



AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Affiliate Group #004

# Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

www.clearwaterostomysupportgroup.org

clearwaterostomy@gmail.com

SUPPORT LINE 727-490-9931



Nov 2022

## Next Meeting

**Sat, November 19, 2022**

**Support Meeting 10:30 am**

**The Masonic Lodge**

**1145 Highland Ave NE**

**Largo, FL 33770**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

*Subject to changel*

December 10th—Holiday Party

January 21st— Speaker—Beth Peters

February 18th — Roundtable

Future dates and locations are still to be determined and confirmed.

## the President's Message

Hi Everyone,

Hope to see you all at the November 19th meeting at the Masonic Lodge.

We will be having Millie Parker here to speak about traveling and the TSA. Be sure to bring all your questions to have answered.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Blessings,

*Marilyn*



Our meetings are open to new ostomates, the experienced ostomates, the caregivers, the families, the healthcare workers, the support persons, the nursing students, the social workers and anyone who has a connection with ostomies and would like to join us. We welcome you all!

## TIPS & TRICKS

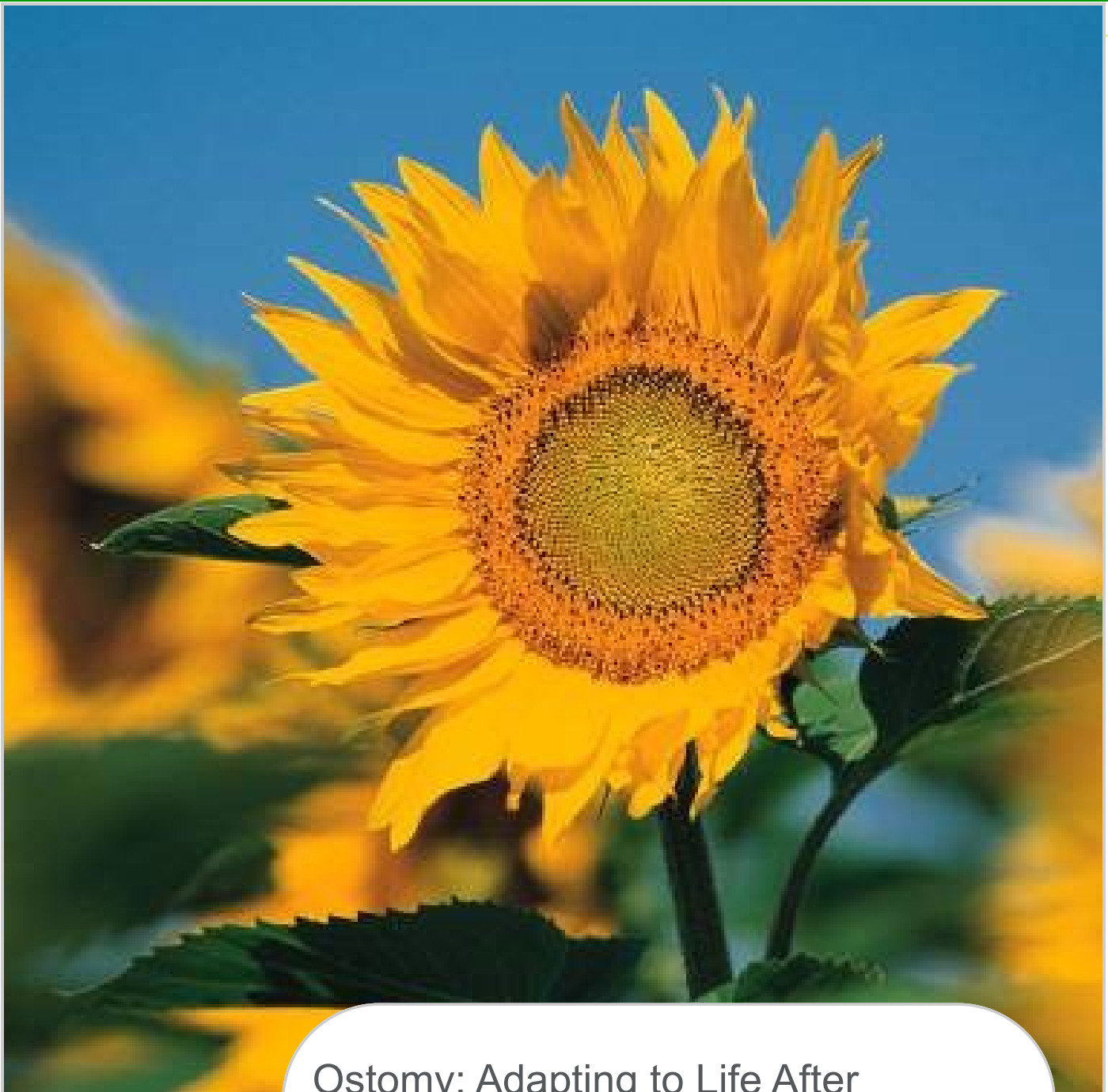
### *Tips for Traveling*

1. Stay hydrated! Stay hydrated! Stay hydrated! There is a no bigger trip spoiler than dehydration.
2. Be handy with pre-cut skin barriers. Pre-cutting them at home will make things handy when you want to change your pouch.
3. Pack extra supplies. Packing extra supplies in your hand bag as well as your luggage (in case the luggage is misplaced) so you are never short of supplies.
4. Make a menu for your trip of what you should eat and what to avoid. Stick to it!
5. Carry a travel communication card issued by the UOAA. It will help you deal with the airline security quickly.
6. Plan the route when traveling by road. You should have an idea of the nearest rest stops so that you can empty or change your pouch.
7. Get an idea of your destination's weather. Adhesiveness of your skin barriers can be affected by warm weather.

### WHEN TO CALL A DOCTOR OR WOC NURSE

1. If cramps last more than two or three hours.
2. If you get a deep cut in your stoma or bleeding at the juncture of the skin and stoma.
3. If you have excessive bleeding from the stoma opening or a moderate amount in the pouch after several times emptying.
4. If you have a strong odor lasting more than a week.
5. If you have severe skin irritation or deep ulcers.
6. If you have severe watery discharge lasting more than five or six hours.
7. If you have an unusual change in the size or appearance of your stoma.





## Ostomy: Adapting to Life After Colostomy, Ileostomy or Urostomy

Learn all you can about life with an ostomy. Use this information to boost your self-esteem and help you adapt to your ostomy.

An Article provided by the Mayo Clinic Staff

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It takes time to become comfortable with an ostomy — a surgically created opening in your abdomen that allows waste or urine to leave your body.

