



Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

June 2006

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

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

"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."

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

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ed Wood 281-493-5015
(ewood6@houston.rr.com)

Meeting: June 19th, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us for a group discussion time. Your participation is welcomed.



Baytown Group

Monthly: Fourth Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Cancer Center Community Room
4021 Garth Road, Baytown
Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-420-8671

Meeting: June 26th, Monday evening

Program: Convatec Products

Tabatha Schroeder, Ostomy Sales Specialist for Convatec will present our program in June. Come join

Northwest Group

Monthly: Tuesday following the third Monday
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.)
Contact: Tony Romeo 281-537-0681 (sa1tmar@sbocglobal.net)

Meeting: June 20th, Tuesday evening

Program: Convatec Products

Tabatha Schroeder, Convatec Representative, will provide our program in June. Come join us!!

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

Meeting: June 19th, Monday evening . . .

Reservation required. No obligation. Please call 281-491-8220 for reservation.

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us for a discussion about ulcerative colitis and the J-Pouch connection.

Patient Visiting and Support Services

Doctors and ET 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, Dorothy Andrews at 713-789-4049.

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.

Central Group News

Twenty people were in attendance for our May 15th meeting which included a program by Mr. Thomas Mathew from the Northeast Rehab Center. He did an excellent job of providing us with his knowledge of exercises and relaxation techniques that everyone can use. We thank Thomas for his talks to us over the years.

We welcomed Mary Beth Jackson as a first time attendee and invited her back to the June meeting.

We were saddened to hear of the death of the father of Dr. David Thompson. Dr. Thompson, a member of our Medical Advisory Board, had gone to Canada where his father was to have surgery. A sympathy card was signed by those in attendance to be sent to Dr. Thompson. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the entire Thompson family.

We also extend our sympathy to the family of Marie Etterman who passed away in May.

The national ostomy Youth Rally is scheduled for July in San Diego. Adult volunteers are needed to assist at the Rally and we are in the process of finding such an individual to sponsor. This Youth Rally is the only camp of its kind that provides an opportunity for youth ages 12-17 who have ostomies and continence issues to share mutual concerns and make life-long friends.

The Board of Directors has been meeting the first Monday of each month since last summer. At the June 5th meeting, we will begin the process of building a budget for the 2006-2007 year.

We have been invited by the oncology nurses at MD Anderson to participate in their second annual "Cancer Survivor Program" which will be held on Sunday, June 25 from 12:30-5:30 PM. We will have a booth that will promote the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area and will allow us contact with medical professionals in our area. We are looking for volunteers who can help modify the display for the booth - from 49th Anniversary to 50th Anniversary - and we'll also need volunteers who are willing to spend a portion of time at the booth during the 5-hour interval. This is an excellent opportunity for members to work on a worthwhile project and get to know each other. Last year, they had excellent speakers and great food . Please contact Ed Wood 281-493-5015 if you can help.

The June meeting will be a roundtable which will allow members to ask questions and share experiences with each other. Hope to see you there.

Ed Wood
President

THE JOYS OF VOLUNTEERING FROM A TO Z

via Springfield, MO Ostomy Association

Answering a need
Building a lasting relationship
Caring for others
Developing new skills
Earning respect and admiration
Feeling good about yourself
Giving back to the community
Hearing "thank you" from those you help
Inspiring others with your dedication
Joining the millions improving the world
Keeping active and involved
Lifting spirits
Making great use of your time and talent
Noting the difference your efforts make
Opening doors to new experiences
Putting your compassion into action
Quieting others' worries and fears
Reaching out to people in need
Spreading smiles wherever you go
Touching lives forever
Understanding people better
Vitalizing programs with your service
Warming hearts with your kindness
Xploring new opportunities
Year-round appreciation
Zeroing in on what's important, being part of the solution ■

TAKE IT EASY ON TEA

via Convatec's Health & Vitality magazine & Springfield MO Ostomy Support Group

Drinking large volumes of instant teas may expose you to unhealthy levels of fluoride, according to recent research from Washington University. Using fluoride-free distilled water and using label directions, scientists prepared 10 brands of instant tea mix and found concentrations of fluoride ranging from 1 to 6.5 ppm, well in excess of the federal limits of 1.4 to 2.4 ppm. The tea plant accumulates fluoride from soil and water. Drinking large amounts of instant tea, especially if you make it strong, could expose you to excess fluoride which can trigger an overproduction of skeletal tissue. The result: achy, dense bones and painful joints. The keys are to not chronically over drink tea and to not make it in higher concentrations than label directions recommend. ■

"Dreams don't have an expiration date."

