Vol. 2, Issue 5 May 2017

The Advocate

Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group

UOAA United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc.
AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Spring / Summer Schedule

Date	Time	Speaker/Topic	Room
5/3/17	Wed 6:30 – 8:00 pm	Dr. Sandra Lopez, **"The Psychological Impact of Ostomy Surgery"**	Tan 119
6/7/17	Wed 6:30 – 8:00 pm	Leslie Heron, ARNP, **"Coping Mechanisms and Strategies for those Affected by Serious Illness or Surgery"**	Tan 119
		No July meeting	
8/5/17	Sat 5:00 – 8:00 pm	Summer Social @ Laura Vadman's House	
9/6/17	Wed 6:30 – 8:00 pm	Welcome back; Meeting topic TBD	Tan 119

Support Group Registration

For the last few months we have been encouraging GEOSG participants to register for the 2016/2017 year. While registration is definitely not required to attend the support group, we urge everyone to become registered members of the group.

The annual dues are $25.00. These dues go towards the group's expenses for speakers, UOAA Affiliated Support Group membership, brochures, website and to support the Supply Closet (see page 2).

Registration forms will be available at the support group meetings and online at www.geosg.org..

If there is a financial hardship and you are unable to pay the $25.00 dues, please fill out the registration form and an allowance will be made for this year's dues.

GEOSG MEMBER STOMA “BIRTH” DATES

May	Ostomy	Years		June	Ostomy	Years
Ted Vosk	*Ileostomy*	5		*Ann Burnet*	*Colostomy*	2
				Mike Freeman	*Colostomy*	2

Contacts

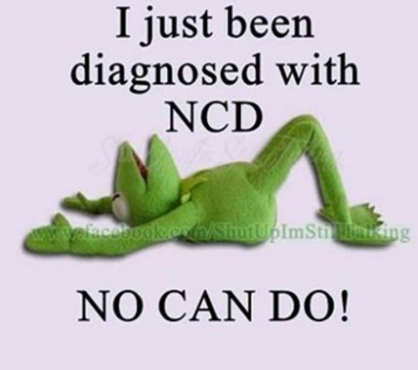
GEOSG Board Contacts	*E-mail*
Ro Moncrieff, Ostomate, President	rjmlocal@hotmail.com
Quyen Stevenson, ARNP, CWOCN Vice-President	nursequyen@gmail.com
Laura Vadman, RN, CWON, Treasurer	lovadman@hotmail.com
Laurie Cameron, Ostomate, Secretary, Registrar	lauriecmrn@aol.com
Dave Maltos, Ostomate, Welcome Team	davemaltos@comcast.net
Jan Williamson, RN, CWON, Evergreen Liaison	jhwilliamson@evergreenhealth.com

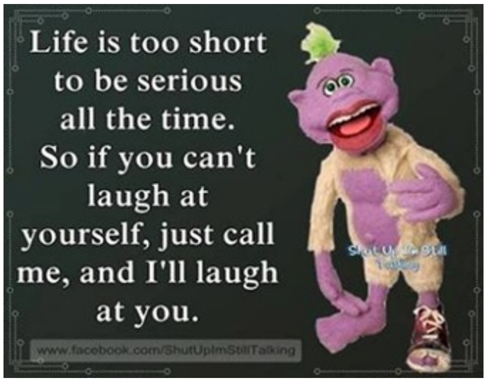
We’re on the web!

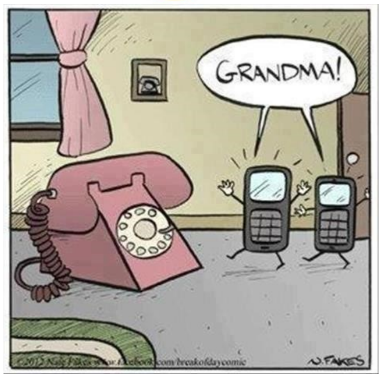
www.geosg.org

Manufacturers	*Phone*	*Website*
Coloplast	888-726-7872	www.us.coloplast.com
ConvaTec	800-422-8811	www.convatec.com
CyMed	800-582-0707	www.cymed-ostomy.com
Hollister	800-323-4060	www.hollister.com
Marlen	800-321-0591	www.marlenmfg.com
Nu Hope	800-899-5017	www.nu-hope.com
Organizations	***Phone***	***Website***
American Cancer Society	800-227-2345	www.cancer.org
Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation	800-343-3637	www.ccfa.org
Friends of Ostomates Worldwide	N/A	www.fowusa.org
United Ostomy Associations of America	800-826-0826	www.ostomy.org

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE







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9 REASONS WHY HAVING AN OSTOMY BAG IS AN AMAZING THING

By Danielle McCormack

You find that there is a lot of negative opinions and stories when it comes to having an ostomy bag whether that is an ileostomy or colostomy.

