



AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Affiliate Group #004

# Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

www.clearwaterostomysupportgroup.org

clearwaterostomy@gmail.com

SUPPORT LINE 727-490-9931



**AUGUST 2023**

## Next Meeting

**Sat, August 19, 2023  
Is cancelled**

**Support Meeting 10:30 am**

**The Masonic Lodge**

**1145 Highland Ave NE**

**Largo, FL 33770**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**2023 MEETING SCHEDULE**

*Subject to changel*

**September 16th**

**October 21st**

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

## the President's Message

Hi Everyone,

This month's meeting had to be cancelled due to personal matters. We will be picking back up in September. The next meeting will be September 16th. Be sure to bring all of your questions regarding your ostomy. We encourage that all ostomates, family members, support persons and caregivers attend.

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

### *10 Commandments for Ostomates*

1. Thou shall allow thyself to be sad, or angry, or depressed on occasion. Who said that you always have to have a good attitude!
2. Thou shall not let the above emotions become a way of life.
3. Thou shall seek help, education and support if thine unhappy emotions overcome thee.
4. Thou shall learn to care for thy ostomy. Letting others do it for you if you are physically able is a copout!
5. Thou shall seek out thy Wound Ostomy Care (WOC) Nurse if thou art not satisfied with thine products.
6. Thou shall not hide thyself away Get out and do the things you used to do. You can!
7. Thou shall not be ashamed!
8. Thou shall cultivate a sense of humor about thine ostomy. There are worse things.
9. Thou shall set an example to the non-ostomy world. An example of triumph over adversity, courage over pity and pride over embarrassment.
10. Thou shall help other ostomates. Join your local UOAA group, volunteer your time. Plenty of volunteer opportunities within your group!

### 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.



**Handy Reference Numbers You Should Have!**

**Ostomy Product Manufacturers:**

- Coloplast..... 800-533-0464
- ConvaTec ..... 800-422-8811
- Cymed ..... 800-582-0707
- Dansac..... 800-538-0890
- Genairex ..... 877-726-4400
- Hollister ..... 888-470-8999
- Marlen Manufacturing..... 216-292-7060
- Nu Hope Lab ..... 818-899-7711
- Ostaway x-Bag ..... 800-774-6097
- Ostomy Secrets ..... 800-518-8515
- Torbot ..... 800-545-4254
- C&S Pouch Covers..... 877-754-9913
- Coloplast Cares (Advisor)..... 877-858-2056

**Ostomy Product Distributors:**

- American Ostomy Supply ..... 800-858-5858
- Bruce Medical Supply ..... 800-225-8446
- Byram Healthcare ..... 877-902-9726
- Edgepark Supplies ..... 800-321-0591
- Liberator Supplies..... 866-761-0534
- Medical Care Products ..... 866-761-0534
- Ostomy Care Supply ..... 866-207-5909
- Parthenon ..... 800-453-8898
- SGV ..... 800-395-6099
- Shield Healthcare ..... 800-675-8847
- TOTAL eMedical..... 800-809-9806
- UOAA..... 800-826-0826



## Factors that Affect Ostomy Function

**Ostomy function may be changed by a variety of medications and medical treatments. (Check with your doctor before taking any medications.)**

**The following are examples:**

**Antibiotics** often cause diarrhea, even in patients without an ostomy. Make sure your doctor knows about your ostomy, and inform him/her of problems as they occur. Drink plenty of liquids that will help maintain your electrolyte balance if diarrhea strikes.

**Pain Medications** are often constipating. Extra irrigations or laxatives or stool softeners might be required for colostomates to combat the side effects of pain medications. Perhaps the dosage of pain reliever may be reduced to eliminate the situation. Again,, be sure to drink plenty of liquids.

**Chemotherapy**—Many cancer patients have follow-up chemotherapy after surgery or as an alternative to surgery. That often produces nausea

and/or vomiting. You need to drink fluids that help you maintain your body chemistry balance.

**Radiation Therapy** often produces the same effects as chemotherapy.

**Travel** may cause constipation in some people and diarrhea in others. Be aware that these are possibilities. Altered diet, when traveling, accounts for some of this plus the excitement of new surroundings. Allow sufficient time for irrigations and take along an antidiarrhea medication.

**Antacids** may cause diarrhea—usually those with magnesium. There are many fine new products on the market. Find out which is best for you.

**Drink plenty of liquids.** You need to maintain your electrolyte balance in case of diarrhea. Tea, orange juice and even Coca Cola are sources of potassium. Bouillon cubes mixed in hot water are a source of sodium. Remember that some of the signs of electrolyte imbalance are irritability, nausea and drowsiness.

