



AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Affiliate Group #004

Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

www.clearwaterostomysupportgroup.org

clearwaterostomy@gmail.com

SUPPORT LINE 727-490-9931



NOVEMBER 2023

Next Meeting

Saturday, November 18, 2023

Support Meeting 10:30 am

The Masonic Lodge

1145 Highland Ave NE

Largo, FL 33770

UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

Subject to changel

December 16—Luncheon

January 20th

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

the President's Message

Hi Everyone,

This month we will be visited by Dan White to discuss Medicare Advantage plans (Medicare Supplement—Part D plans) as we are currently in the annual enrollment period. Be sure to bring all of your questions. Also, it is membership renewal time too! Complete the application and return it at your next meeting!

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 and Tricks for Ostomates

1. **Learn About Your Ostomy Bag.** The first step in adjusting to life with an ostomy bag is educating yourself on what it is and how it works. Ostomy bags are medical devices that collect waste from the body after an ostomy.
2. **Explore the Different Types of Ostomy Bags.** Next, you'll want to explore the different types of ostomy bags available to you. Oftentimes, the one you choose is purely based on personal preference, so don't be afraid to try a few out and see which one works best.
3. **Understand How Your Stoma Changes.** After an ostomy, your stoma will undergo a period of change as the swelling subsides and it settles into your body. This usually means that it will shrink and may change color or shape.
4. **Find Healthy Ways to Cope with Emotional Challenges of an Ostomy.** Living with an ostomy can bring many emotional challenges, including anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. Feeling overwhelmed and uncertain about managing these challenges is natural, but many resources are available to help individuals cope.
5. **Learn How to Regain Your Confidence.** Another important aspect of coping with emotional challenges is finding ways to regain confidence. This can be achieved by finding ways to minimize the appearance of your ostomy bag, taking measures to ensure that you don't experience ostomy odor, and surrounding yourself with loved ones who will encourage you to stay positive.
6. **Join an Ostomy Support Group.** Support groups are another valuable resource after you've undergone ostomy surgery. These groups provide a sense of community, understanding, practical advice, and emotional support.
7. **Learn the Truth About Physical Limitations.** The initial physical limitations can be a significant challenge for new ostomates, but that doesn't mean you can't do everything you once loved. You just have to be a little more careful when doing it.
8. **Read Up on Ostomy Myths.** Educate yourself!

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.



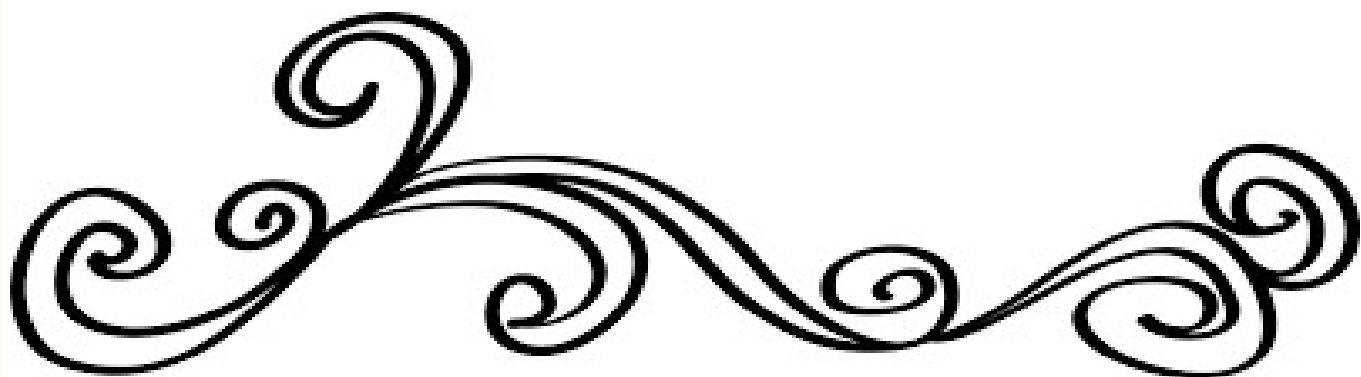
Handy Reference Numbers You Should Have!

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



Ostomy Information Just for You

By Colorectal Cancer Alliance

Nutrition with an Ostomy

Start Small. Ease your way back to proper nutrition with small quantities of food. Experts recommend eating three or more times per day in smaller quantities and portions. Try to eat meals at the same time each day to help regulate bowel movements. Eating more frequently and in smaller quantities, and with adequate liquids, will help aid your body's ability to process food and help with unnecessary gas.

