



AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Affiliate Group #004

Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

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clearwaterostomy@gmail.com

SUPPORT LINE 727-490-9931



May 2023

Next Meeting

Sat, May 20, 2023

Support Meeting 10:30 am

The Masonic Lodge

1145 Highland Ave NE

Largo, FL 33770

UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

Subject to changel

June 17th—Michael Baldwin (Hollister)

July 15th

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

the President's Message

Hi Everyone,

This month we will be having our Roundtable discussions. Be sure to bring all of your issues and questions regarding your ostomy. We encourage that all ostomates, family members, support persons and caregivers attend. The Roundtable discussions can provide valuable information to new and long-term ostomates.

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

Ostomy Tips

Life can become difficult after undergoing colostomy surgery. The fact is that the learning curve for people who have gone through ostomy surgery is pretty steep.

1. Avoid Backsplash

If emptying your bag causes a splash of toilet water, it might be best that you flush it while emptying. To prevent backsplash, you need to empty into the bowl. Another useful technique that you can use is sitting on the toilet backwards. You can lay out some toilet paper over the toilet seat. Thus, you will be able to empty down directly onto the paper rather than into the water.

2. Remove Hair around the Stoma

Next, you need to remove the hair around the stoma. It is common for most people to have some hair on their abdomen. Not only would the hair impede but it would also get pulled when you remove the appliance.

3. Change during an Empty Stomach

The best time for you to change is when you first get up in the morning. Output would be slow if you have not eaten for a long time.

4. Change after Taking a Shower

A great time to change the appliance is when you take a shower. You can easily remove the appliance while you are standing in the bathtub. Then, you can take a shower without a bag. Once you are done taking a shower, you can attach a new appliance.