- David Niven, PhD

OPPORTUNITIES & 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 and sent to: **Ostomy Association of the Houston Area**
Attn: Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164

Memorial Fund: Donations can be made to our Memorial Fund to memorialize or honor individuals. Checks should be made payable and sent to: **Ostomy Association of the Houston Area**
Attn: Mary Harle
9643 Winsome Lane
Houston, TX 77063-3725

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

Donation of Supplies: We are contacted on a regular basis by individuals who are in need of donated supplies of all kinds. Consider donating ostomy supplies that you no longer use to assist your fellow ostomates in the Houston area. Please contact Chuck Bayens at 281-497-7749 with any questions.

Consultation with ET: Clarice E. Kennedy, Certified Enterostomal Therapist, is available for consultations. Clarice is an ostomate with over 30 years of knowledge and experience to share with anyone who has questions about, or needs assistance with, the care of an ostomy both prior to and following surgery. Contact cekennedy@ev1.net or call 713-647-8029 for an appointment.

Sponsorship: You can sponsor a member of our ostomy support group with a tax-deductible donation to cover the cost of their membership. Send your check in the amount of \$25.00 to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164

Use Those Shopping Cards: Krogers and Randalls return a percentage of your purchases to the Ostomy Association on a quarterly basis. For card applications, contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015.

Moving??? 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 Chuck Bouse, Treasurer, at 281-495-1840 (dewitt@houston.rr.com) or send your request to the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, P.O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164.

**Dare to dream, hope, believe,
seek, feel, find, and love.**

ALL POUCH WEARERS

Via Ft. Worth, TX *New Directions* and Hendrick Big Country Ostomy Association Newsletter, Charlotte Allen, RN, CWOCN, Editor

Although one of our members says he likes his pouch to "balloon up" because it makes him feel lighter on his feet, it is not a good practice. Normally, you should empty your pouch when it becomes 1/3 to 1/2 full, and before trapped gas makes it feel firm. Avoid letting your pouch get too full with either waste or gas. As the pouch fills up, it places a greater strain on the snap fastener holding the pouch to the flange on two-piece systems, and increases the tendency for the adhesive part of the system to pull away from the skin on a one-piece system. If it is not convenient to empty a "filling" pouch, get somewhere that you can discreetly "pop" the seal (on a two-piece system), releasing the gas pressure. This trick can buy you a little more time before emptying is absolutely necessary.

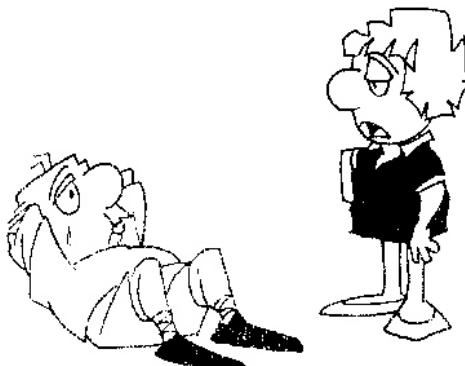
For ileostomates, if you know that you are going to be traveling or in a situation where easy access to a restroom is not available, adjust what you eat to avoid high-residue food. Instead of eating bran muffins and a bowl of cereal (for example), eat pancakes which have less residue. Be aware of how fast your body responds to eating. If you know that you can expect a lot of stoma activity about two hours after eating, time your meal so that you don't have to deal with a pouch approaching its capacity at an inopportune time.

Similarly, urostomates may want to consider temporarily adjusting their rate of fluid intake for a short time. The caution here is that urostomates should consume plenty of fluids during the day. This technique is not advisable for more than a couple of hours.