The thought of having the surgery is extremely scary and when you're put in the position of potentially having one or you wake up from an emergency surgery with one, all you can think about is every negative aspect of life with a bag.

But here are 9 reasons why having an ostomy bag is totally awesome!

1. Well obviously we can go to the toilet wherever we want, literally wherever. At a work meeting, on a date, yep, I'm going right at this moment!
2. You never have to worry about plugging the toilet at a friends house… nobody wants that.
3. You literally have the cleanest asshole ever. It's not in use so it's squeaky clean and we can actually see where we poo from now, so everything's always clean.
4. After more than likely not being able to eat what you wanted before surgery, you now can…to an extent of course! Pizza finally doesn't upset my stomach, woo!
5. Having a bag gives you an excuse to get out of those annoying situations you don't want to be part of: 'Sorry I can't come today my bags 'acting up'. I promise I've never used that excuse. Honest.
6. You never have to worry about having an accident and keeping a clean pair of underwear on you. 'Oh god I think I've 'followed through' is something you never have to worry about again.
7. For us females it's clearly an 'excuse' to get away with wearing high waisted knickers, super comfy and makes us look good at the same time where as before surgery most of us wouldn't have even thought about the high waisted underwear or jeans!
8. Some of us have found we actually get more intoxicated because of our bags… Maybe the alcohol absorbs differently.. But who cares… CHEAP NIGHT OUT FOR US!
9. There is such a huge online support network that you make friends and meet different ostomates… It actually gives you a better social life online.

Life with a bag isn't as bad as it sounds, eh?

Swim Confidently with an Ostomy

By Ed Pfueller, UOAA

Editors Note: A pdf of this article along with a self-advocacy toolkit for ostomates who may be denied access to a pool facility is available online at http://www.ostomy.org/Swimming_with_an_Ostomy_Toolkit.html

Let's start by getting something out of the way. After healing from surgery people of all ages and types of ostomies can and do enjoy swimming in community pools, athletic clubs, aquatic centers, oceans, and water parks. They also surf, swim in open water, and relax in a hot tub.

But we understand the hesitation that some living with an ostomy may have. From worry of leaks to the reaction of fellow swimmers, the anxiety can be enough to keep some people out of the pool. There are no ostomy-specific restrictions to swimming in public places. Just follow all the normal pool rules, such as rinsing off before entering, just like everybody else.

"Swimming has made me stronger both physically and emotionally. It is a great outlet and has made me even healthier. I feel and look more beautiful" says Lynn Wolfson of Florida. Lynn has two ostomies and leads a team of triathletes with Ostomy United.

Here are some solutions to common concerns. Let's get you feeling confident in the water whether it is in your own backyard pool, the beach, or on a cruise.

I'm afraid that my pouch will leak or my wafer will loosen while I'm in the water.

If this is your number one concern, you are not alone. Remember, your pouching system is resistant to water and with a proper fit it is designed not to leak. If you have output concerns eat a few hours before swimming and a good practice is to empty your pouch before taking a dip. If you are hesitant about how your wafer will hold, take a practice soak in your own bathtub.

It is best to avoid applying a new wafer or flange and pouching system right before swimming. The WOCN Society recommends allowing 12 hours for proper adhesion. Using waterproof tape or water-specific barrier strips are not necessary for most, but can provide peace of mind. Be aware that some may have skin sensitivities to the adhesives in these products. There are a wide variety of ostomy supplies on the market for swimming and you should be able to find a solution that works best for you.

When swimming laps Lynn Wolfson has discovered the optimal amount of time for her to stay in the water. "I limit myself to half an hour, forty minutes at most," she says of maintaining the best adhesion. Others find they can swim longer with no issues while some notice the need for an appliance change in a few hours or the next day after a swim.

If your pouch has a vent another consideration is to make sure to use the provided sticker over the air hole so that the filter remains effective. Having confidence with your ostomy pouch fit out of the water is critical to feeling confident in the water. Traveling with an emergency kit of supplies is also a good idea.