Many questions may run through your mind as you plan your first ventures outside of your home. Can you go back to work after colostomy? Can you ride your bike if you have an ileostomy? Will everyone figure out you've had urostomy surgery just by looking at you?

You can do many of the same activities you enjoyed before your colostomy or other ostomy surgery.

### **You can eat whatever you want if you have an ostomy**

Have a favorite dish? If you've been given the OK from your doctor to resume your regular diet, eat what you like. If you have a colostomy or ileostomy, you'll find that various foods affect your digestive tract differently.

Just as some foods gave you gas before your surgery, you'll likely experience gas with certain foods now that you have an ostomy. While you may choose to eat gas-causing foods sparingly or only at times when the gas won't make you self-conscious — such as when you're at home, rather than at work — it doesn't mean you shouldn't ever eat gas-causing foods.

Certain foods are more likely to cause gas, diarrhea, constipation, incomplete digestion or urine odor. But which ones have these effects will depend on your body.

If you're unsure how foods will affect you, consider trying them at home, one at a time, before eating them in public.

Knowing how each food affects your digestion means you'll spend less time worrying about the food's effects and more time having fun with friends.

It may help to chew your food thoroughly and drink plenty of water.

If you have a urostomy, you might be concerned about urine odor. Certain foods can cause a stronger urine odor, but you can minimize that by drinking water or cranberry juice.

### **You can participate in sports if you have an ostomy**

Unless your favorite hobby is a contact sport with lots of potential for injury, you'll be free to go back to the activities you enjoy after you heal from ostomy surgery. The main danger is injury to the opening where waste or urine leaves your body (stoma), which means rough sports may be out.

If you want to continue these pursuits, ask your doctor or ostomy nurse about special products you can use and precautions you can take to protect your stoma during these activities.

Check with your doctor before you begin lifting weights after your surgery. You may need to wait for your surgical incision to heal before lifting weights, to reduce your risk of complications. Once you're fully healed, your doctor or an ostomy nurse might recommend a device to support your abdomen when lifting weights.

If you're nervous that running, swimming or other athletic activity will loosen your ostomy bag and cause a leak, use a special belt or binder to hold your ostomy bag in place. Check with

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your local medical supply store or look online for specialty products for active people with ostomies.

### **You can go back to work if you have an ostomy**

You'll need time after your surgery to heal and recover, but you can eventually go back to work. You might choose to ease back into work or talk with your employer about a limited schedule until you feel more confident with your ostomy.

If your line of work involves manual labor or lots of lifting, your doctor may recommend ways to protect your stoma on the job.

