



Houston Chapter United Ostomy Association

August 2005

Houston Chapter UOA
PO Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164
www.uoahouston.org

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

"UOA is 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: August 15th, Monday evening

Program: Report from National Conference

Floyd and Judy Swinger will present their report after attending the national conference in Anaheim.

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 (sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net)

Meeting: August 16th, Tuesday evening

Program: Dietitian from NW Hospital

Join us for this presentation by a dietitian and have all your questions ready to ask. See you there!!



The lazy, hazy, c^ra^zy
days of summer ...



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: August 15th, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

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

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: August 22nd, Monday evening

Program: Round Table Discussion

Join us for a round table discussion. Bring your questions and ideas to share.

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. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Chapter News

Our July program was a presentation by Diana Burkett, American Cancer Society Health Initiatives Program Manager. She explained all of the programs that the ACS offers at no expense to the client. They offer, for those in need who are cancer survivors, the first three months of ostomy supplies in order to allow the patient adequate time to apply for their regular supply from their insurance company. The National American Cancer Society gave a grant that allowed many chapters to receive the UOA's seven ostomy support booklets in the Spanish language. We most recently received 490 of these booklets and all but 90 have been distributed to WOCN's in hospitals in the surrounding area. The remaining 90 have been stored in space provided to us by the American Cancer Society in Houston for distribution as needed. We thank the American Cancer Society for their help and support in the past, and look forward to our continued partnership.

The Committee for the 50th Anniversary celebration has set the date and time: Sunday, March 26, 2005 from 2 PM to 4 PM. We hope this timing will allow everyone convenience in traveling to the event. We are planning a reception that will honor all of those who have contributed to the achievement of this remarkable accomplishment. More news will be coming in the next few newsletters.

We are fortunate to have Lorrette Bauarschi as a member of our local organization. We are even more fortunate that she is a lawyer in the Houston area and has offered to lead us through our effort to become incorporated in Texas and file for an IRS determination letter to achieve status as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization. We are grateful for the donation of her time. Along with some of the decisions that have to be made, the July meeting had a "hotly contested" discussion to change our name to "Ostomy Support Group of the Houston Area" vs "Ostomy Support Group Houston Area". The former won by a vote of 14-12.

Chuck Bouse, Treasurer, reported at the July meeting that he had received a response from 30 out of 83 dues notices that had been sent out in June for members who are due to renew during the last six months of the year. We hope that you will remit your dues if you are one of the remaining 53 who are yet to send them. We greatly appreciate those who have donated additional funds to help with expenses of *ongoing activities* or for the *50th Anniversary celebration*. Chuck also reported that we are receiving approximately \$150 from Krogers every six months from their share program. This \$300 per year is almost enough to pay for 2 months of printing for our monthly newsletter. If you are interested in participating in this program or the Randall's program call Ed Wood at 281-493-5015 or by email at ewood6@houston.rr.com.

I have received information, via email, about the rationale in the decision to dissolve the National UOA. This should appear in the last "Ostomy Quarterly" in the fall. If

you want to read about it now, send your request to ewood6@houston.rr.com.

The last UOA-sponsored **Youth Rally** was held in July in Boulder, CO. The Houston Ostomy group sponsored Erika Daniel, a youth participant, and Colleen Reeves, a WOCN, to attend this year's rally. I have received reports from both saying how much they appreciate our support and how much they enjoyed the experience. We hope to have both Erika and Colleen at our September meeting. Regina Haney, a youth we sponsored in previous years, and another nurse from Houston, whom Colleen met at the rally, may possibly attend the meeting as well. It is hoped that some organization will continue to sponsor the Summer Youth Rally in the future.

We appreciate those who attended visitor training the first part of the year and the work of Dorothy Andrews our Visitation Coordinator. I have been a trained visitor for 6 years. In that time, I have been called only 6 times by Dorothy. Those needs were evenly split between hospital and telephone calls. I say this because as trainees we must look upon ourselves somewhat as the National Guard that is trained and ready to be deployed or the "Texas Aggies" who stand ready to go on the football field to play for the team if needed. I am not sure how trained those Aggies in the stands would be to play, but we know that, as ostomy visitors, we are trained and ready to be called upon.

For those of you who are readers, there are two new books that might be of interest to you. One is a mystery written by an ileostomate of 19 years called "*Caught Holding the Bag*". Another is by a baseball coach at Youngstown State. He tells the story of living with an ostomy and Crohn's disease. Look on page 7 for more information on these two books.