## INNIES AND OUTIES

### WHAT IS CONVEXITY?

A convex skin barrier looks like a small volcano. It is used to “bud” a stoma in order to make a better spout and reduce leaking. It is also used to fill in the gaps around a stoma and thus prevent leaking. Does your skin barrier leak daily or every other day? Sometimes a goal is to have at least a three-day wear time. Convexity in the skin barrier may help achieve this goal.

There are many reasons for pouch leaks. One common reason is that the product one is washing the skin around the stoma with may have an oily or greasy residue on it. This residue will interfere with skin barrier adhesion. Commonly used offenders are baby wipes. Do not use baby wipes on peristomal skin. These are manufactured to leave an oily residue on the skin, like to protect the skin on the bottom of a baby. My personal love for washing around the stoma is warm water. How dirty does the peristomal skin become anyway?

Another reason for leaks may be that

you are wearing your skin barrier too long. If you find that it starts to leak the fifth day you have it on, it would seem prudent to change it no later than day four. If a pouch is not emptied often enough, this will also lead to leaks. Try to empty your pouch at least when it reaches 1/4 to 1/2 full. In addition, does the pouch “rock off” the skin barrier? This means through vigorous activities, like banding and twisting, does the pouch start to pop off the flange on a two-piece system. Very active people often prefer using a one-piece pouching system to eliminate this from occurring.

If you rule out the above reasons and still have frequent leaks, you may want to consider convexity. Do you have a flush or retracted stoma? If so, can you put a finger on either side of the stoma, press in and see if the stoma “buds” or protrudes a bit. If one of the new barrier seals will help, like a ConvaTec Eakin Seal or Genairex Conformable Seals. What happens to the tummy as one sits up? Look at the

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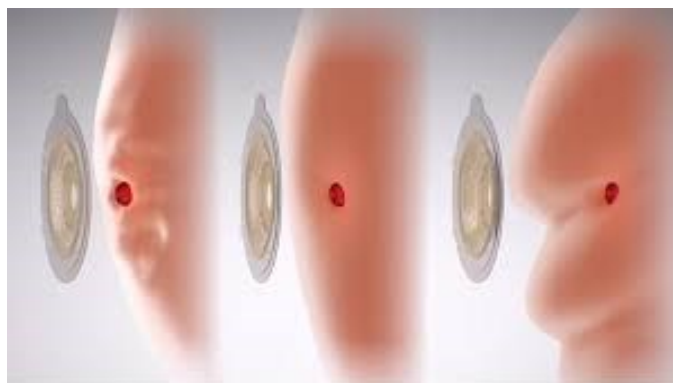
stoma when you are sitting down as well as when you stand up with a mirror, in order to see what it does. Is the stoma sitting in a crevice or canyon? Try flattening the surrounding tissue with your hand and see what happens to the stoma. Does this help the stoma look more like a spout? Your ostomy nurse can help you with this examination and assessment to determine if you would benefit from a convex pouching system. There are different types of convexity. One type is firm and another type is flexible. Firm convexity may be best for the “jelly bellies” and the flexible convexity best for “firm bellies”. If you put firm convexity on a firm belly, it may rock off.

Then there is deep convexity and shallow convexity. Deep convexity looks like a high volcano. The top of the volcano goes against the skin. Shallow convexity looks like a molehill. The type of convexity depends on how concave the tissue is around the stoma.

Some people may need to add a belt to keep the skin barrier hugging the stoma. The belt should be snug, but not too tight. An Ostomy belt that is too tight or skin barriers with too much convexity are actually able to cause an injury due

to the pressure ulcer on the tissue around the stoma. Damaged skin would look pink to purple and may even have a pressure sore on it. If this happens, one should discontinue to convex pouch, use a flat pouch and see your healthcare provider or an ostomy nurse.

**If you need assistance with evaluating the need to change your pouch, change the convexity of your current pouching system, or to solve leaking issues, please schedule a free appointment with the Ostomy Clinic at the Bay Breeze RX in Largo. You can contact Lila Watkins at 727-744-2660 to schedule an appointment.**



***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

## CLEARWATER OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

*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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Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses (WOC) 462-7243

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



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## Need Emergency Ostomy Help?



Bay Breeze RX is a proud sponsor of the Angel Closet in affiliation with the Clearwater Ostomy Support Group. The Closet offers free supplies for all types

of Ostomy and wound care. Bay Breeze also provides consultation services by appointment. These services are offered by Karen Burdewick BSN, RN, CWOCN at no charge.

Appointments can be made directly with Lila Jane at 727-744-2660. **Bay Breeze RX** is located at 3350 East Bay Drive. Largo, FL 33771. [www.baybreezerx.com](http://www.baybreezerx.com)

COSG #004

12931 88th Avenue  
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.

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