



# 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



Virtual Monthly Meetings  
Stay healthy & get vaccinated!

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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.



We hope you're enjoying this beautiful Fall weather and spending some time outside. We had our first Virtual Ostomy meeting on Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. It was so nice seeing familiar faces and welcoming some new comers. We had good conversations, questions and answers with our nurses, and an opportunity to share updates from our members. We will have another Virtual meeting on December 2 from 7-8 pm. See Zoom information on page 6 and our website.



Have you paid your dues?

*The Ostomy Association of Austin Board  
Members wish you and your families a happy  
& healthy holiday Season!*



## Holiday with an Ostomy

By Molly Atwater (edited)



Ah, November... the leaves are changing colors and falling from the trees, the jack-o-lanterns have been put away and exchanged for candy canes, and the Black Friday sales emails have started trickling into our inboxes. That can only mean one thing: the holiday season is upon us! It's safe to say that our celebrations in 2020 were a little different than what we're used to.

Regardless of how we'll celebrate, there are still lots of cookies to bake, memories to make, and laughs to share. But what does that mean for those of us with ostomies? The holiday season is inherently stressful, but adding medical issues on top can feel overwhelming. But fear not – with a little extra planning and mindfulness, you can handle the next few weeks like a pro. Here are a few tips and tricks to make sure you have a HAPPY holiday!

### Travel Prepared

If you must travel during this time, make sure you pack *more than* enough supplies. Odds are you won't need all of them, but it's always better to be safe than sorry. My rule is to figure out how many bag changes I expect to perform while I am away, and then pack double that amount of supplies. That way, even if I have to do extra bag changes, I never have to worry about running out of my necessities. I also pack in-bag odor reducers and a small bathroom aerosol spray so I don't have to feel self-conscious about any expected or unexpected ostomy smells.

If your holiday plans include traveling by airplane, pack your supplies in your carry-on. Airlines are notorious for misplacing luggage, so keeping your supplies with you at all times can save you a lot of worrying. Also, go ahead and download one of the [UOAA TSA advocacy cards](#) to make your security checkpoint experience easier. For even more peace of mind contact [TSA Cares](#) 72 hours before your flight for additional assistance. Don't forget to throw an empty water bottle in your carry-on to fill up once you're at your gate to prevent dehydration.

### Enjoy Meals with Peace of Mind

When it comes to eating, everyone's post-ostomy diets are different. For some, ostomy surgery can open up foods that were previously off-limits, while for others, options might be more limited. Regardless of your digestive system's abilities, take the opportunity to make your meals a little more festive! If you can eat things you've missed for a while, go for it! But if you're dealing with more restrictions, all is not lost. Maybe you could make macaroni and cheese with turkey-shaped pasta or try your hand at some homemade applesauce.

Chew, chew, chew! A lot of the foods we eat over the holidays are out of our normal diet, so give your body some help with digesting. It's not a ton of fun to step away from the festivities to deal with a blockage! If at all possible, it's also helpful to stay on your normal eating schedule. With all of the uncertainties that come with the holidays, having one steady touchstone can really help.

Alcohol is a staple for some families' celebrations, but it can be very dehydrating. That's an issue for everyone, but it's crucial for those of us with ostomies. Try to alternate your cocktails with a glass of water or your electrolyte beverage of choice. Don't forget that with the weather cooling down, warm drinks like tea also count as hydration!

### Trust Your Emotions

The holidays can be emotionally challenging for everyone, but for those dealing with chronic conditions, things may feel a little tougher. If you are feeling blue, that is ok! All emotions are valid, so give yourself the time and space to feel sad or angry and to grieve what was. But it's also a great time of year to reflect on the things that you are grateful for, whether that's your support system, your health, or even just for making it through this crazy year.

Some people don't mind talking about their medical conditions, but if you'd rather not focus on your ostomy this holiday season, think of some ways to steer the conversation in a different direction. The questions people ask typically come from a good place, but you are fully entitled to a few hours without thinking about your health. Brainstorming quick responses or coming up with other topics to bring up instead can help you feel more prepared if you do find yourself in a situation where you want a quick "out."



### Listen to Your Body

Dealing with chronic health conditions is exhausting, and putting on a smile when you aren't feeling great makes it that much harder. Finding others who can accept and acknowledge that things are hard instead of offering common and well-meaning phrases like "it will get better" and "stay strong" can be extremely helpful and validating. Nobody wants to be a Scrooge during this time of year, but having a safe space where you can feel seen and heard can bring you back into the celebration faster than wallowing alone.

Find an outfit that makes you feel AMAZING with your ostomy! Since a lot of us have spent more time in sweatpants than ever before thanks to quarantine, take the opportunity to wear something that makes you feel confident. It doesn't have to be fancy – maybe just your favorite pair of pajamas or an extra-festive mask!