What can I wear or do to help conceal my pouch and keep it secure?

Whatever your bathing suit style, wearing a patterned or darker color is less transparent than a light colored swim garment.

Options for women included patterned and boyleg one piece suits. For a two-piece suit consider a mix and match of tankini tops, high-waisted bottoms or boy shorts. You can also look for a suit with a concealing ruffle or skirt. The type of bathing suit depends on how many ostomies you have, where they are located on your abdomen and what type of water activity you are going to be doing. Since Lynn has two ostomies located in the middle and upper abdomen and she enjoys swimming laps, she wears a one-piece Speedo bathing suit.

Men often favor a higher cut waist for trunks, or suits with longer legs. Stretch fabric undergarments and swim or surf shirts also provide support. Ostomy bands and wraps are also commonly used.

On the beach or poolside don't be surprised to know that some ostomates are comfortable with simply wearing the swimsuit of their choice- with swim fabric pouch covers or just an opaque pouch. There is also swimwear and accessories specifically made for ostomates by a variety of manufacturers.

Continued on page 7

Karin Miller Shares Why Having An Ostomy Is A Huge Thing To Deal With Alone

By Karin Miller

No one will know you have an ostomy unless you make them privy to that information. So maybe you're wondering…*Do I have to tell people I have an ostomy? When should I tell someone I have an ostomy? Who should I tell? Do I have to tell my new employer? Someone I want to date*?

The answer is: It's up to you!

You do not have to tell someone you have an ostomy if you do not feel comfortable doing so. The only people that you really should disclose your ostomy to are medical professionals, your significant other, and people who help with your recuperative care. Since ostomies are still kind of a hidden thing, your medical professional may not be familiar with them – at least not in person. If you feel comfortable, show it to them if they want to see it. This could be your opportunity to educate them and spread awareness. You should tell someone when you feel it's appropriate. Telling a potential significant other is totally different from telling the person you sit next to on your next airplane trip.

It's up to you to make the call about telling your employer.

If you are already working somewhere and are taking sick-leave to have surgery, it's likely you've already told them. Hopefully they were supportive and understanding. Maybe they even did a little research to understand better what you're going through. Maybe that's just an ideal world and doesn't happen in every workplace, but it should! If you're applying for a new job, it's up to you whether you disclose that information. Maybe you put it on your resume to explain an employment gap. Maybe you put it on your resume in a round-about way if you volunteer at a lot of ostomy-related events. Maybe you leave it off completely. Maybe you tell your employer after you've proven yourself to be dependable and good at your job. That's a similar strategy to the one I talk about on the dating & sex page on my website for people trying to choose when to tell a potential mate.

The benefit to telling friends, family and your employer about your ostomy is support.

If they know you have an ostomy and you're having a rough day, you have someone to talk to. Letting someone at work know can help if you find yourself with a leak at work and need to take care of it.

Immediately after surgery, while you're recovering and learning about ostomies on the fast track, you may find it hard to hide. You're walking slower and your actions are restricted, people might ask you what's going on. You could simply tell them you had abdominal surgery. Often times, that's not enough for a curious person and you find them asking what it was for. In that case, you can choose to say you'd prefer not to share, or you could just mention that you had your colon or bladder removed. You aren't required to go into detail about the need to wear an ostomy pouch on your abdomen to collect waste.

Having an ostomy is a huge thing to deal with alone.

Talking to someone can help ease your concerns, give you someone to vent to, and is just a good overall mental health practice. My experience telling people has been really positive. I told pretty much everyone I ran into for the first six months because it was the center of my world and on my mind a lot. Guess how much rejection and negative feedback I got? None. If I think about it, I am sure I could think of a few people who were in touch with me more frequently then and who have lost touch since, but I don't really blame my ostomy for that.

Nearly everyone I have told has either been really supportive or told me they know of someone else who has one (usually an older family member). In fact, you'd be really surprised how many people have said "oh, my dad, grandparent, sister, other friend, has/had one of those". It happens really often. Just as often, they say "what's that?" and "wow you I didn't even know that was possible!" That's been my experience, which is really fortunate. I hope you have the same positive experiences as I have with sharing the news.

Personal Stories of Healing & Hope

Would you be willing to share your story?

What lead up to your ostomy surgery? How have you handled the difficulties that are inevitable when recovering from your surgery? Do you have any special "tricks of the trade"? Do you have any funny stories to tell?