For the first several weeks after your surgery, eating simple and bland soft foods will be easier to digest. Keep in mind that chewing your food well also adds to the ease of digestion – the more broken up it is, the easier it will be to process. Take your time with introducing high-fiber foods back into your diet, as these may be harder to digest and can cause blockages. Ileostomates are often encouraged to avoid high-fiber foods to prevent risk of obstruction, yet fiber is important to CRC prevention - start small and gradually increase and be sure to drink water throughout the day! Always follow the advice of your medical team or dietitian regarding any dietary restrictions

right after surgery or on a long-term basis.

If you are trying new foods, start them slowly and one at a time. This will help you to have a better understanding of how your body works with the new foods and if any will cause excess gas, constipation, strange odors, or diarrhea. Slowly incorporate them into your diet and make note of how your body responds to them. Remember that everybody is different, and what affects someone else may not affect you in the same way. This is why it can be helpful to keep a journal or diary of how your body responds to different foods. Foods that you have decided to eliminate today - because of gas, bloating or constipation/diarrhea, may be tolerated a few weeks down the road... be patient and re-try foods in small amounts to see how well things adjust. Keep in mind some foods may continue to be a problem long-term.

Consider problem foods. Even though you can still enjoy most of the foods you loved before surgery, there are some foods to be aware of after your ostomy, specifically foods that are

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hard on digestion and can cause blockages. These are some common foods that may cause intestinal symptoms:

- Nuts
- Seeds
- Popcorn and corn
- Dried fruit
- Mushrooms
- Raw-crunchy vegetables

1 Eat these foods in small quantities, at least at first, until it is clear what symptoms may appear. Be sure to chew thoroughly and drink plenty of water with them. If you think you have a food blockage, you should call your doctor or ostomy nurse. Having an ostomy certainly doesn't mean you have to completely change your diet. By steering clear of problem foods and making sure to stay hydrated, you can get back to enjoying the foods you love.

2 If you're unsure how foods will affect you, consider trying them at home one at a time before eating them out in public. Knowing how each food affects your digestion means you'll spend less time worrying and more time having fun with friends.

3 Hydration with an Ostomy

4 What is dehydration? The term dehydration means a significant loss of bodily fluids. Patients can develop dehydration from treatments and treatment side effects. Dehydration symptoms range from mild to moderate to more severe depending on how much fluid is lost and not replaced. Severe dehydration could be a life-threatening condition.

5 What are common causes of dehydration? Most common causes of dehydration in cancer patients:

1. Fever
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Frequent urination
5. Sweating and night sweats
6. Limited eating or drinking due to nausea, mouth sores, difficulty swallowing, and digestive problems.

How to prevent dehydration:

1. Sip water or ice chips throughout the day
2. Choose drinks that contain electrolytes (low-sugar varieties of sports drinks, such as Gatorade or Powerade)
3. Try water infused with fresh fruit for added flavor and nutrients - berries, citrus, etc.
4. Increase water intake prior to cancer treatments or procedures.

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5. Increase water and fluid intake if you live in a warm/hot climate or before/during exercise.

Symptoms of dehydration:

1. Extreme thirst (but not always, so be careful)
2. Dry mouth
3. Taut, dry skin
4. Headache
5. Less frequent urination
6. Darker urine
7. Irritability

Physical Activity for Ostomates

Exercise is one of the healthiest things for the body- ostomates included. Find out more about how to ease back into workouts, some suggested physical activities, and some abdomen specific exercises to help build up the core. Exercise can accelerate recovery, strengthen your heart, boost blood flow, enhance balance and flexibility, boost self-confidence, increase energy, and is a major stress buster (one of the Top 10).

Easing into it

1. Be sure to confirm with your doctor before you start exercising.
2. Too much physical activity can increase the risk for hernias. Muscles around the stoma that support it are a bit weaker after surgery.
3. Avoid lifting more than 8lbs., especially for the first six weeks after surgery.
4. Ostomy support belts are highly

recommended when lifting or using abdominal muscles.

5. Helpful tip to avoid hernia- keep weight in check and monitor.
6. Always speak with a medical team (especially a surgeon) before trying any abdomen exercise or activities that could risk straining the area.
7. Walking is the most effective (and easiest) exercise for healing.
8. If dealing with a perineal wound, your body needs plenty of time for healing. Exercise is still a possibility, just keep in mind that just about any lower body movement and the wound could be affected. It will be tender (more than the incision) but will become resilient with time.
9. If something is hurting- STOP. Listening to your body is very important.
10. Work on a gradual build up- start slow and easy.
11. Hydrate! Before, during, and after exercise, make sure to be drinking plenty of fluids (ORS recipes on this page).
12. If at any time you experience lightheadedness- STOP!
13. Empty bag before any exercise or activity.