### Get Creative

If you can't participate in some of your favorite holiday traditions, now is the time to get creative! There might be ways to augment some existing traditions, like making different cookies without hard-to-digest ingredients, or you can create brand-new ones. Maybe it's time to introduce a holiday movie marathon or invite your friends to join you on a wintery walk through the woods! Whatever you choose to do, I encourage you to find an activity that brings you joy.

The holidays might feel tricky to navigate, but with a little extra preparation, you can remove ostomy stress from your list of worries. Whether you're a new ostomate or a seasoned pro, I encourage you to find your own tricks for making this time of year as merry as possible. From all of us here at UOAA, we wish you a happy and healthy holiday season!



## Know Your Supplies

Know Your Ostomy Supplies Checklist <sup>®</sup>				
Patient Name/Address: _____		Supplier Contact Information: _____		
Patient Date of Birth: _____		Supplier Order #: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> NO SUPPLY SUBSTITUTIONS
Allergy Alert: _____				
<b>Pouching System:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> One-Piece <input type="checkbox"/> Two-Piece  <b>Stoma Information:</b> Size: _____  <b>Ostomy Type:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Colostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Urostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<b>Brand Manufacturer:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Coloplast <input type="checkbox"/> Convatec <input type="checkbox"/> Cymed/Microskin <input type="checkbox"/> Hollister <input type="checkbox"/> Marlen <input type="checkbox"/> Nu-Hope <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  <b>Order Frequency:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Per month <input type="checkbox"/> Per 3 months	<b>Pouch:</b> Product # _____ Size: _____ Quantity: _____  <b>Pouch Features:</b> <b>Color:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Transparent <input type="checkbox"/> Opaque <input type="checkbox"/> Opaque with viewing window  <b>Closure/Outlet:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Drainable (velcro or clip) <input type="checkbox"/> Closed-end <input type="checkbox"/> Tap Bottom  <b>Gas Management:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Filter <input type="checkbox"/> No Filter	<b>Wafer/Barrier/Flange:</b> Product # _____ Quantity: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-cut Size: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cut-to-fit Size: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Moldable Size: _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Convex: ____ Soft/Flexible ____ Light ____ Deep  <b>Two-Piece:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive Coupling <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Coupling	<b>Accessory Products:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Skin Barrier Seals/Rings <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive Remover Wipes or Spray <input type="checkbox"/> Barrier Wipes or Spray <input type="checkbox"/> Barrier Strips <input type="checkbox"/> Deodorizer <input type="checkbox"/> Paste (Tube or Strip) <input type="checkbox"/> Tape/Tape Extenders <input type="checkbox"/> Powder <input type="checkbox"/> Hernia Support Belt <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Drainage Bag/Jug <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight High Output Pouch <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<p><b>Advocates for a Positive Change</b>    www.ostomy.org    1.800.826.0826    </p> <p><small>Copyright © 2018 UOAA. All rights reserved.</small></p>				

## 8 Things to be Thankful for...

© 2011 Family Minute. All Rights Reserved. Family First, All Pro Dad, Mom, and Family Minute with Mark Merrill

In our life, we sometimes spend too much time complaining about the things we do not like or have. Today, and every day, we need to take time to be thankful for the blessings we do have. Take a look at this list of 8 things we should be thankful for:

- 1. Be thankful for family.** We are all where we are today because our parents or guardians raised us. Hopefully, we have taken all the positive lessons from them and are applying them to our lives. If you are married and have children, be thankful for the blessing of your family. If you are single, be thankful for your parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins.
- 2. Be thankful for friends.** True friends encourage us, motivate us, and push us to do better. Take time to call them and thank them for all the great things they have done. Show your gratitude by also being a great friend to others.
- 3. Be thankful for a home and for nourishment.** If you have a home, be thankful you have a place to rest and relax. Hopefully your home is also a place of safety and encouragement. Truly show you are thankful for your home by supporting organizations who help those who have no homes. In addition, we should be thankful we have the opportunity to eat on a daily basis. If you have plenty, please show your thanks by helping to support agencies that care for the hungry.
- 4. Be thankful for laughter.** Laughter is a gift from God which can bring great joy. Be thankful for the laughter of children, a spouse, or friends.
- 5. Be thankful for a job.** A job is a great blessing, whether we are happy in the job we are in or not. Take the time to list out reasons you are thankful for your job. If you find this hard, don't look at your job just as a means to make money, but look at it as a way to help people.
- 6. Be thankful for the freedoms you have.** We have so many freedoms other countries do not have. It has cost some men and women time away from family, life-altering injuries, or the ultimate price – their life. Take time today to say "thank you" to someone who helped, or is helping, protect those freedoms.
- 7. Be thankful for those who have made a positive impact in your life.** All of us have had people in our lives that have made a positive impact. It may have been a teacher, coach, pastor, youth worker, Sunday school teacher, or a family member. Be thankful that these people were placed in your life and give to others as they have given to you.
- 8. Be thankful for your health.** If you are reading this, you are probably a person in good health. Be thankful for that. However, there may be people in your family and community that are not as fortunate. Take time to help someone this week.