Have you travelled with your ostomy? Do you have any pictures to share with the group?

Would you rather write up your story anonymously?

We're looking to inspire, comfort, encourage and possibly even entertain those who have new ostomies and those who may be facing ostomy surgery.

One story for every newsletter would be fantastic. If you are willing to share, please submit your written story to Laurie at lauriecmrn@aol.com.

This is a wonderful opportunity to not only feel empowered by your own journey, but to also assist those who are just starting down the path.

How One Nurse's Act of Kindness Saved My Spirit

By Amy Oestreicher

In 2005, I suffered a coma, a ruptured stomach, and underwent a total gastrectomy. When I awoke from my coma, I was told by my doctors that my stomach exploded. I couldn't eat or drink, and it was not known when, or if, I'd ever be able to again. With the expertise, audacity and innovative thinking of surgeons from seven hospitals, many 19-hour surgery marathons, and multiple shifts of nurses and doctors, I was miraculously reconstructed with the intestines that I had left. Over time, I made slow but steady steps towards recovering my "personhood." I learned to sit upright again. When my tracheostomy healed, I started to talk. Once my hands were no longer shaky from the medications, I began to write and doodle. With time, patience, resilience and persistence, the "me" I remembered started to come back — the "me" that 26 surgeries could never take away.

By 2012, I felt like I had finally made the "great comeback." I had written, starred and directed myself in "Gutless & Grateful," a one-woman musical about my life. I was happy, healthy and had an ostomy. But everything is better in retrospect. At that time, I felt I was happy and healthy, *but* I had an ostomy. So I took a risk. I underwent an elective surgery to reverse my ostomy. Unfortunately, this elective surgery turned into three emergency surgeries within eight days, an ileostomy, a nicked bladder, a fistula, and a wound that will never close.

It was so overwhelming and traumatic to try to figure out how to put a bag over this gaping wound — this wound that now functioned as a second ostomy. Then, Tina, a very generous nurse with a truly compassionate heart, visited me at my home. Previously, I had been unwilling to receive any outside input. But after weeks of stuffing towels around my abdomen, I knew I had to come to terms with the idea that this wound needed a big intervention. This was a very big deal to me. It was my acknowledgement that this surgery, that I had chosen, was truly a setback. And I had no idea how I would make a comeback.

Tina admired my spirit and did everything she could to help me. She dropped off new bags in my mailbox daily, and was determined to help me until we could finally find a solution. She saw the spirit in me that was numbed by this tremendous setback, and she was determined to get me out of the house again. It was hard for me to imagine that just months earlier, I had been singing and dancing in a satin red dress, singing about my "gutless and grateful life." Tina saw that spark in me and nominated me for a **Great Comebacks Award**. She had seen my show in 2012, and knew that I was capable of making a comeback once again, even when I couldn't imagine doing so.

Things did get better. They got better because I was determined to make them better. I applied to college at 25. I booked two theaters to perform "Gutless & Grateful" again — updating the show with the 27th surgery for a little comic relief. I created an online dating profile for the first time, and I met the love of my life, who is now my husband. I made a comeback, and I felt alive once again. Then, one day, while I was at school in Amherst, Rolf Benirschke, the founder of the Great Comebacks Award, called me personally. I was so thrilled, I could hardly speak. This was the first time I was really recognized for what I had been through medically, as a true survivor.

Not for my performance, my mixed media art or what I was doing in the community, I was being recognized for being a resilient, strong and proud ostomate.

◆ ◆ ◆

♥ ♥ ♥ *Supply Closet* ♥ ♥ ♥

The Ostomy Supply Closet provides supplies free of charge to anyone with an ostomy that has a need due to lack of insurance coverage or is in need of emergency supplies. The Supply Closet is dependent on donations. If you have extra, unneeded supplies, please consider donating them to the Supply Closet.

The supply closet is located at a Public Storage in Kirkland, If you would like to donate, have a need, or know someone who is in need, please contact Laura Vadman (lovadman@hotmail.com) to arrange a time to meet and pick up needed supplies.

Colon Cancer Impacting Millennials: A young survivor shares her story

Some cancer patients are calling on the medical community to screen younger people for colon and rectal cancers, which usually aren't a concern until someone is much older.

Alarming research published last week shows colon and rectal cancer rates rising sharply among people in their 20s and 30s.

