

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

"We help ourselves by helping others to help themselves."

We are a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing education, information, support and advocacy for people who have had or will have intestinal or urinary diversions.

P.O. Box 25164 Houston, TX 77265-5164 www.ostomyhouston.org

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal Cancer Awareness? What does this mean? This means that if you love someone, you educate and encourage them to seek a routine diagnostic procedure that could save

their life. A colonoscopy. A routine colonoscopy is recommended beginning at age 50 or when other symptoms are present as recommended by a physician.

Colorectal cancer is the most treatable form of cancer—if caught early.



Symptoms include frequent urges to go to the bathroom, diarrhea, blood in the stool and other un-natural bowel behaviors. Often times we don't want to do 'potty talk', it's embarrassing. A long time ago people thought the same way about breast and prostate cancer. Now these diseases are featured everywhere and the survival rate is increasing. It is colorectal cancer's turn. Support someone you love and have a little potty talk.

I am often amazed at the attitude of friends and family when a colonoscopy is mentioned. Usually they balk and justify not having it done. I often share at this point that colon cancer is the most treatable—if detected early and the most fatal if not.

—Patti Suler, Editor

Patient Visiting and Support Services

Doctors and WOC Nurses, please note:

Upon request from a doctor or nurse, a specially trained visitor will be sent to visit an ostomy patient before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. There is no charge for this service. The visitor does not give medical advice. Please contact our Visitor Coordinator, Marian Newman at 281-485-1961.

We are a health support group, a non-profit, tax-exempt, organization of volunteers whose purpose is to provide mutual aid and education to persons who have ostomies and to their families. We are a Texas non-profit corporation. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Can Ostomates Donate Blood? (Updated Again)

by Bob Baumel, North Central OK Ostomy Association

Note: This is my third iteration of this article. Previous versions were published in our August 2006 and February 2009 newsletters.

Ostomy newsletters sometimes publish warnings that ostomates, especially ileostomates, shouldn't donate blood. One such article cites a horror story (which may or may not be real) about an ileostomate who developed a kidney stone, allegedly due to the temporary dehydration caused by a blood donation.

I am one ileostomate who has always ignored those warnings. As of February 2014, I've donated the equivalent of over 110 units of blood, at least 80 of them since my permanent ileostomy surgery in 1992. And I've never suffered any ill effects from giving blood.

The question in the title of this article involves two issues: Is giving blood safe for the ostomate? And will the ostomate's blood be accepted by the blood bank? On the first question, it should be understood that ostomates are different, and may have other health issues besides the ostomy, so it isn't possible to make a blanket statement for all ostomates. Therefore, check with your doctor if you have any doubts about your ability to give blood.

It's true that giving blood (at least, donating whole blood) can cause temporary mild dehydration (although not as severe as can occur from an ileostomy blockage or acute gastroenteritis episode). If you have a strong tendency to develop kidney stones,

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Central Group News

We welcomed Jenny Jansson-Smith, RN, CWON, the clinical consultant with For Life-Stomocur to our February 17 meeting. Jenny told us about the company that is located in Berlin, Germany. In fact, this OAHA group was one of the first to hear about Stomocur in the U.S. Clarice Kennedy, ET, helped introduce Stomocur products to this country, and members of the Central group participated in a study using the products. Jenny brought us up to date with the features and product lines. The wafers and pouches have a very thin profile. The wafers have been shown to work well for those who have skin issues with other brands. For example, the wafers are available gelatin free. Jenny had many samples available for us to examine. She is happy to provide product samples to anyone that would like to try them. Jenny can be reached at 512-258-3750, or by email at j.jansson-smith@forlife.info. The Stomocur website is www.forlife.info; click the British flag for information in English.

Please join us at the March 17 meeting which will be a celebration of our 58th Anniversary. Patti Suler, our newsletter editor, will tell us about her trip to the national UOAA conference last summer.

Don't forget to sign up for the 2014 Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America Take Steps Walk coming in May. Did you see the *Phoenix* article about Kathleen Duplessis written with assistance from Patti Suler? I have a copy if anyone would like to read it.

It was nice to see Mary Harle up and about after her surgery. Our thoughts and prayers are with those in treatment and recovery along with those whose family members are in care.

