check once a month](#) to see if you spot any new developments. You'll also want to check existing spots for changes in size, color or shape. And if you see something “funny,” don't hesitate to contact a healthcare provider.



Article Designations:

All Ostomy Types

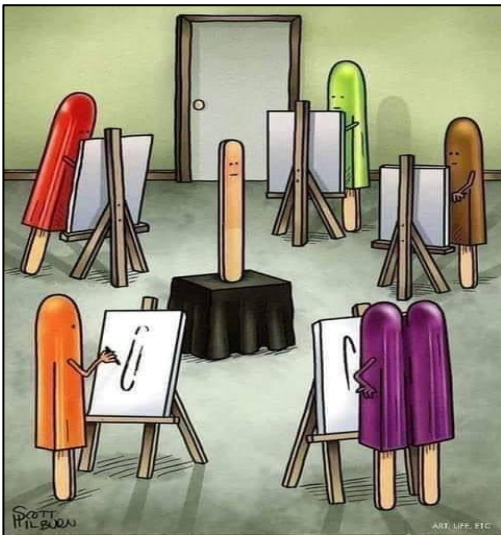
Colonoscopy & Ileostomy related

Urostomy related



*Ostomy Anniversaries: July & August 2024*

Christina Luna, 22; Trudy Faloon, 45; Dorothy Mogoyne, 8



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

**No July Meeting**  
**August 1**  
**September 5 (No Virtual Mtg)**  
**October 3**  
**November 7**  
**December 5**  
**No January Meeting**

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

Meeting ID: 886 3266 6521  
Passcode: Welcome!



**Are you in need of donated supplies? We have plenty available!**

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](mailto: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.austinstomy.org](http://www.austinstomy.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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