Floyd and Judy Swinger will represent our chapter at the last UOA Conference in California in August. There should be programs to help local chapters make a "soft landing" in dealing with the challenges created by the dissolution of the UOA. Judy and Floyd's report about their experience and what they learned will be the program for the August meeting.

I hope to see you on August 15th.

Ed Wood
President

*"A good laugh is sunshine
in a house."*

- William Makepeace Thackeray

ANNIVERSARY GIFT

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Houston Chapter UOA. A gift of \$1.00 for each year you have had your ostomy is a guideline; however, each person determines the amount, if any, he/she wishes to give. If you desire to make such a gift, make your check payable to Houston Chapter, UOA and please send it to:

*Houston Chapter, UOA
Attn: Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164*

★ **Editor's Note:** \$168.50 has been added to our Treasury from donations to the Anniversary Gift program. **Thank you!!!**

HAPPINESS IS

Happiness, more than an emotion, is a state of mind, and attitude. More sought after than riches, more elusive than a rainbow, happiness cannot be taught, bought, or even fully described. For those who have just undergone ostomy surgery, it can take more than knowledge of the ostomy function and management to live happily ever after. For some, reaching the goal of a happy life is hard work. It can take all our emotional and intellectual resources to reach acceptance of our new "normal". Adjustment to life with an ostomy can require effort and motivation. There are no rules to follow, no formulas to pass along. It's up to you.

Ostomates all over the world are living proof that we are given a rare gift—a second chance at life. How we use the gift is a matter of choice. Once you make the choice for happiness, you'll find it everywhere! ♦

ATTENTION...

Ostomates and Medical Personnel

Clarice E. Kennedy, Certified Enterstomal Therapist and Immediate Past President of the Houston Chapter, UOA, is available for consultations by appointment only at Spring Branch Medical Supply at 8700 Long Point Road, Houston, Texas. Clarice is an ostomate herself and has 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. The Houston area is fortunate to have such a dedicated individual available for personal consultations. Appointments can be made by calling Clarice at 713-647-8029.

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

MEMORIAL FUND

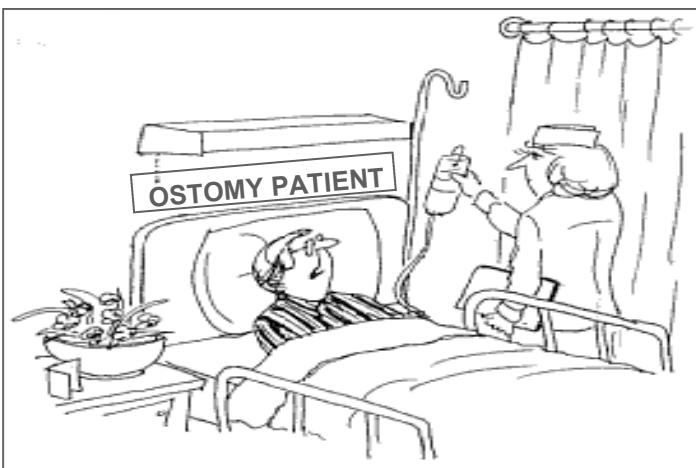
The Houston Chapter of UOA has established a Memorial Fund. Donations can be made to the fund to memorialize or honor individuals. All donations should be made payable to the Houston Chapter, UOA and sent to:

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

If you have ostomy supplies that you no longer use, please consider donating them. The Houston Chapter of UOA is contacted on a regular basis by individuals who are in need of donated supplies of all kinds. This is one way that you can assist your fellow ostomates in the Houston area. Please contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015 with any questions.



"Are you sure I'm not getting too much fiber?"

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.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO MEMBERS

Excerpt from article by Carla Mellon, RN BSN CWOON, *New Life Newsletter*, Charlotte NC

One of the most important aspects of teaching and helping the new ostomate, I feel, is being able to guide them in the **major steps** of basic ostomy care. It is vital that, at least initially, the steps be short and as few as possible. We often refer to teaching the new ostomy patient in the hospital as being able to only teach “survival skills”. The post operative patient is only able to retain small amounts of information at a time and we are often limited in how many visits we can expect to make. It is often after discharge that we capture the most teachable moments with patients and families.