Best regards, **Denise Parsons**, President, OAHA 713-824-8841

ZIP Code Locator

Great news! The UOAA is proud to announce the evolution of our search method for individuals looking for ostomy support groups from our web site. Now, rather than a state-by-state listing of our groups, people looking for support can type in their zip code or city and state and see the four closest ASGs (affiliated Support Groups), complete with mileage/distance and contact information. This new tool will help more ostomy patients and caregivers locate your group.

Check it out http://www.ostomy.org/supportgroups.shtml#US_LOCAL

Local OAHA Upcoming Elections

Lorette Bauarschi, Terry Marriott, and Jenrose Foshee have been nominated to serve on the Board of Directors. Nominee(s) will be voted on at the May OAHA meetings.

Baytown Group News

Baytown welcomed speaker Patti Suler, on February 3. "Adventures of Captain Colon: Highlights from the 2013 UOAA Jacksonville Conference" sounded like fun and Patti was ready to share! We appreciated the fact that Patti began her presentation by telling the group that she was skeptical about her attendance and just not that enthusiastic about the trip in general. It seems her heart had not warmed up to the notion of sharing with a bunch of people she did not know. As she so eloquently detailed in the pictures she took, Patti was welcomed by a warm group of fellow ostomates, invited to join in all types of education endeavors and enjoyed the venue—Jacksonville was a beautiful place to be. Patti said her attendance at the Conference renewed and refreshed her spirit. She came back feeling the need to reach out and volunteer. Patti currently shares her talents as the Newsletter Editor for the OAHA. She is also planning to walk in the upcoming Crohn's & Colitis Walk. She encouraged everyone to think about attending the next conference—it is well worth the effort!

In March, Tabatha Schroeder with Coloplast will bring us their latest news. April brings our favorite Dietitian Matt Potter, back to speak with you. ConvaTec ostomy specialist, Kerrianne Pelzl is lined up for May. Baytown Ostomy Support Group meets the 1st Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Community Room at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital. We look forward to seeing you here!

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN 281-428-3033

Northwest Group News

Brian Hakel, the founder and president of Stoma gear was our presenter. His company's web site can be found at stomagear.

com. Unlike many who come to our group, Brian is an ostomate. He found that he was not happy with the products that were on the market so he designed and patented his own. His Stoma shield is adjustable, durable, discreet and comfortable. It comes with a full 30-day money back guarantee.



Brian lives in Katy and all his equipment is proudly made in the USA. The Stoma shield comes in three sizes for maximum comfort. There were eight hearty souls in attendance and one sickly WOCN. Here's hoping everyone gets better real soon. Next month, Tabatha Schroeder with Coloplast will be here.

Craig Cooper 281-948-6883

Tony Romeo 936-588-4031

Supply and Accessory Swap-Meet

Ostomy supplies are expensive. This is the number one reason no one likes to throw them away even when they are no longer needed or pouching changes have occurred. So they pile up in closets, under counters and countless other places.

The Ostomy Association of the Houston Area no longer maintains a supply closet. Those of us who failed to donate their supplies before the final give-a-way were left holding the bag. Here is your chance to resolve this issue and make friends in the process.

The Northwest Group is holding the first ever **Supply and Accessory Swap-Meet**. The best part is you can bring your stuff and don't have to take any new items unless you want to. Plus, they will have cookies!

Just bring all your old, "didn't likes" or extra "won't use" products and accessories. Swap it for other stuff or not. Left over supplies will be donated to one of the remaining programs that provides supplies to ostomates. This is a win-win to clean out your cabinets opportunity! Save the date for the April 15 meeting.

Seeking Medical Assistance— Colostomates

Via: GAOA Atlanta, January 2014 courtesy of the New Life Newsletter of Charlotte

The most common problem after colostomy surgery is the development of a hernia around the stoma site. This is manifested as a bulge in the skin around the stoma, difficulty irrigating and partial obstruction. Heavy lifting should be avoided immediately after surgery.

You should call the doctor or ostomy nurse when you have difficulty with:

- 1. Severe cramps lasting more than two or three hours
- Unusual odor lasting more than a week
- 3. Unusual change in stoma size and appearance
- 4. Obstruction at the stoma and/or prolapsed of the stoma
- 5. Excessive bleeding from the stoma opening, or a moderate amount in the pouch
- 6. Severe injury or cut to the stoma
- 7. Continuous bleeding at the junction between stoma and skin
- 8. Watery discharge lasting more than five to six hours
- 9. Chronic skin irritation
- 10. Stenosis of the stoma (narrowing)

The ostomy nurse is helpful in managing complications should they arise.

