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

Next meetings: Thursday, May 4, 2017 @ 7:00 pm
Thursday, June 1, 2017 @ 7.00 pm

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This bi- monthly newsletter is located on our website: www.austinostomy.org

Printing Courtesy:
The American Cancer Society

Ostomy surgery is a lifesaving surgery that enables a person to enjoy a full range of activities, including traveling, sports, family life and work. **You Matter** ~ Come join us!

Spring is here with its longer days, milder weather, and oh, those beautiful flowers coloring the landscape. We encourage you to get outside, go for a walk, and enjoy this weather before it heats up!

We enjoyed playing a Question & Answer Trivia Game with our members in March.

Physical Therapist Leslie Micus presented in April. She shared many suggestions and strategies for individuals with Ostomies as well as having had abdominal-related surgeries. Leslie recommended the **plank position to build core abdominal strength.**

May 4th Mtg @ 7:00

Representatives from U S Ostomy Supply will join us. Located in Bedford, Texas, they will share information and address any question you have regarding supplies. **Refreshments:** Jim Chandler, Marina Chavez, Dorothy Mogonye, Herlinda Burks

June 1st Mtg @ 7:00

We will have a Question & Answer session with the opportunity to ask our nurses and members anything on your mind.
Refreshments: Carol Marshall Hanson, Mohsin Sheikia, Joe Torn, Karen Hollis

A Change in My Body Helped My Heart Grow

Support Group Leader Compelled to Give Back

By Ellyn Mantell

Over two and a half years ago, after 22 abdominal surgeries and countless bowel obstructions, my surgeon and I took a big step...a surgery that resulted in the formation of an ileostomy. As you may know from others in your support groups there are three major types of ostomies or stomas, which divert either stool (a colostomy or ileostomy) or urine (urostomy) from the organs nature gave us to do so. An ileostomy is created to enable stool from the small intestine, to leave the body into a "bag" or a pouch that adheres to an appliance secured on the belly.

I was ready for this body-altering procedure, had been ready for years, waiting for the signal that it was the right time to do the ostomy. And in March of 2014, my world became infinitely better, thanks to my wonderful surgeon (Dr. Paul Starker) and my amazing Ostomy nurse (Angela Natale-Ryan.) As part of my recovery, I attended my first Ostomy Support Group at Overlook Medical Center in Summit, New Jersey. It was May, just six-weeks post-op and I was shaky and more than a little confused by the new language I was learning, but was welcomed by the members. I returned in July for the next every-other-month meeting, and I felt so much healthier than I had ever felt possible over the 23 years of that chapter of my life...only a few months after my ostomy!

As providence would have it, coincidentally, our support group was asked to incorporate and as such, would need a president. Although I was the newest member of the group, I knew for certain, that I was the one for that job. I felt there was a greater purpose for me, and I couldn't sleep until I threw my hat into the ring! As with so many of these groups, membership was delighted to have someone volunteer (I prepared a mission statement, outline of items I wished to accomplish, goals and outreach for the community, etc. to show my determination and vision)...all needless, because the minute my hand went up, the job was mine!

I share this health issue with you...something many keep very private, because what I have gained by my openness has come back to me beyond measure. It is an amazing experience because I am "the one" with whom people in our area connect when they are told by their surgeon they should consider an ostomy, or they have awakened from surgery with one. My name is provided by the American Cancer Society or by some of the health "hotlines." I have a chance to make a difference, and that never gets old or tiresome. This summer, I became certified in becoming a "visitor" to those in the hospital recovering from their surgery. In many cases, I am the "face of normalcy" for these patients, and thankfully, I can show them a healthy woman. As many say, we who are ostomates look just like any other person walking into the room. Patients are able to ask me the question they cannot ask the surgeon or nurses....what kind of life will they really have, and what changes will they experience? It is with profound responsibility that I mentor those asking for my support and guidance...it is not lost on me that my positive feelings may very well make the difference in their ability to embrace their new body.

We are all unique, and there are many reasons we find ourselves at a place where we need help. Fortunately for me, I am surrounded by loving family and friends, as well as devoted medical personnel. And our Ostomy Support Group has grown beautifully over these past months...I feel so proud of us. We laugh, we cry, we mourn, we fulfill each other's needs as only we can. Walking in each other's shoes is something that brings us together...and assisting new members to take their first and most important step is an amazing accomplishment! My mind, my body and my heart tell me there is more to us than we can ever imagine, until we have to imagine it...and then we watch ourselves grow!

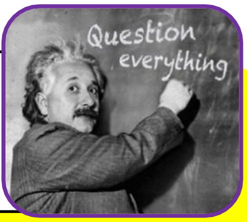
NEW!

New: Ostomy Clinic
St. David's North Austin Medical Center (NAMC) Wound Clinic
You need a doctor referral
http://stdavids.com/service/wound-care
M-F 8:00-5:00 512-901-2250

NEW!