I feel that it is vital when I see a patient in the outpatient setting after discharge, that I only change steps/techniques that are causing a problem for them. I only add steps that will help to solve a problem. It is important that as **UOA visitors** and at chapter meetings that you not create unnecessary anxiety for the newer ostomate by imparting any long term rituals that you may have developed in the past upon them. Just because you have applied your pouch a certain way or done a certain thing does not mean that **all** ostomates have to do it that way....there are **many correct ways** to pouch an ostomy. It creates doubt and confusion in the mind of the new ostomate when information is presented this way. Please phrase your comments...”I do this...or “This works for me” instead of “Every ostomate should do this” or “No ostomate should do that”. Please leave those statements to the trained Ostomy Nurses. As ostomates your input is **very valuable**, however you only can address what works for you, not someone else. Please leave that job to the professionals. ♦

How to stay safe in the world today.

- ✓ Avoid riding in automobiles because they are responsible for **20%** of all fatal accidents.
- ✓ Do not stay home because **17%** of all accidents occur in the home.
- ✓ Avoid walking on streets or sidewalks because **14%** of all accidents occur to pedestrians.
- ✓ Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water, because **16%** of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.
- ✓ Of the remaining **33%**, 32% of all deaths occur in hospitals. So...above all else... avoid hospitals. ♦

“First keep the peace within yourself, then you can also bring peace to others.”

– Thomas a Kempis

CONTROLLING ODORS

via the *Beacon*, Coos Bay, OR

An important part of the new ostomate’s rehabilitation is learning to control odor. It is important to feel good about oneself and be secure in relationships with others. The ostomate can be extremely sensitive to odors and the reactions of those around him or her, especially family and friends.

Colostomies tend to emit more odor than ileostomies because of the bacterial abundance in the colon. Many sigmoid and descending colostomies are routinely irrigated, so persistent odor is less of a problem than with a transverse colostomy where semi-liquid drainage tends to be rather malodorous.

Ileostomates experience almost continual peristaltic waves which sweep the ileum and prevent stagnation of the intestinal contents, thereby eliminating the major cause of odor, i.e. bacterial growth. Extreme and persistent odor from an ileostomy could be an indication of a secondary problem, such as a stricture or blockage. External and internal deodorants are available, but two important aspects of odor control are good personal hygiene and appliance care. For fecal ostomies, use odor proof pouches. Change the pouch immediately if leakage occurs. Eliminate from your diet such odor producers as cabbage, onions, fish, spicy foods and eggs. Do eat parsley and yogurt. Internal deodorants that can be taken by mouth include bismuth subgallate tablets which help control odors by absorbing toxins. Ostomates should consult their physician before taking these tablets.

Urinary Ostomates should clean their pouches periodically with agents such as Uri Kleen, etc. Vinegar solutions have fallen into disfavor because they tend to damage certain manufacturer’s pouches. Avoid eating asparagus and onions. Do eat parsley and drink cranberry juice. Deodorants are not used because they may mask the odor which could signify the presence of an infection. Urine has a characteristic odor, but a foul odor could be a sign of infection due to overgrowth of bacteria. Certain foods will affect the odor of both feces and urine. Avoiding such odor-producing foods will help.

With proper care of the appliance, personal hygiene and dietary precautions, odor should not be a problem for ostomates. ♦

Colostomy Irrigation Hint...

If you irrigate, spray the inside of the irrigation sleeve with any liquid soap before the procedure so that the stool will drain easily, the sleeve will clean faster, and less odor will be retained. Disposable sleeves are also available. ♦

BAYTOWN SUPPORT GROUP

The Baytown group has enjoyed the month of July by taking time off from the regular meeting schedule, however, everyone is ready to meet again in August on Monday, the 22nd.

We will have a round table discussion and look forward to hearing everyone's story and helping one another by answering whatever questions you may have.

We always look forward to the *WHAT'S NEW* "feature" of our meetings as well.

Come join us as we get back "in the groove". See you on the 22nd.

Cindy Barefield, RN, WOCN
281-420-8671
Pager 713-404-0296

OVER 50?

Are you over 50 and looking for reliable information on government services, health, volunteering and finances? Need help with taxes, information on fraud, long-term care, Social Security, federal and state services, pertinent laws and travel? If so, the **FirstGov for Seniors Web site** at <http://firstgov.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml> will be helpful. This site includes links on eldercare, nursing home comparisons, prescription drug assistance and a retirement calculator. ♦

ACCIDENTS

If you are worried about having an accident in bed, or worse yet, in someone else's bed, here is a suggestion. For your home, a flannel-backed tablecloth under your mattress pad works wonders. It's inexpensive, and the flannel side clings to the mattress, and it's waterproof. Be sure to place it under your mattress pad to prevent sweating from the plastic.