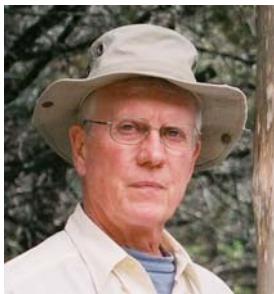
Ostomates should not skip meals before going out socially. In general, the less an ostomate eats, the more gas he or she will produce, with its attendant problems. Actually, a quick arm across the stoma will usually silence it if it is operating at a wrong time. ■

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

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.



"ARE YOU WORKING ON YOUR ABS OR JUST TRYING TO LOCATE THEM?"



Becoming an Ostomate... .

My Experience

By Bill Propst

Eight years ago, at the age of 60, I was diagnosed with rectal cancer. The treatment was six weeks of radiation, then six weeks to allow the cancer to shrink, then surgery. The surgery resulted in a colostomy.

I was very fortunate in several aspects:

- My doctor said of all the cancer types mine was the most curable. He quoted a number, something like 90% curable.
- A colostomy is apparently the easiest type of ostomy to live with in that I can regulate my bowel movements with a process called irrigation. After this process there is no output (normally) until I initiate it again 24-36 hours later.
- My doctor insisted I see a ET nurse for training in the care of my ostomy and, in particular, the process of irrigation before leaving the hospital. He made it a stipulation that he would not discharge me until I could do it myself.
- I was sixty years old, not a twenty something, or less, as some are.
- My biggest "stroke of luck" was that Clarice Kennedy was the ET the doctor recommended.

Of course, I would not have needed this good fortune if I had not ignored the obvious signs before detection of the cancer. I had blood in my stool and I guess I was in denial for a long time. It was easy to deny the symptom blaming it on recent hemorrhoid surgery.

I finally went to the doctor, told him what I'd been experiencing, and he discovered the tumor visually. It was confirmed with a colonoscopy the next day. During the colonoscopy I recall watching the monitor and seeing a bright pink background. Suddenly there was a large black blob with deep red streaks. I said, "That must be the bad guy" and my doctor said, "Yes, that's it." It may have surprised him that I was watching as they had given me something to put me out.

Later, during a follow up colonoscopy, my doctor asked, "How are you doing with your ostomy...it's no more than an inconvenience right?" That kind of aggravated me because it is far more than an inconvenience. But as they say, "I can live with it." Without it I would be gone.

Six weeks after surgery I attended an ostomy group function. It was the Northwest Group's annual picnic. There were many couples there and I learned:

- You cannot tell which one has the ostomy...nothing is "stamped on anyone's forehead".
- They all acted normal and relaxed, visiting with each other at length.
- They were very friendly to me, welcoming me to their group.

- Some of them had lived with an ostomy for over 20 years so I realized it was not a life limiting situation, in fact, quite the opposite.
- There were young people there as well as those who were older.

After the picnic, my wife, Margo, and I attended the monthly meetings and learned a lot about caring for and living with an ostomy. After a while I decided to give something back to the group and volunteered to serve as newsletter editor and the Northwest Group Coordinator for a period of time.

Prior to the detection of the cancer I was a consultant with two employees, my daughter and a son. We kept the business going based on my doctor's optimism for survival...thankfully, he was right. I am still a consultant, working part time now. I often work all day in the offices of large companies and have no problems due to my ostomy. Most of the time I work in my home office (good fortune again) and this makes managing my ostomy especially easy.

For the past year Margo and I have been learning to kayak. We have paddled rivers/rapids, freshwater lakes (most recently Lake Amistad), saltwater bays and marshes and love all of them. I also enjoy fishing; freshwater for bluegill and crappie and saltwater for flounder. Another of my hobbies is woodworking. Together we enjoy gardening. Margo does the landscaping and I grow orchids but am currently trying to sell down the collection to make more time for fishing/paddling. Travel is another favorite...our last trip was to New Zealand. We rented a car and drove to the south island. Our big regret was not bungee jumping from the big bridge. At the time it seemed too cold to take off our coats. Looking back now, that seems like a lame excuse.

In spite of my ostomy we manage to live an apparently normal life. As with every ostomate, there are times when things do not go well, but the unpleasant is soon forgotten and memories of the good times remain. ■

Editor's Note: Bill was responsible for obtaining grant monies from a client which enabled the Houston ostomy association to design and print a full-color brochure. He and Margo also hosted many of the fall picnics at their beautiful home.