Important Ostomy Questions & Their Answers

By Amparo Cano, MSN, CWOC and Debbie Walde, BSN, CWOC



What are the signs and symptoms of UTI in people with a Urostomy?

- Fever, Strong smelling urine, Cloudy urine, increased mucus, retroperitoneal pain, bloody urine new onset confusion (in elderly patient).

What is the Crusting Procedure which helps to cure irritated or raw peristomal skin?

- Clean the peristomal skin with water (avoid soap) and pat the area dry.
- Sprinkle skin barrier powder onto the denuded skin.
- Allow the powder to adhere to the moist skin.
- Dust excess powder from the skin using a gauze pad or soft tissue. The powder should stick only to the raw area and should be removed from dry, intact skin.
- Using a blotting or dabbing motion, apply the polymer skin barrier over the powdered area, or lightly spray the area if you're using a polymer skin barrier spray.
- Allow the area to dry for a few seconds; a whitish crust will appear. You can test for dryness of the crust by gently brushing your finger over it; it should feel rough but dry. 7. Repeat steps 2 through 6 two to four times to achieve a crust.
- You may apply a pouching system over the crusted area. Stop using the crusting procedure when the skin has healed and is no longer moist to the touch.

What are some medication precautions for Ileostomtes?

- Do not take enteric coated or time-release medications Do not crush or open medications Inform the pharmacist Never take a laxative.

What foods may affect Ileostomates?

- Apple peels, cabbage raw, celery, Chinese vegetables, corn, whole kernel, coconuts, dried fruit, mushrooms, oranges, nuts, pineapple, popcorn, seeds.

What is the Push-Pull Technique?

- Rough removal of your skin barrier wafer can tear out hair on the peristomal skin. Pulling out hair causes folliculitis, infection of the hair follicles, and is characterized by red, sore, itching and eventually weepy skin. It can also look like a pus-filled or open pimple. Never pull your skin barrier wafer off but instead hold wafer in place while pushing your peristomal skin in toward your body. This method is far more gentle to your skin.

When should I seek medical assistance?

You should call the doctor or ostomy nurse when you have:

- severe cramps lasting more than two or three hours
- a deep cut in the stoma
- excessive bleeding from the stoma opening (or a moderate amount in the pouch at several emptyings)
- continuous bleeding at the junction between the stoma and skin m. severe skin irritation or deep ulcers
- unusual change in stoma size and appearance o. severe watery discharge lasting more than five or six hours
- continuous nausea and vomiting; or the ostomy does not have any output for four to six hours and is accompanied by cramping and nausea (Ileostomates only.)

Can I skip meals from time to time?

- No, it increases watery stools and gas

What foods cause gas?

- Some foods cause excess gas, so these may need to be reduced or avoided. Foods such as beans, hard boiled eggs, fish, melon, milk products, onions, spicy foods, asparagus, cauliflower, cabbage family, and carbonated beverages cause flatus. Some behavioral changes to reduce flatus include avoiding drinking through a straw, smoking, and chewing gum.

What are peristomal skin problems?

- A study revealed that 61% of people with an ostomy have a peristomal skin problem as assessed by a WOC or Ostomy Nurse. The primary cause of skin problems was from effluent coming in contact with the peristomal skin. Body shape and skin type are as individual as personality - some people can establish a good seal between the skin and the barrier, while others may find it a challenge getting a tight seal to avoid leakage and may need a little extra help to make their ostomy appliance fit securely and to care for peristomal skin.

How do you replace fluids and electrolytes?

- A rule of thumb is to drink a glass of replacement fluid each time pouch is emptied. Try replacement drinks such as sports drinks, fruit or vegetable juices (V8), broth, or Cera Lyte. Electrolytes (sodium and potassium) are lost when the body loses a lot of water. Foods containing potassium are orange juice bananas and tomato juice. If diarrhea is caused by antibiotics or bacterial imbalance, replace the normal intestinal flora (bacteria) with yogurt, buttermilk, acidophilus.

What are some hospitalization tips for Ostomates?

- Never assume hospital personnel know the difference between ostomy types. Ask if the hospital has an ostomy nurse. If they do, call them and let them know you're an ostomate and you'd love to just meet them even if they do not need to be involved in your immediate care. Never assume they have ostomy supplies you use in stock. Always keep an emergency supplies kit ready in your closet full of everything you need for at least five changes of your ostomy appliance during an unexpected stay. Bring a warm bathrobe. Hospitals are kept very cool to keep them sanitary. Never assume the medications they give you are correct.

I wasn't lactose intolerant before surgery but I am now. Is this normal?

- Yes

What can I eat to decrease diarrhea?

- Tapioca, toast, applesauce, bananas, boiled rice and peanut butter.

Can I go swimming?

- Yes! UOAA has a swimming with an ostomy toolkit: Facts and your rights. You should not be denied access to a pool facility.