When you travel, use a plastic dry cleaning bag to fold your good clothes over (it will prevent wrinkles) and when you get to your destination and unpack, slip the bag under your sheet. If you slit open the side, you will find it will be more than enough to cover your half of the bed. ♦

LEND SUPPORT WHILE YOU SHOP...

Remember to use your Kroger and Randall's shopping cards. Both stores return a percentage of your purchase to the Houston group on a quarterly basis. For card applications, contact Ed Wood at 281-493-5015.

NORTHWEST GROUP HAPPENINGS

At our July 19th meeting, 14 members and guests enjoyed our annual ice cream social. Thanks to those who provided the ice cream and cookies. Ed Wood, president, from the Central Group, joined us. (Thanks, Ed, for the Oreo cookies!)

During our round table discussion, Pat Thompson, CWOCN, provided some handouts regarding heat related issues faced by ostomates. We also discussed travel tips and shared some travel experiences.

Remember those who have just had surgery and those who are waiting to be scheduled for surgery.

A big thank you to Gay Nell Faltysek for the jars of homemade jelly she gave to everyone.

As always we welcome family and friends to attend our monthly meetings.

See you on Tuesday, August 16th, for the presentation by the NW Hospital dietitian.

Tony Romeo
281-537-0681



Where *not* to sit on a plane

Ever been stuck in an airline seat that barely reclines? When you book a flight, note the type of plane you'll be on. Then go to seatguru.com, where there's info on seat pitch and width, and the spots savvy passengers request most. You'll also see the location of power ports and the audio/video gear available. As for the food—you're on your own. ♦

TWO SUMMER READING MUSTS

Caught Holding the Bag, a new mystery novel by Peter McGinn, ostomate and UOA chapter leader from Portland, ME, features two ostomates embroiled in a mysterious death and scandal. Read the first chapter and place your order for \$14.95 plus shipping at: www.booklocker.com/books/2015.html. To request the book by mail, write 665 Saco Street #172, Westbrook, ME 04092.

Healthier than Normal, is a story about Crohn's Disease and living with an ostomy. Author, Mike Florak, is one of the youngest NCAA Division 1 Baseball Coaches. He overcame eight surgeries, four blood transfusions, and bouts with depression to become an example to others that no matter what happens to the body, it is the spirit that counts. Visit www.MikeFlorak.com to order your copy of "Healthier than Normal" for \$14.95 plus \$3.95 shipping. To order by mail write to P.O. Box 2547, Wintersville, OH 43953 or call 1-888-435-6125. ♦

WHAT IS A REVISION

via New Life Newsletter, Charlotte, NC

We often hear people asking, “What is a revision?” The term applies to a surgical correction of the stoma. This may be a small procedure done in out-patient surgery, or it may be a procedure requiring hospitalization. Four common reasons for revisions are listed below. But, before we begin, please bear in mind that one of these conditions may be present without causing much trouble—in which case a revision is not needed. Revisions are most frequently done to correct:

- ✓ A tight stoma;
- ✓ A prolapse—when the stoma becomes very long and large;
- ✓ A retraction—when the stoma becomes so short that it is below the skin level;
- ✓ A hernia that is so near the ostomy that it interferes with management. ♦

DID YOU KNOW?

Sources: *Prevention Magazine* & other periodicals

- ! An increase of as little as 1 centimeter in waist size (that's less than 1/2 inch) could raise the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 28% for women and 34% for men.
- ! Estimated global medical cost of dementia—primarily from Alzheimer's—is \$156 billion....92% of which is spent by developed nations, which have less than 40% of the cases.
- ! People with diabetes are 40% more likely to suffer from glaucoma and 60% more likely to develop cataracts than those without the disease.
- ! By filling your diet with more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables and walking 30 minutes a day for 6 weeks, you can lower elevated cholesterol by 12%, diabetes by 38%, and high blood pressure by 60%. For every 1% decline in cholesterol, heart disease risk drops by 2 to 3%.
- ! For the roughly 41 million Americans with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), finding treatment is tricky. Current medications are approved only for short-term use or severe cases. Now research suggests that a natural cure—“good” bacteria called *Bifidobacterium infantis*—may soothe the pain and bloating as effectively as drugs. The bacteria may calm the inflamed inner lining of the intestines. The probiotic is still experimental, though the bacteria are found in some yogurts and supplements. ♦

“If you can't get rid of the skeleton in your closet...you'd best teach it to dance..”