Cancer was pretty much the last thing on anyone's mind when Karin Miller went in for a colonoscopy following a year of digestive problems.

“I know there were a few people in the room and there were gasps,” she recalled. “I saw the tumor. The colon is very uniform, so when it came up on the screen, it was very noticeable.

And then I heard people in the room saying like, ‘Wait, how old is she?’

Miller was just 24, battling a disease that doctors don't usually screen for until someone is twice that age.

“I think everyone was pretty shocked, and even seeing my oncologist, I was the youngest person in that waiting room by probably 30 years,” she said.

Doctors surgically removed the tumor and put Miller on six months of chemotherapy. That was eight years ago.

Miller is cancer free today, but she wishes she hadn't waited so long in those first few months to speak up and insist that something was wrong.

“I've known a lot of people who weren't taken seriously or who didn't go to the doctor as quickly as I did, therefore had a later stage, and it breaks my heart when they lose the battle. And that's why I'm here is to advocate for those people. It's like, know the symptoms, know your body, take yourself seriously, so doctors will also do the same,” said Miller, who found a community of young colon and rectal patients called *The Colon Club.*

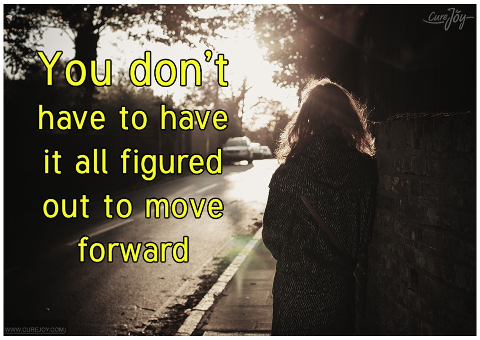
She hopes new research showing a startling rise in colon and rectal cancer rates among millennials will help bring more attention to a disease that might have seemed impossible.

“It really opened my eyes, and there's not a day that goes by that I don't appreciate everything I have,” she said.

The Best Is Yet To Come

Sometimes, we mistake our present to be the future, but it is not true. The present is a gift – cherish this treasure. So what if you don’t get the results you expected; just hold yourself up, breathe, and enjoy!

No Need To Figure Out Everything



Sometimes, one step can show you the right way. Your life does not work on the blueprint that you created in your mind. Walk and see how life intends to unfold its mysteries.

Swim Confidently with an Ostomy

(Cont’d from page 4)

What do I do if I am approached by pool personnel concerned that my ostomy is an open wound or believe ostomy bags are not allowed in pools?

If you are approached by pool personnel who are uninformed about ostomies stay calm and try to educate. However, unless you or another person tell pool personnel, no one should know you have an ostomy. UOAA Advocacy has created resources to share if this is a recurring issue at your swim location visit:

http://www.ostomy.org/Swimming_with_an_Ostomy_Toolkit.html

The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures your right to pool access and most disagreements can be solved through education before exploring any legal recourse.

When in the changing room you could wear an oversized shirt or seek out a bath stall or private corner if modest about revealing your ostomy. You can't control the reactions of others, but if asked about it, seize the teachable moment. Ostomy United founder Ted Vosk is training for an Ironman and has handled unsolicited comments before. "A guy pointed to my bag and said he was sorry I have that, I replied that he could feel sorry when he could outswim me. We both smiled." Ted had outperformed him easily in the pool.

So, get yourself a bathing suit and start swimming.

Ask Stephanie: How Do I Deal With Ostomy Overwhelm?

Stephanie Horgan, LCSW

What To Do When You Feel Overwhelmed With Ostomy Life

The experience of managing a new stoma or dealing with ongoing skin problems can be a lot to handle. Add in the demands of normal everyday life – it can all feel completely overwhelming.

Whatever the reason you're feeling frazzled, there are ways to help prepare yourself to handle whatever may come your way. Here are eight tactics that can help you deal with ostomy overwhelm:

1. Know how long things take.
I'm notorious for assuming tasks take much less time. For instance, I'll block out 15 minutes and then discover it actually takes 30 minutes! I've learned this simple rule: whatever time you think a task will take, double it. That way you when your appliance change doesn't go smoothly, you'll feel less stress because you know you have extra time to apply it properly.

2. Simplify your life.
Is your life too complicated? Take a good look at everything you do and ask yourself if there is a better, easier way to do it, or maybe not do it at all. If you don't get through your to-do list, it's okay. Figure out your priorities, like having a system in place for organizing and ordering ostomy supplies.