Suggested Activities: Always check with a healthcare professional before trying specific sports and fitness activities. Gaining an understanding of your body after surgery and how it responded is so important. If the healthcare team approves, you can try almost any type of exercise (even swimming). Be sure to communicate about contact sports (e.g. soccer or rugby) and activities that involve

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bending (e.g.aerobics or bowling).

Some recommended activities are walking, biking, swimming, and yoga. Team sports are another option, but with caution.

WALKING

Start by walking. Can start soon after surgery. Slowly increase the distance and time over time.

BIKING

Biking can be a healthy choice as long as the surgeon approves. They may have you wait until your abdomen and the surrounding area have healed completely before you can start. With its low impact and light strain on the abdomen, this can be an amazing activity. *If the anus has been removed, the healing time will take longer and you may need to wait longer before biking.

SWIMMING

The water is supporting your weight which gives your muscles a nice workout without much risk of injury. This also helps with flexibility. *Look to see if the flange/wafer has a barrier that is waterproof. If not, options like Sure Seal or Brava Strips help "waterproof" your ostomy device. If using Sure Seal, remove it directly after swimming or it can cause irritation. Make sure the water did not damage the flange or create a leakage issue. Bring extra supplies with you for backups. If using a pouch with a filter, use an ostomy filter sticker to cover.

YOGA

Helps to reduce stress, improve balance, improve breathing, and strengthen muscles. Incision sites and abdominal muscles should be fully healed before attempting (and with any exercise, check with surgeon and medical team that you

are ready) since yoga and pilates uses lots of core strength. Make your own pace, don't rush. Many yoga teachers will understand. It is up to you if you want to tell anyone about your ostomy, including the teacher. Many ostomates that exercise wear tight-fitting layers and/or wraps to help keep their bag in place. Also, many skin barriers used on stomas are water-resistant and should stay adhered to your skin during movement and sweating.

TEAM SPORTS

As always, check with the surgeon. Competitive sports can put a strain on your body, so it is important that you are fit and in shape before you take part. Make sure your pouch is empty before starting. Some people also wear close-fitted waistbands or girdles to keep their pouch securely in place. For sports such as football, rugby, wrestling, or kung fu, there are protective stoma guards that can help prevent injury. ALWAYS inspect stoma after participating in heavy activity. If any injuries occur, contact your medical team.

Abdomen Specific Exercises

These activities are specific to help recover and restore muscle strength in your abdomen. These exercises should be possible for those with an ostomy. However, if you are feeling concerned about doing the exercises, talk to your surgeon/medical team before starting.

TUMMY TIGHTENING BREATHING

When to start: within days after your surgery. You may even be able to begin in in the hospital, with doctor approval and recovery is normal.

How to do it: Lie on back, support your head (a pillow works best) and bend your knees as far as you can. Breathe in deep and slow through your nose and exhale

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through mouth. While exhaling, be aware of your deep, lower abdomen muscles and gently tighten them (you should be able to feel the "tightening"). Do not push head back into pillow, or lift your bottom. Hold position for 3-5 seconds- release. Breathe, relax, repeat. Do this 3-5 times. With progression, you should be able to remove the pillow and try using stronger tightening motions. Hold, count to 10, moving up to 15 as you progress. Breathe deep and repeat 2-3 times. Use your hands to feel your muscles tighten by placing them on your abdomen.

PELVIC TILT

When to start: Within days of surgery. Make sure to start slow and use gentle movements. Stay within a small pain-free range.

How to do it: Lie on back, support your head (a pillow works best) and bend your knees as far as you can. Using gentle motions, rock pelvis up and make sure back is flat on floor (or bed). You should be able to feel your abdomen and glutes muscles tighten. Rock yourself back into starting position- repeat. Start with 5 repetitions and take it slow. With progression, arch your back and use stronger tightening motions in the abdomen while pushing back into floor. Try this 2-3x daily and work up to 20 repetitions.

Care and Pain Management for Ostomates

Cleaning Stomas

If possible, clean stoma while showering. Have your supplies set out and ready before you remove your bag. Wash around stoma with warm water. Try to stay away from soaps and baby wipes, they leave a residue on the skin that can obstruct the adhesion of the barrier, or cause dermatitis. If soap is necessary, use soap without oils in it and make sure

to thoroughly rinse the area. If you are insistent on using more than just water to clean the peristomal area, only use products that are made specific for ostomy care (such as skin wipes). If the area around your stoma has excess hair, shaving around the area can help, especially during barrier removal. This also can help prevent folliculitis (inflammation of the hair follicles).