Is it important to know what portions of my bowel that was removed?

- Yes. This is important re: your diet, meds, and absorption of foods.

Where can I get detailed information on diet, etc.?

- United Ostomy Association of American has a very good Diet and Nutrition Guide at www.ostomy.org.

When is your ostomy anniversary month and year? Please let us know!

Article Borders: Yellow - All Ostomy types; Red - Colostomy-related;
Green - Ileostomy-related; Blue - Urostomy related

How Do I Deal With Ostomy Overwhelm?

By Stephanie Horgan, LCSW, ostomyconnection.com

What to do When You Feel Overwhelmed with Ostomy Life

The experience of managing a new stoma or dealing with ongoing skin problems can be a lot to handle. Add in the demands of normal everyday life - it can all feel completely overwhelming. Whatever the reason you're feeling frazzled, there are ways to help prepare yourself to handle whatever may come your way. Here are eight tactics that can help you deal with ostomy overwhelm:

1. Know how long things takes.

I'm notorious for assuming tasks take much less time. For instance, I'll block out 15 minutes and then discover it actually takes 30 minutes! I've learned this simple rule: whatever time you think a task will take, double it. That way you when your appliance change doesn't go smoothly, you'll feel less stress because you know you have extra time to apply it properly.

2. Simplify your life.

Is your life too complicated? Take a good look at everything you do and ask yourself if there is a better, easier way to do it, or maybe not do it at all. If you don't get through your to-do list, it's okay. Figure out your priorities, like having a system in place for organizing and ordering ostomy supplies. Check if your supplier has automated reordering. There is also a handy ostomy tracker app available for smart phones that alert you when supplies are low or when to get a new prescription.

3. Get into daily habits.

Getting the most important things done in an orderly fashion is taking care of you, first and foremost. For instance, the first thing I do each morning is hydrate. Then I'll change my appliance prior to eating breakfast. Next, I might take vitamin supplements if I'm not eating properly. Then I prep for that day's events by packing healthy snacks and my water bottle. These daily tasks allow me to feel prepared for the day. And if you're not a morning person, pack things the night before.

4. Allow for Murphy's Law.

No week is complete without something going wrong, so plan for it. Take for instance that terrifying feeling of your wafer peeling off your skin while you're at work, or a very inconvenient leak at the movie theater. Allow time in your week for preparing an emergency ostomy kit and extra clothes, and always carry it with you. You'll be better-off knowing these things are readily available just in case you need them.

5. Lean on others for support.

Don't underestimate the power of peer support. When you ask for help in a considerate way (and understand they may need to turn you down), there's no need to feel guilty about leaning on others. It can be something as simple as coming over to watch a movie when you're not feeling well, or asking for a ride to a doctor's appointment.

6. Be kind to yourself.

If you're having ongoing ostomy related issues, this kind of overwhelm can lead to feelings of inadequacy and failure. This is not the time to beat yourself up. It's extra important to pay attention to your mental radio and turn down the volume on your inner critic station. Practice self-compassion, and remember all the things you've been through. Talk to yourself as if you were talking to a loved one or best friend.

7. Dump it all on paper.

When you're fed up with your ostomy, sometimes taking time to write down your frustrations can help. At Oak Park Behavioral Medicine we give our patients journals to help with this. One of my favorite assignments is having ostomates write a letter to their stoma with all their truest emotions and thoughts about it. Profanity is definitely allowed, if necessary.

8. Connect with others who have been there.

There are many Ostomates who have gone before you, and many who have yet to receive an ostomy. We can all learn from each other, so it doesn't hurt to reach out to a UOAA support group or discussion board. Sometimes this kind of understanding can really help when you're feeling overwhelmed with ostomy life. If you want a pen friend, Girls with Guts has a Pen Pal Program where you can request another Ostomate to send snail mail back and forth to.

The Rules: Just pick ONE (maybe two) of these tips and do it. I don't want you to get overwhelmed by trying them all.

Stephanie had ileostomy surgery in 2009 due to Crohn's disease. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who specializes in health psychology and chronic illness at Oak Park Behavioral Medicine in Illinois.

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Mark Your Calendar

Yearly Anniversaries ~2017

May
Jim Ellisor, 33
Linda Schmeltekopf, 33
Joe Russell, 10

June
Bill Holcomb, 32
David Strayhorn, 31
Sadie Faught, 28

Thursday Meetings

No July Meeting
August 3
September 7
October 5
November 2
December 7

This is a wonderful day; I have never seen this one before." Maya Angelou

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, 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____________________________________

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

$20_______ Ostomate

$12 _______ Spouse/Relative/Partner/Friend/Other

$20 _______ Professional

Mail Application to:
Ostomy Association of Austin
P.O. Box 143383
Austin, TX 78714

Prefer a paper copy be mailed, check here ☐

Bi- monthly newsletters are located on our website: www.austinostomy.org

Membership benefits include:

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