For example, Edgepark Medical Supplies offers Continue Care for automated reordering and there's a handy app called Ostobuddy which alerts you when supplies are low or when to get a new prescription.

3. Get into daily habits.
Getting the most important things done in an orderly fashion is taking care of you, first and foremost. For instance, the first thing I do each morning is hydrate. Then I'll change my appliance prior to eating breakfast. Next, I might take vitamin supplements if I'm not eating properly. Then I prep for that day's events by packing healthy snacks and my water bottle. These daily tasks allow me to feel prepared for the day. And if you're not a morning person, pack things the night before.

4. Allow for Murphy's Law.
No week is complete without something going wrong, so plan for it. Take for instance that terrifying feeling of your wafer peeling off your skin while you're at work, or a very inconvenient leak at the movie theater. Allow time in your week for preparing an emergency ostomy kit and extra clothes, and always carry it with you. You'll be better-off knowing these things are readily available just in case you need them.

5. Lean on others for support.
Don't underestimate the power of peer support. When you ask for help in a considerate way (and understand they may need to turn you down), there's no need to feel guilty about leaning on others. It can be something as simple as coming over to watch a movie when you're not feeling well, or asking for a ride to a doctor's appointment.

6. Be kind to yourself.
If you're having ongoing ostomy related issues, this kind of overwhelm can lead to feelings of inadequacy and failure. This is not the time to beat yourself up. It's extra important to pay attention to your mental radio and turn down the volume on your inner critic station. Practice self-compassion, and remember all the things you've been through. Talk to yourself as if you were talking to a loved one or best friend.

7. Dump it all on paper.
When you're fed up with your ostomy, sometimes taking time to write down your frustrations can help. At Oak Park Behavioral Medicine, we give our patients journals to help with this. One of my favorite assignments is having ostomates write a letter to their stoma with all their truest emotions and thoughts about it. Profanity is definitely allowed, if necessary.

8. Connect with others who have been there.
There are many ostomates who have gone before you, and many who have yet to receive an ostomy. We can all learn from each other, so it doesn't hurt to reach out to a UOAA support group or discussion board. Sometimes this kind of understanding can really help when you're feeling overwhelmed with ostomy life. If you want a pen friend, Girls with Guts has a Pen Pal Program where you can request another ostomate to send snail mail back and forth to.

The Rules:
Just pick ONE (maybe two) of these tips and do it. I don't want you to get overwhelmed by trying them all.

Why I Carry Ostomy Supplies With Me At All Times

By Christine Kim

A starter kit was given to me at the hospital from my nurse who suggested that I keep extra ostomy supplies with me at all times. It was a little black carrying case that had compartments for various products.

I remember taking that case with me everywhere I went, even on quick errands because being a new ostomate was really scary and I was paranoid the ostomy bag would fall off my body.

The first year after ostomy surgery was trial and error.

I was just starting to learn what worked and what didn't, and I remember feeling overwhelmed with all the different products I needed to order each month. Plus, I went through supplies much quicker in the first year because I wasn't very good at the application process. There were many times I had to start over with a brand new wafer because it wasn't sticking to my skin.

There was so much anxiety those first few months after surgery. I was so nervous, constantly checking on the wafer to make sure it was secure and not leaking. I didn't trust that the system would hold up, especially when doing any physical activity so I decided to put an extra set of clothes in my car. At night, I'd slept on my back with my hand over the pouch and had nightmares of embarrassing leaks in public.

During that first year there were actually only a few times where I had an unexpected leak in a public place, and even though it was embarrassing I kept my wits and got it handled. Knowing I had extra ostomy supplies along was such a relief.

How is ostomy life nowadays?

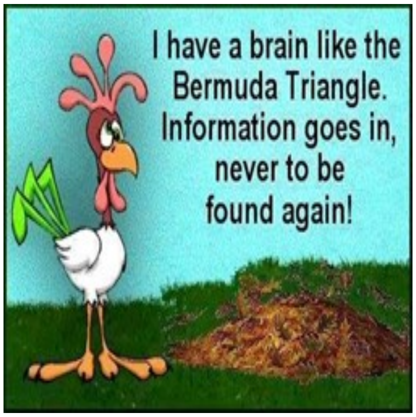
These days I rarely check on my pouch. I've learned which foods cause higher output, how dehydration affects wafer adhesion and what type of clothing constricts the stoma area. I've traveled on an airplane, taken road trips far away from home, experienced different climate conditions, and stay active. I'm aware that it's there, but it's no longer a concern.