Equation for keeping peristomal area healthy: FIT + FORMULATION = HEALTHY PERISTOMAL SKIN. This is where using the correct device for your body and making sure the wafer has been measured to your stoma will protect your skin and reduce the risk of leakage.

Crusting Technique

1. Start with a clean and dry peristomal area. If you have residue from stoma paste or barrier rings, use an ostomy adhesive remover to remove it- do not scrub. Scrubbing will aggravate the already irritated skin.
2. Lightly dust the peristomal area with stoma powder, making sure to especially cover the irritated skin. You do not put powder on the stoma itself, but if some get on your stoma, it will not hurt it. Brush off the extra powder.
3. Use an ostomy-specific skin barrier wipe or spray and gently pat it on the powder. The skin barrier is what adheres the powder to the skin. Wait around 10-15 seconds (or until dry) and repeat steps 1 & 2. This will form a protective "crust" to help shield the irritated areas. Do this for about 4 layers to ensure you are creating a safeguard for your skin. Once completely dry, proceed to attach your device as normal.

If you are dealing with a rash and the crusting method is not working, you may be dealing with a yeast infection and you should contact your ostomy nurse/

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medical team.

Blockages

Signs of blockage: output is a clear, thin liquid with repugnant odor; feelings of cramping near the stoma; swelling of the stoma/abdomen; and lighter urine/decrease in darker urine.

STEP 1: AT HOME

1. Create a larger opening in your pouch for your stoma to be able to expand without barriers.
2. If you are still having an output and you are not experiencing nausea or vomiting, only drink liquids such as sports drinks or tea.
3. Taking a warm bath can help relax the muscles around the stoma.
4. Try moving around, using positions like knee-to-chest, possibly moving the blockage.
5. Gently massage the area around the stoma and abdomen. Try pulling your knees to your chest, as it helps to increase the pressure behind the blockage. Most blockages from food happen just below the stoma.

STEP 2: IF STILL BLOCKED, DEALING WITH NO OUTPUT, OR VOMITING FOR SEVERAL HOURS: STOP ALL FLUIDS AND FOODS.

1. Call your medical team (doctor or WOC Nurse). Let them know what is happening and what you've tried to do and report what is happening and what you tried at home to ease the problem. They will give you instructions on what to do next. If ER is necessary, your doctor can call in your care orders.
2. If you are unable to reach your medical team and your stoma is not outputting anything, go to ER immediately.

3. It is important that you take your ostomy supplies with you.

WHEN TO GO TO THE ER:

If you are dealing with an ileostomy obstruction you will have no output from your stoma, pain/cramping of the abdomen, nausea/vomiting, swelling of the stoma, swelling in the abdomen, and faint or absent sounds of the bowel.

Nausea/Vomiting

Electrolyte imbalance is common for those who have had their large intestine removed. This risk can also increase when sweating, vomiting, or dealing with diarrhea. Keeping electrolytes balanced are very important. Try Oral Rehydration Solution recipes to keep hydrated and balanced.

Sodium loss can also be an issue. Signs are: loss of appetite, leg cramping, and drowsiness. If low on potassium, signs are: fatigue, short breath, and muscle weakness. Being dehydrated and having low sodium and/or low potassium needs immediate attention. Keeping hydrated with electrolytes is important to avoid these issues.

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

October 2023 - It's Renewal Time !!!

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 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



We need your help with some positions within our Ostomy Support Group. Volunteering for these positions will help our organization run more smoothly. None of these positions require a substantial time commitment from you, but each is an important role.

Before volunteering for a position, we thought you might like to know which positions we really need filled and their role within the organization.

- ◆ Vice-President—serves as a back up to the President when needed. Will need to regularly communicate with President to ensure you are up to date on organization details.
- ◆ Secretary—serves to take notes during Board of Director meeting. The meetings occur prior to the Support Group meeting on the 3rd Saturday of the month as needed.
- ◆ Raffle Coordinator—conducts the 50/50 raffle ticket sales prior to the Support Group meetings on the 3rd Saturday of the month. Counts monies received and ensures appropriate transfer of funds to Treasurer.
- ◆ Speaker Coordinator—provides ideas on different speaker engagements. Provides ideas to President to determine if coordinator should move forward on making contact and arrangements for speaker to appear at Support Group meeting. Provide details to Newsletter Editor for publication in newsletters.

Please volunteer and make our organization stronger!

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

UOAA Discussion Board -
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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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for lots of great information and some humor.



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



https://twitter.com/clwtrostomy_grp

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

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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