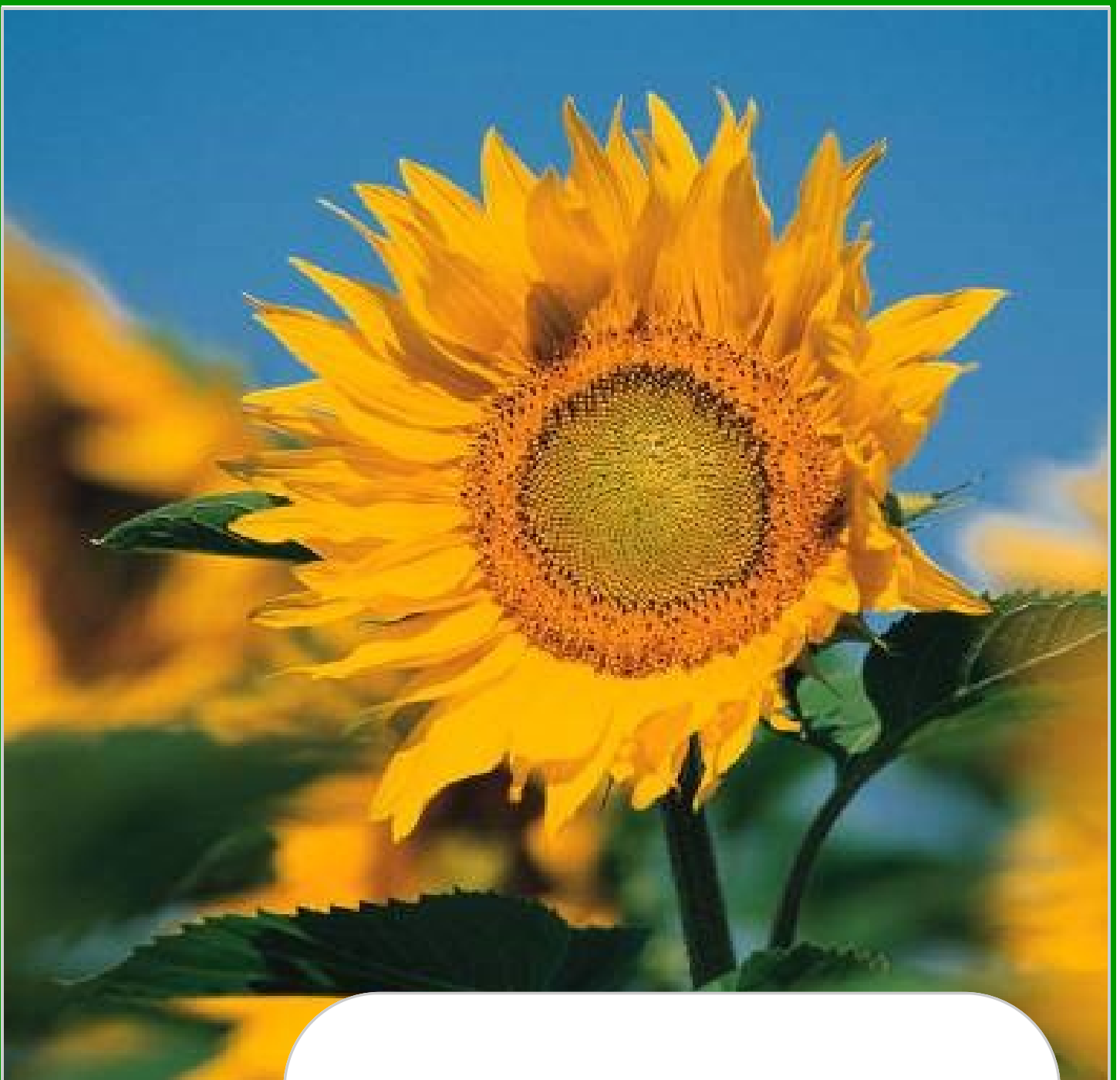
5. Rinse out the Appliance

Finally, you have to rinse out the appliance using clean water. Clean the appliance whenever it is convenient for you. When you regularly clean the inside of the appliance, it will help ensure that there are no solids clinging to the inside. Squirt some clean water inside the appliance using a dropper, syringe, or squeezable bottle.

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.





How Do You Sleep With an Ostomy Bag?



A good night's sleep is an important part of recovery after colostomy, ileostomy, or urostomy surgery. Yet adjusting your sleep patterns with an ostomy bag will take some time and patience, especially in the early days. Fortunately, with some simple bedtime modifications, you can still enjoy a restful night of restorative sleep. Try these steps to help you sleep soundly with an ostomy bag. Learning to live with your ostomy pouch shouldn't necessitate major adjustments to your lifestyle. Here are a few tips that will help you get the sleep you need:

Empty the Bag Before Going to Bed.

Immediately before you slip into bed, empty the contents of your ostomy pouch. This prevents the bag from

becoming overly filled during the night. Also, make sure the pouch fits tightly over the stoma. A loose-fitting pouch could lead to a nighttime leak.

Don't Eat Prior to Bedtime.

Consuming a heavy meal just before bedtime will make your stoma more active and could possibly lead to frequent drainages during the night. Instead, prepare a light dinner for the early evening, or eat at least two hours before going to sleep.

Find a Comfortable Sleep Position.

You likely won't have to change your sleeping position following the ostomy surgery. The recommended sleeping posture is either on your back or side. For side sleepers, resting on your ostomy side shouldn't be a problem. If you want to sleep on



the opposite side, place your pouch on a pillow so the bag isn't weighed down and pulling away from your abdomen as it fills. People who are used to sleeping on their stomach can still do so with some minor adjustments, such as nestling a pillow under their bent stoma-side knee to create a gap between the pouch and the mattress. That way, your stoma and pouch aren't squeezed beneath your body.

Know When to Empty Your Pouch.

Initially, you may have to set an alarm to remind yourself to empty your pouch. As you heal and adapt to your ostomy, your body may naturally alert you when it's time to drain the pouch. And if you drain it

before bedtime, you may not need to discharge the waste until the early morning.

Secure Your Pouch.

Wear an ostomy belt or wrap to keep your pouch snug, but not too tight, on your abdomen during the night. Don't wear tight-fitting pajamas that will restrict the flow into the pouch. If you find your nighttime output is heavy, consider using a nighttime drainage bag.

Prevent Leaks.

Unfortunately, despite your best efforts, you may experience an occasional leak. In the case of an unexpected leak, have your ostomy supplies, a change of bedtime clothes, and sheets nearby. You can

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also protect your mattress by placing a pad on the bed to absorb any leakage. If you notice your nighttime output continues to be excessive and interrupts your sleep frequently, talk to your doctor about medications that could reduce the amount of waste draining into the pouch.

Ensure you're using the right stoma bag for you.

Making sure you're using the right stoma bag for you is important for all areas of life, not just sleeping. However, ensuring you're using the right bag for you can help to reduce anxiety and significantly improve your quality of sleep.

Make sure your stoma bag is on properly.

Our next top tip may sound like a really obvious one, but it's really important to make sure that your stoma bag is in place properly before you go to bed!

Getting seven hours of sleep each night is an important part of the healing process.

Other sleeping tips you can try...

Of course, there are a huge number of things you can try to help improve your quality of sleep, all of which apply to everyone not just ostomates! Some of the main sleep tips to try include:

- Try to go to sleep and get up at the same time every day
- Reduce blue light exposure in the evening
- Don't consume caffeine late in the day
- Reduce irregular or long daytime naps

- Reduce alcohol intake
- Optimize your bedroom environment – including temperature, lighting, and cleanliness
- Relax and try to clear your mind
- Have a warm bath or shower before you go to bed
- If needed, invest in a more comfortable mattress and/or pillows

It's worth bearing in mind that everybody is different and what works for some people won't work for others. As time goes by, you will settle into a routine that works for you.



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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

UOAA Discussion Board -
www.uoaa.org/forum

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

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

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Need Emergency Ostomy Help?



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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

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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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