Don't cry because it's over...Smile because it happened!

UOAA NEWS

- ❖ YODAA (Young Ostomate & Diversion Alliance of America will hold a Conference in Cleveland, OH on August 2-5, 2006. Details are available at yodaa@uoaa.org.
- ❖ World Ostomy Day will be observed October 7th, 2006
- ❖ UOAA will hold election of Officers and Directors this fall. More information is to be announced.
- ❖ The inaugural UOAA National Conference will be held August 16-18th, 2007 in Chicago, IL.

BAYTOWN SUPPORT GROUP

Baytown had an exciting meeting Monday night, May 22nd, with an awesome attendance of 15! We were happy to welcome a new member and welcomed back a few folks we had not seen in a while.

The group discussed plans for the upcoming National Cancer Survivor's Day. Festivities are planned for Sunday, June 4th at the SJMH Cancer Center. Members are encouraged to call the Cancer Center if they plan to attend the event from 2 - 4 p.m. We want our support group to be well represented!

Chris Robison, Hollister Ostomy Specialist, had a wonderful presentation that explored options for Resources for ostomates and explained the Discharge Program and Education Component as well. Chris did such a good job that almost everyone agreed to try something new or give up something old....thank you Chris for your help in keeping us up to date with our ostomy care!

Baytown group is looking forward to meeting Tabatha Schroeder, Ostomy Sales Specialist, for Convatec at our June 26th meeting

Hope to see you then.

Cindy Barefield, RN, WOCN
281-420-8671

"In life, all good things come hard, but wisdom is the hardest to come by."

- Lucille Ball

DID YOU KNOW . . .

Did you know that the time it takes a meal to pass through the small intestines varies quite a bit? If a person is normally active, the time is 4 to 5 hours during the day. However, at night, when all body functions are slower, it is not uncommon for the time span to be 10 to 12 hours. The time it takes for a meal to pass through the intestines will also be governed by the kind of food eaten. If you have a virus or diarrhea, eat pretzels. You can usually keep them down and the salt is good in helping to maintain the liquid balance otherwise lost with diarrhea. Eating parsley with meals eliminates odor. ■

No-measure, perfect portions

Here are some easy ways to eyeball portions:

- **Your fist** = a 1-cup serving of cut-up fruit, pasta, rice, or yogurt
- **The palm of your hand** = one 3-ounce serving of beef, chicken, or fish
- **Your thumb** = 1 ounce of cheese
- **The tip of your thumb** = 1 teaspoon of peanut butter, olive oil, or butter ■

NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

Our May 16th meeting was well attended with 17 members and one visitor. Thomas Mathew from the Northeast Rehab Center presented a very informative program on exercise and stretching. He encouraged everyone to participate and we all benefited from his knowledge and expertise.

Jane Price provided refreshments....a pound cake with fresh strawberries and whipped cream as well as chips and dip. "Thank you", Jane!! Gen Stephens will provide refreshments in June.

Tabatha Shroeder, Convatec representative, will be with us for a presentation of products at our June 20th meeting.

See you then . . .

Tony Romeo
281-537-0681

FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

**Now and then it's time to say
Something in a special way,
And so to fathers everywhere
May God grant you special care.**

**Giving you health and much happiness
And all your family richly bless,
Not just while Father's Day is here,
But on each day of every year!**

KEEP YOUR COOL

Heat waves can strike anywhere. Even in Alaska and Maine, temperatures can soar above 100°F.

But temperatures don't have to be extreme to be dangerous. Heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke (sunstroke) can occur at ordinary summer temperatures, particularly if you are active in hot, humid conditions. Reduce your chances of heat illnesses in several ways: Wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat • Choose loose, lightweight, light-colored clothes and shoes • Wear sunscreen every day and take other steps to avoid sunburn • Run your air conditioner • Make meals that don't require the stove • Eat light, well-balanced meals • Drink lots of cool water • Avoid drinks that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar • Don't take salt tablets unless your doctor says to • If you must do hard labor, work in the coolest times of the day • Pace yourself and take frequent breaks • Take a cool bath or shower • Go to a heat-relief shelter • Stay on the lowest floor of your home out of the sunlight • Don't rely on fans—they may not stave off heat illness in 90°-plus temperatures. ■