- George Bernard Shaw

URINARY TRACT STONES

Via UOA Website

Urinary tract stones, particularly kidney stones, have been known for many, many years. The disease manifests primarily in adulthood, although its occurrence in children is not unknown. Three times as many males suffer from the malady as females. The pain associated with the disease, i.e., the result of passing of the stones, is recognized to be the most severe known.

Heredity is one factor that contributes to the disease. If one member of a family has stones, most likely another family member will also develop stones. Age is also a contributing factor, with males in the fifth decade of life being at the highest risk.

Summer time is the “peak” season for kidney stones because outdoor activity leads to perspiration which, in turn, may result in dehydration. Replacement of lost fluids with such liquids as ice tea or soft drinks does not adequately correct the dehydration or the tendency to form kidney stones. The ingestion (drinking) of ample amounts of water is the most important way to help prevent kidney stones.

Urostomates are at high risk of developing infections of the urinary tract and of kidney stones. Ileostomates who have lost large sections of the bowel are also at risk of developing kidney stones because they have difficulty with absorbing liquids and are thus subject to dehydration and consequently stones.

The currently preferred treatment for the majority of patients suffering from urinary tract stones employs shock waves, which break up the stones rapidly and with a minimum of discomfort. Usually one day in the hospital is all that is required.

As time goes by, we may see advances in the field of pharmaceuticals which will bring us medicine to prevent the formation of urinary tract stones. But until such time arrives, our best defense remains drinking an adequate amount of fluids, the best being water. ♦

TIPS AND HINTS

- Two or three tablespoons of plain baking soda in water when washing around the stoma will not only help heal the skin, but relieve itching too.
- Write down your pouching procedures and instruct a family member just in case you aren't able to care for yourself at some point.
- Excessive oily skin can affect adhesion. Wiping the skin around the stoma with alcohol is helpful, but be careful that the alcohol does not contain glycerin, as this will hinder adhesion.
- To check how quickly food goes through your system, eat beets. Their color and substance remain “true to the end”. ♦

Relax & enjoy life

Readers Digest supplement

■ Lean on people

Cultivate a network of people you can turn to. Share what's bothering you. Avoid people who always need something or who are moody or depressed.

■ De-clutter your world

Stop hoarding old magazines and throw away those old receipts and tax returns you no longer need. Clutter-free surroundings will help prevent the frustration of not being able to find something you need.

■ Laugh a little

Laughter sends chemicals to your brain that ease pain and enhance your feeling of well-being. It also stimulates the heart, lungs and muscles, and boosts your resistance to infection. If you laugh for 20 seconds, your body gets the same amount of beneficial oxygen—good for stress relief—as it does in three minutes of aerobic exercise. Find movies, comics or friends that make you laugh!

■ Chop your to-do list in half

After you've written your to-do list, decide what's most important to you in the long run, then cut the list in half.

■ Eliminate last-minute rushes

Leave the house 15 minutes early for appointments, set up a system for paying bills, refill your prescriptions a week ahead of time and stock up on birthday cards when you see ones you like.

■ Keep a journal

Writing is a great way to relax and put things in perspective. Reflect on your day, your emotions and your personal goals.

■ Get a massage

Massage not only relaxes tense muscles, it decreases the level of stress hormones in the bloodstream and stimulates the release of serotonin, a brain chemical associated with relaxation and a feeling of well-being.

■ Get organized

Set aside a place for bills, paperwork, letters. Store items you use most in accessible places. Spend five minutes straightening your office or main living area at the end of the day. Keep a long-range calendar and a short-range to-do list. Check off items as you finish them.

■ Carve time for yourself

Give higher priority to your "relax and renewal" time. Include it in your schedule at least every other day. Cut out an activity to make time for your hobby, or spend time reading or listening to music you love.

■ Avoid crowds

Schedule your travel to avoid traffic, go for lunch before the usual rush, order your clothes and prescription drugs through the mail. ♦

Moving??