All Ostomy types

Ileostomy-related

Urostomy related



## A Visit from St. Ostomy

by Marjorie Kaufman, Los Angeles (CA) Los Ostomy News; via Austin (TX) Austi-Mate

Twas the night before Christmas and all through the flat, there was general confusion including the cat.

The bathroom was strewn with the ostomy ware, that I had abandoned in utter despair.

The courage I'd had in the hospital bed, to follow instructions, had suddenly fled.

It all looked so strange, and uncommonly new; I swore I would never know quite what to do.

Now which goes to which, and what sticks to what? I fumbled each step, with my nerves overwrought.

And then in my anguish, I went to my room, to settle my brains for a night full of gloom.

With a household a-flutter in holiday matter, I shut out the sounds of excitement and chatter.

When out in the hallway I heard from below, the sound of a voice with a jolly "Hello."

As I peeked through the door, up the stairway she came;

And she smiled when she saw me, and called me by name.

And I, in my wonder, just couldn't believe that ostomy visits were made Christmas Eve.

And then in a twinkling she put me at ease, and said she could lessen my anxieties.

She was dressed all in white, in a form-fitting sheath, with nary a sign of what lay underneath.

So trim and well-groomed, a delight to behold, no one would suspect, unless they'd been told.

That standing before me so calm and serene, was the very first ostomate I'd ever seen.

Her manner so friendly, with faith and good cheer, soon gave me to know I had nothing to fear.

My questions, like leaves in a hurricane flew; and with each knowing answer, my confidence grew.

Then under her guidance each part fell in place, as I conquered the problem I'd just failed to face.

And all of a sudden I knew I was free, to live just as normal and happy as she.

For only an ostomate is really akin, to the fears and frustrations that lie deep within.

Her time and her friendship so willing to give, will keep me remembering as long as I live.

And my family was grateful for what she had done, for once more the evening was festive and fun.

Now each time I meet her, more clearly I see the "Saint" who came calling with blessings for me!!

### Did You Know...

**Eggnog dates back to medieval times.** Eggnog is a signature beverage of the holiday season, and one that has a history dating all the way back to medieval times and a drink called "posset." Made with sweetened and [spiced milk curdled with ale or wine](#) and served hot, according to Healthline, monks in the 13th century "enjoyed this mixture with the addition of eggs and figs."



**The largest gingerbread house ever made was as big as a real house.** In November 2013, a group from Traditions Club in Bryan, Texas, constructed a [gingerbread house](#) that was 160 feet long, 42 feet wide, and 10.1 feet tall. Made with a wood base, it reportedly took 1,800 pounds of butter, 7,200 eggs, 3,000 pounds of sugar, 7,200 pounds of flour, and over 22,000 pieces of candy to cover [the record-breaking structure!](#)



**Thomas Edison and his business partner invented Christmas lights.**



### Yearly Anniversaries:

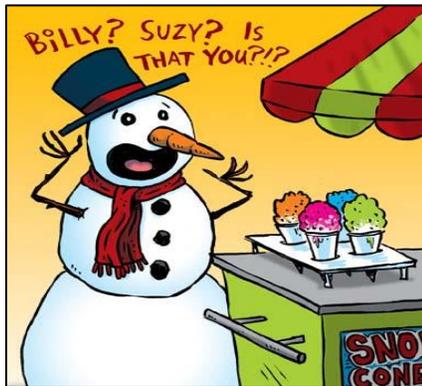
### November & December 2021

Amy Nichols, 31      Pablo del Rio, 11  
 Jim Walker, 19      Charles Wright, 39  
 Annette Perrone, 15

### Problem-Solving Clinic **CLOSED**

The Ostomy Problem Solving Clinic remains closed for in person visits during this pandemic period.

- Many folks have reached out to Karen Hollis, RN, CWON via text and have been assisted during this time.
- Text Karen at **512-785-7448** for assistance. Send a text first and include your name. Send photos if you can as that will help in identifying the problem. Phone calls and facetime visits can be set up as needed.
- Don't suffer alone if you are having issues with your ostomy.



Monthly Virtual Meetings: 7-8 pm  
First Thursday of the month

**Thursday, December 2**

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

Meeting ID: 886 3266 6521

Passcode: Welcome!

\*Must download the [Zoom App](#) prior to joining the link



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

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)



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1-800-866-3002

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Rachel<sup>\*</sup>, SenSura<sup>®</sup> Mio Convex Flip user

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