We encourage you to bring your spouse or significant other and members of your immediate family to our meetings.

What to Drink with Drugs

2/2014 UOAA Update

How many times have you received a prescription with the instruction to "take as needed" or "take before meals"? Pretty vague, but many people do not stop to question further, assuming the medication will work, no matter with what they swallow it.

Acidic drinks, such as fruit juice or soda pop, may chemically destroy certain kinds of antibiotics, including penicillin, ampicillin, or erythromycin. Citrus fruit juices may reduce the effect of antidepressants, antihistamines or major tranquilizers by speeding their urinary excretion.

Milk can interfere with a number of medicines. The laxative Ducolax, for example, has a coating designed to ensure that the drug will dissolve slowly within the intestine. But if the medication is taken with milk, which is alkaline, it may dissolve prematurely within the stomach, lose its cathartic action and irritate the sensitive stomach lining. Milk can also block the action of tetracycline. If a doctor fails to warn his/her patient not to take this antibiotic within an hour of any dairy product, he/ she might be puzzled to hear the infection being treating has not disappeared.

Even something as simple as tea, hot or cold, may cause problems. A woman given a mineral supplement to treat iron-deficiency anemia would probably be surprised to learn that the tannin in tea can undo the benefits of her iron pills.

To play it safe, you can always rely on **good old water!** Water will not interact with drugs or reduce their effectiveness.

Ten Questions to Ask Your Doctor or Pharmacist about a New Prescription

2/2014 UOAA Update

- 1. What's the name of the drug you're prescribing?
- 2. Is a less-expensive generic version of this drug available?
- 3. How much will I be taking and how many times a day?
- 4. What time of day is best to take the medication? Should it be taken with food or without?
- 5. Does the medication need refrigeration?
- 6. What side effects, if any, might I experience? What should I do if they occur?
- 7. Is it safe to take this drug with other drugs or supplements? Can I drink alcohol while I am on this medication?
- 8. What do I do if I miss a dose?
- 9. How long will I be taking the drug?
- 10. Do I need to finish the entire dosage you're prescribing for me? What do I do if I feel better before that?

Can Ostomates Donate Blood? (Continued from page 1)

you may wish to avoid donating blood for this reason. However, in most cases, this mild dehydration is easily dealt with by being careful to drink a good amount of fluid before and after the blood donation.

You can also give blood and avoid dehydration totally by using one of the newer "apheresis" methods. These are procedures in which components of your blood are separated by specialized equipment while you donate, and some components are returned to your body. In addition, they pump enough saline into you to replace the blood volume removed, so you aren't dehydrated at all afterward. I've donated a number of times using one of these methods (double red cell donation). However, there is no longer a collection center in my area that can take such donations, so I'm back to donating whole blood now.

Turning to the second question (whether the ostomate's blood will be accepted), having an ostomy does not, by itself, disqualify you from giving blood, at least in the United States, although you may need to wait until a year after surgery. Rules vary in different countries, so readers outside the U.S. should check rules in their country. In the U.S., the rules are set by the Food and Drug Administration; for a good summary, see www.redcrossblood.org.

While having an ostomy doesn't disqualify you from giving blood, you may be rejected due to low hemoglobin, or if you take certain medications or have certain other health issues. To probe some of those issues, you'll need to answer a list of questions before donating (at many collection centers, you can answer those questions directly on a computer, although you can always have a person ask you the questions if you prefer).

If you've had recent surgery, especially if you received blood transfusions, you'll probably need to wait a year before donating.

If you've had cancer, as long as it wasn't a blood-related cancer, you can donate if it was treated successfully and the cancer hasn't recurred for at least a year.

Chronic conditions like ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease also don't disqualify you. The Red Cross site says: "Most chronic illnesses are acceptable as long as you feel well, the condition is under control, and you meet all other eligibility requirements."

Thoughts to Ponder...

- $\sqrt{\ }$ No man has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
- √ If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.
- $\sqrt{}$ Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.
- √ Everyone deserves to be greeted with a smile.
- √ Everyone needs a friend to act silly with.

WOC Nurse Directory

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN (281) 428-3033 Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital

cbarefield@houstonmethodist.org

Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN (713) 465-8497

Specialty Wound & Ostomy Nursing, Inc.

charlene@swoni.com

Pat Thompson RN, BSN, CWON (281) 397-2799

Pat.thompson@tenethealth.com

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he United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA) can be contacted at: www.uoaa.org or 800-826-0826

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Each issue contains 72 pages of inspiration, education and information including new products, medical advice, management techniques, personal stories and more.