Once your doctor says you're ready, consider going back to work. If you're nervous about caring for your ostomy at work, talk to your doctor or an ostomy nurse.

Don't let worrying get the best of you. Returning to work is a good way to transition back to a normal routine, and working again can make you feel good about yourself.

### **You can tell - or not tell - whomever you want about your ostomy**

It's up to you to decide who to tell about your ostomy surgery. It may make sense to tell the people closest to you. These people may be worried about your recovery, and explaining your ostomy may ease their fears. Talking with loved ones is also a healthy way to cope with your emotions.

Acquaintances may be curious about why you've been away from work or know that you were in the hospital and ask about your illness. Think ahead

about what to say when questions arise. You could say you've had abdominal surgery or use another basic description without going into details if you're uncomfortable discussing your ostomy with people you don't know well.

Other people will need to know about your ostomy for practical purposes. If you don't have a desk or locker at work to store extra ostomy supplies, for instance, you might need to reveal some details of your ostomy to someone at work so that such arrangements can be made.

Some people keep their ostomy surgery private, and others prefer to tell anyone who asks. Who you tell is up to you, but you may find you're more willing to discuss the details as you become more comfortable caring for your ostomy.

### **You can hide your ostomy**

To you, the ostomy bag attached to you is very obvious. When you look in the mirror, you notice the bag under your clothes. You might think every gurgle and noise coming from your stoma is loud and heard by everyone in the room.

Most people won't notice your ostomy unless you tell them about it. As you get used to your ostomy, you'll figure out tips and ways to keep the bag concealed and the noises to a minimum. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Empty your ostomy bag when it gets to be one-third full. That way it won't bulge under your clothes.

Work with your ostomy nurse to find the ostomy pouching system that works best for you.



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If you're worried about the odor when emptying your ostomy bag, ask your ostomy nurse or visit your medical supply store for pouch deodorants or air sprays to minimize odor.

Ask a close friend or loved one whose opinion you trust whether your ostomy bag is visible under your clothes or if the sounds your ostomy makes are as loud as you think they are. Everyone's body makes noises and produces odors from time to time. While it can be embarrassing, don't let a fear of what could go wrong keep you from going about your day.

### **You can wear whatever you want if you have an ostomy**

No clothing is off-limits if you have an ostomy. However, your individual body contour and your stoma's location may make some clothes less comfortable. For instance, tight waistbands or belts might feel restrictive over your stoma. Be open to experimenting with different styles of clothes.

But don't let your ostomy keep you from wearing tightfitting clothes or even your bathing suit. Look into ostomy swimsuits and trunks, which can be found through specialty retailers.

### **You can go wherever you want if you have an ostomy**

It will take some pre-trip planning, but having an ostomy shouldn't prevent you from traveling. If you'll be traveling by airplane, bring extra ostomy supplies and pack them in both your carry-on and checked bags.

Consider carrying a statement from your doctor about your ostomy. This note might explain why you have an ostomy

and ask airport security screeners to respect your privacy during searches.

### **You can have sex and intimate relationships if you have an ostomy**

You'll need time to recover after surgery. And depending on what type of ostomy surgery you have, you may experience some temporary sexual side effects, such as erectile dysfunction or vaginal dryness. But sexual intimacy can continue after you have an ostomy.

If you feel less attractive with your ostomy, take your return to intimacy slowly. Maybe you aren't ready to have sex right away. Discuss this with your partner. Suggest starting with touching and kissing. Your partner can help make you feel more comfortable and reassure you that you are just as attractive with an ostomy.

Take steps before intimacy to feel more confident. Empty and clean your ostomy pouch. Check the seal to make sure it's tight. Use an opaque pouch or try a pouch cover. Lingerie and cummerbunds made to conceal a pouch or hold it in place are available from specialty retailers. Ask your ostomy nurse about companies that sell these products.

Certain aspects of sex may change with an ostomy. You might find that some sexual positions put pressure on your ostomy and are uncomfortable. Experiment with new positions, such as lying on your side.

People with ostomies who are dating often worry about when to tell new companions about their ostomies. That's up to you. Some people feel more comfortable getting it out in the open right away, while others want to

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get to know and trust a potential partner first. Do what feels right for you. Know that rejection is possible and give a new partner time to consider what an ostomy means to your relationship. Answer questions openly and honestly.

### Talk to others with ostomies

Get in touch with other people with ostomies — they sometimes refer to themselves as ostomates. Whether it's a support group in your community or online, getting advice from people who've been there is a great way to boost your confidence. You can ask questions that you might be embarrassed to ask your doctor or nurse. And you can get tips to help you adapt to life with an ostomy.