If you're a brand new ostomate, you might be feeling the same anxiety that I had. Everything is going to feel overwhelming… because it is! There's a TON of new things to learn and get used to. Any fear you're having now is completely normal, but as time passes you'll gain more confidence and those worries will eventually go away. The slogan, ***Winging It Is Not an Emergency Plan*** is a good reminder that I need to be prepared for whatever comes my way. It's been over 20 years since my ileostomy surgery and I still carry ostomy supplies with me at all times. I don't expect an accident, but if I have one I'm prepared knowing I'll be able to handle the situation.

What's inside an ostomy emergency pack? Here are some ideas:

- Ostomy pouches + clips (for non-velcro close)
- Wafers, also called flanges (for two-piece system)
- Moldable rings or stoma paste (tube)
- Bottle of ostomy deodorizer (sample size)
- Barrier adhesive wipes (individual packets)
- Baby wipes or disinfecting wipes
- Paper towel (for clean up)
- Baggies
- Gauze pads

Quick tip: Always keep ostomy supplies in a cool, dry place.



California Dreamin'

You're invited to UOAA's National Conference!

6th National Conference Aug 22-26, 2017

Discover the "Journey to a Bright Future"

This year's conference takes us to Irvine, CA a place that boasts on average 280 sunny days per year. Abundant area attractions may inspire you to plan a vacation around the conference dates. After a day of inspiring talks, educational workshops and exhibits, lounge poolside under the palm trees while socializing with new friends from around the country, or explore all the area has to offer.

Irvine is in the heart of Orange County in coastal Southern California. The fabulous "lifestyle hotel" the Hotel Irvine will be the home of the conference and is a perfect base of operations for area attractions.

You'll find amazing shopping at the Irvine Spectrum Center (pictured left) and other premiere areas near Irvine. Pacific beaches and Newport Harbor is accessible and nearby, as is golf, hiking and family attractions such as Knott's Berry Farm and of course Disneyland!

Southern California has many airport options but if you fly into nearby John Wayne International Airport a free airport shuttle will take you straight to the hotel that is both affordable and packed with amenities.

An Adventurous Welcome

1st Night Ceremonies features speaker Pam Wall, an adventurous ostomate who is as much at home on the sea as on terra firma. A lifelong sailor, Pam and her late husband cruised together for almost 40 years.

She raised her small family aboard a 39 foot sloop, circumnavigated the world, voyaged across every ocean, cruised through the Caribbean, transited the Panama Canal, and sailed through the South Pacific while managing her ostomy without the benefit of a shower, flushing toilet or hot water. She is living proof that there is nothing a person with an ostomy can't do.

Our **Closing Speaker** is Joanna Burgess-Stocks, BSN, RN, CWOCN, and newly elected member of UOAA's Management Board of Directors. Joanna, a heartwarming speaker whose journey to wellness began 47 years ago when she overcame a rare type of bladder cancer, she has both an ileal conduit and a colostomy. Having a national presence with WOCNs, nurses in general, and through UOAA the ostomate community, she can serve as a bridge between the world of the patient and the medical/scientific world. By walking back and forth between these worlds Joanna is able to bring better communication and understanding about the needs of all. She truly is a source of strength for many people needing hope, guidance and a "white coated" friend they can lean on.

Fun and Informative

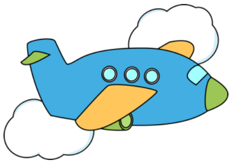
A wide variety of informative, fun and educational workshops and presentations are scheduled throughout the conference. From topics and frank discussions you will find nowhere else to the ASG Leadership Academy, there is something for everyone to learn, share, laugh and make friendships.

Returning of course will be our "hands on" Exhibit Hall with representatives from major pouch manufacturers, ostomy suppliers/retailers, specialty manufacturers, related nonprofit organizations and many others. They will be on hand to talk about their services, answer your questions, demonstrate their latest products and, of course, provide samples. In addition, we will again have our Free Stoma Clinic staffed by WOC nurses.

Conference-Related Information

Please go to www.ostomy.org, the UOAA website, to register and view the educational programming that is planned for you.