Subscriptions directly fund the nonprofit United Ostomy Associations of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.

Phoenix

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Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: American Cancer Society Building

6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston

Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841

rockynme2@aol.com

Meeting: March 17, 2014

Program: Please join us at the March 17 meeting which will be

> a celebration of our 58th Anniversary. Patti Suler, our newsletter editor, will tell us about her trip to the

national UOAA conference last summer.

Baytown Group

Monthly: First Monday Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Community Room in Lobby of Houston Methodist

San Jacinto Hospital

4401 Garth Road, Baytown

Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-428-3033

Meeting: March 3, 2014

Program: Guest Speaker: Tabatha Schroeder, RN BSN

CWOCN, Territory Sales Manager, Coloplast Corp.

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Tuesday of the month

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: NW Medical Professional Bldg., (The Cali Bldg.)

> 17117 Cali Drive, Houston (This location is just off of 1960 and west of I-45. Turn north on Cali Drive from 1960. At the stop sign turn left on Judiwood and left

again to park behind the Cali Building.)

Tony Romeo 936-588-4031 Contact:

sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net

Meeting: March 18, 2014

Program: Guest Speaker: Tabatha Schroeder, RN BSN

CWOCN, Territory Sales Manager, Coloplast Corp.

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday

Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment Place:

American Cancer Society Building

6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston

Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311

Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

Meeting: March 17, 2014

Monthly support and information meetings are held in three locations for member convenience.

Opportunities and Announcements

Anniversary Gift

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Ostomy Association. Checks should be made payable to the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area and sent to the Treasurer at the address shown below.

Memorial Fund

Donations can be made to our Memorial Fund to memorialize or honor individuals. Checks should be made payable to the *Ostomy* Association of the Houston Area and sent to the address below. When sending a donation, be sure to include the name of the person being honored so that acknowledgement can be sent.

Movina?

Our newsletter is sent by bulk mail, which the Post Office will not forward even if you fill out a forwarding request. To continue receiving the newsletter after a move, contact Ron Cerreta, Treasurer, at 832-439-1311 or texasronc@aol.com or send your request to the provided address below.

For Anniversary Gifts, Memorial Donations, Mailing Changes, or Sponsorships, please send all correspondence to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

Attn: Ron Cerreta, Treasurer

P.O. Box 25164

Houston, TX 77265-5164

(When sending a donation, please include the name of the person being honored so that appropriate acknowledgement can be sent.)

Use Those Shopping Cards

Kroger and Randalls return a percentage of your purchases to the Ostomy Association on a quarterly basis. For information about shopping cards, please visit the website:

http://www.ostomyhouston.org/

Sponsorship

You can sponsor a member of our ostomy support group with a tax-deductible donation to cover the cost of their membership. Please make the check in the amount of \$25.00 payable to Ostomy Association of the Houston Area and send to the treasurer's address above.

Disclaimer: The information contained within this newsletter is presented expressly for informational purposes only and may not be applicable to everyone. It should not be substituted for professional medical care or attention by a qualified practitioner. Always check with your doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your condition.

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Membership Applicati	on				
Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area requires one easy payment. Please complete the following form and mail as directed with payment as shown. Dues of \$25.00 per year are payable to: Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, Attention: Treasurer P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164					
Name:		Phone:			
Street Address:					
City:	_State: ZIP: .	E-mail:			
Surgery Date:	Birth Date:				
Reason for surgery: Crohn's Ulcerative Colitis Cancer Birth Defects Other Do you speak a foreign language? Yes No Foreign language spoken:					
Procedure or Relationship:					
To help us complete our record. □ Colostomy □ Ileostomy □ Urinary Diversion □ Other:	□ Continent Ileostomy □ Continent Urostomy □ Pull-Through	□ Parent of Child with procedure	Membership benefits include: Monthly Support/Information Meetings, Social Events, Monthly Newsletter		
☐ I would like to attend meetings with the (<i>please circle one</i>):					
Central Group	Baytown Group	Northwest Group J-Pouc	h Group		
\square I would like to become a	member but cannot pay due	s at this time. (This will be kept confiden	tial.)		
I learned about the Ostomy Ass WOC nurse Physicia		al Shop □ Website □ Other:			
I am interested in volunteering.	□ Yes □ No				
I have enclosed an additional \$-	as a donation t	to support the association's mission of h	elping ostomates.		







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