Reference: "Ostomy: Adapting to Life After Colostomy, Ileostomy or Urostomy," *Mayo Clinic*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 28 July 2022, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/colon-cancer/in-depth/ostomy/art-20045825>.

***IMPORTANT NOTICE:*** *Articles and information printed in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Clearwater Ostomy Support Group and may not be applicable to everyone. Please consult your doctor or Nurse for the medical advice that is best for you*



It's membership renewal time! Attached is the Annual Membership paperwork.

Membership is open to all people with ostomies, as well as those with incontinent, intestinal, or urinary diversions. Family members, friends, and professionals are also encouraged to join.

Membership includes our monthly newsletter and access to medical professionals, the ostomy.org website and the latest product information and samples.

Annual dues are \$20.00 and membership dues are tax deductible.



# Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

**October 2022 It's Renewal Time !!! October 2023**

Membership in the Clearwater Ostomy Support Group (COSG) is open to all people with ostomies, as well as those with incontinent, intestinal, or urinary diversions. Family members, friends, and professionals are also encouraged to join. Membership includes our monthly newsletter and access to medical professionals, the [www.ostomy.org](http://www.ostomy.org) website and the latest product information and samples. Annual dues are \$20.00 and **membership dues are tax deductible**. Memberships renew annually in October.

The Board of Directors is making efforts to have an accurate accounting of all members. Please fill out both sides of the form and mail to the address below. **Your thoughts and comments are important to running this group.**

PLEASE PRINT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate (other) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Classification – Procedure (circle all that apply)

Ileostomy    Colostomy    Urostomy    Continent Diversion    J-Pouch

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: Self    Spouse    Family Member    Parent    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$20.00 for membership in the Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (tax deductible donation)

\_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed

Please make checks payable to **COSG #004**. Mail form along with the payment to:

**COSG #004  
ATTN: JoAnn Barr  
106 Cedar Elm Dr.  
Safety Harbor, FL 34695**



# Annual Membership Additional Information

How would you like to receive your newsletter?  Mail  E-mail (e-mail helps to reduce costs of printing and postage)

Would you like a reminder before each meeting?  Yes  No If so, how would you like to be contacted?  
(Choose one)  E-mail  Primary Phone  Other Phone

Are you interested in having the meetings on a different day of the week and time  Yes  No

If so, what is your preferred day and time \_\_\_\_\_

In future meetings with speakers, are there any topics that you would like to hear about?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have talents ... and would you like to volunteer? We have many ways that you can participate (check as many as you have interest in):

Help check in at the meetings

Social Media (Facebook, etc.)

Calling for reminder calls

Greeters for meetings

Find speakers for meetings

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please note that all information provided is kept confidential and your name and address will NOT be shared.

**Thank you for supporting the COSG!**

COSG 4804  
ATTN: JoAnn Barr  
100 Cedar Elm Dr.  
Safety Harbor, FL 34695

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*Lots of information can be found at the United Ostomy Association of America website.*



UOAA's Main Website -  
[www.ostomy.org](http://www.ostomy.org)

UOAA Discussion Board -  
[www.uoaa.org/forum](http://www.uoaa.org/forum)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/UOAA](https://www.facebook.com/UOAA)

Twitter: [Twitter.com/UOAA](https://twitter.com/UOAA)

Phoenix Ostomy Magazine:  
<https://phoenixuoaa.org/my-account/>

Keep Hydrated!

Keep Hydrated!

Keep Hydrated!

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VACANT

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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for lots of great information and some humor.



<https://www.facebook.com/clearwaterostomysupoSrtgroup/>



[https://twitter.com/clwtrostomy\\_grp](https://twitter.com/clwtrostomy_grp)



## Need Emergency Ostomy Help?



Lila Watkins at Bay Breeze RX has graciously set up a beautiful private room where she can see people and help them with problems they may be having with their ostomy.

Bay Breeze RX is located at 3350 East Bay Drive. Largo, FL 33771  
P: 727-614-9933 | [www.baybreezerx.com](http://www.baybreezerx.com)

**We'd love to see you at the next meeting!! Everyone is welcome!!**

COSG #004  
12931 88th Ave. North  
Seminole, FL 33776

## Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix magazine provides answers to the many challenges of living with an ostomy. From skin care to nutrition to intimacy, in-depth articles are written by medical professionals, ostomy experts and experienced ostomates. Subscriptions directly fund the services of the United Ostomy Associations of America.

Your satisfaction is guaranteed and your personal information will never be disclosed to a third party.

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**Payable to:** The Phoenix magazine, P.O. Box 3605, Mission Viejo, CA 92690

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