TSA's Pat-Down Policy in the Spotlight



UOAA Advocates For Concerns of Ostomy Community

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has recently announced a pat-down policy that has concerned some people living with an ostomy. Those selected for the additional screening will experience a universal procedure for pat-downs. Remember that you can request a private screening (along with a travel companion) and a chair at any point in the process. Early communication in the screening process that you have an ostomy remains key to the experience you may have during this security procedure. Be sure to plan for extra time at the screening in case you are selected.

See our information online for a travel communication card and the latest travel tips from the TSA. Board member George Salamy is our TSA liaison and is in frequent communication with them about your concerns. They have been very responsive to the voices in our community and strive to enhance agent training where needed when incidents arise.

Share Your Concerns: Have your voice heard directly by the TSA by completing their survey and sending your answers by this Thursday, March 16 to info@ostomy.org.

Travel Tips

Extra security precautions are being taken at airports and other transit hubs worldwide. A little pre-planning and understanding of both security rules and your right to privacy can help you avoid problems in transit and enjoy your travels. In particular, remember that all airport screenings must be conducted with courtesy, dignity and respect. You may request screening in a private area at all U.S. airports and most international destinations. A few additional tips to keep you on the go:

- Carry a statement from your healthcare professional stating your need for ostomy supplies. You can also download and print our discreet TSA card to show to security officers with questions.
  - ⇒ TSA rules state that you can be screened without having to empty or expose your ostomy; however, you may need to conduct a self pat-down of the ostomy, followed by a test of your hands for any trace of explosives
  - ⇒ If you are traveling to a foreign country, bring this information written in the appropriate language.**Google Translate** may be helpful with translations. If you find you need additional supplies while traveling, a local pharmacy is a great starting point. The local pharmacist should be able to provide you with the necessary supplies and/or refer you to a local clinic/hospital for support.
- Pre-cut all cut-to-fit barriers at home.
  - ⇒ Although current United States Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) rules allow curved point scissors with blades less than 4" in length in your carry-on luggage, keeping your ostomy scissors in your checked luggage may avoid delay and extra screening.
- Consider purchasing travel insurance that guarantees getting you to a hospital, if necessary.
- When it comes to supplies, OVERPACK! Better safe than sorry. Pack at least three days' worth of ostomy supplies in your carry-on luggage—just in case your checked luggage is misplaced.
- Take extra supplies, in case of delays and/or non-availability at your destination.
- Drink, drink, drink. Nothing slows down a vacation more than dehydration.
- If travelling by car, take advantage of rest areas. Stop and empty your pouch regularly; you never know how far it will be until the next one!
- Pack ostomy-friendly snacks.
- Keep a set of clean clothes handy whether in your carry-on luggage or in the trunk of your car.
- Carry a few plastic bags and wet wipes for quick clean-up.

Transportation Security Administration

What to Expect

Disability Branch, Office of Civil Rights & Liberties, Ombudsman, and Traveler Engagement

Colorectal Awareness: Ostomies (Colostomy, Ileostomy, Urostomy)

TSA Pre✓®	Standard Screening
Travelers eligible for TSA Pre✓®: ○ Present your boarding pass and government-issued ID to the TSA travel document checker; ○ The TSA travel document checker will scan your boarding pass barcode; ○ Proceed to the **TSA Pre✓®** line.	**Travelers not eligible for TSA Pre✓®:** ○ Present your boarding pass and government-issued ID to the TSA travel document checker; ○ The TSA travel document checker will scan your boarding pass barcode; ○ Proceed to the standard screening line.
At the beginning of screening: ○ Inform the TSA officer about your disability or medical condition. ○ Inform the TSA officer if you have a medical device such as an ostomy pouch. ○ Oversized medically-necessary liquids should be removed. These liquids are permitted through security checkpoints after undergoing x-ray or inspection screening. Medically-necessary items may include lotions, creams, cleaning agents, disinfectants, and other ostomy-related equipment and supplies. ○ Inform the TSA officer of any sensitive area where pain or medical complications could happen if touched.	**At the beginning of screening:** ○ Inform the TSA officer about your disability or medical condition. ○ Inform the TSA officer if you have a medical device such as an ostomy pouch. ○ Oversized medically-necessary liquids should be removed. Medically-necessary items may include lotions, creams, cleaning agents, disinfectants, and other ostomy-related equipment and supplies. ○ Inform the TSA officer of any sensitive area where pain or medical complications could happen if touched.