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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 you need to contact Chuck Bouse, Treasurer, at 281-495-1840 (dewitt@houston.rr.com) or Judy Swinger, Newsletter Editor, 281-463-0069 (swingcon@ev1.net). You may also send your request to UOA, Houston Chapter, P.O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164.

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OPPORTUNITY TO LEND A HELPING HAND

If you would like to sponsor a member of our ostomy support group with a tax-deductible donation to cover the cost of membership, send your check in the amount of \$10.50 to:

**Chuck Bouse, Treasurer
P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164**

GREAT UROSTOMY HINT AND TIP

from Richard Kimball, Ostomate

I have learned a few tricks on managing my urostomy that have been helpful. One tip I've learned is a useful method on how to hang a night drainage bag in a hotel. It came to me one evening to take a clothes hanger from the closet and insert it in between the mattress and the box springs with one corner protruding. I then can hang the bag on it and it works just fine. ♦

DEALING WITH SKIN ULCERS

va Rock County, WI , GB News Review and Evansville, IN

Persons with ostomies might experience some form of skin breakdown from time to time, but "skin ulcers", which are very painful, are not common. A skin ulcer is an open wound; it can be close to the stoma or an inch or more beyond the base of the stoma. Many people who have experienced skin ulcers are under the impression that they are caused by the cement or seal which keeps the appliance adhered to the body. Up until now, we have never found this to be true. All cases of skin ulcers that we have seen have been due to belts worn either too loosely or too tightly, belts moving away from the original position or slipping or a poor fitting appliance. Although skin ulcers are not dangerous, they are painful. If they are neglected they can take more than two weeks to clear up. There are other, more difficult to treat, types of skin problems so it is crucial to see your doctor or ET nurse to find the cause and cure as quickly as possible. ♦

OPPORTUNITY TO TRY SOMETHING NEW AND EARN \$\$\$\$

Attention Colostomates:

STOMOCUR®, a leading German developer and producer of high-quality ostomy appliances, pastes and related products is planning to conduct a focus group product evaluation in Houston. The purpose of this evaluation is to demonstrate product benefits from an American perspective. In addition to testing the pouches, there will be 3 - 4 meetings of the focus group, spaced approximately 1 week apart.

STOMOCUR® is offering \$25/meeting to each colostomate (maximum of \$100) during the testing period. The pouches are, of course, free of charge.

Colostomates interested in testing these products should contact Clarice Kennedy, CET, at 713-647-8029 for more information.

IN PRAISE OF ICE CREAM

The U.S. makes enough ice cream each year to fill the Grand Canyon—about 1.4 billion gallons! Legend says the frozen treat dates back to ancient Mesopotamia and Rome. It came here from Europe in the 1700s. California now produces the most, and folks in Portland, OR eat the most per capita.

Where's the Blue Bell?! ♦



I've sure gotten old. I've had 2 bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Then there are the bouts with dementia, poor circulation, hardly can feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92 and all my friends are gone. But...Thank God, I still have my driver's license!

Advocacy for Patients with Chronic Illness

This site has been launched for people with IBD. Jennifer C. Jaff, author of "Know Your Rights: A Handbook for Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease," has inaugurated a new nonprofit corporation to advocate for patients with chronic illnesses, especially IBD. Visit www.advocacyforpatients.org to use this free service. ♦

ABDOMINAL CHANGES

via Blue Water Reflections, Port Huron, MI

The surgeon allowed only so much moveable bowel in the construction of your stoma. Once that piece of bowel was pulled through your abdominal wall, it was tacked down on the inside of the abdominal wall and on the outside of the skin. That length will remain constant throughout your life, therefore, if the wall of your abdomen thickens (i.e. with fatty tissue) the length of the bowel used for your stoma is not affected. One result of the limited length of bowel with increased abdominal wall thickness, is that when you sit or stand, the changed position causes the abdominal wall to shift forward and down, and the stoma segment prevents the peristomal skin from shifting as much as the rest of the abdomen. The limited movement results in a "skin well" around the stoma when you sit or stand. Skin adjacent to the stoma becomes quite mobile being pulled down, then flattened by your changing positions. I have found that an appliance with a firm, convex surface which "pushes" the skin back and holds it stable, relative to the stoma, works much better than the highly flexible pouches. ♦

Why do croutons come in airtight packages? Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?

Houston Chapter United Ostomy Association

Officers

President	Edgar Wood	281-493-5015 or ewood6@houston.rr.com
Immediate Past President	Clarice Kennedy	713-647-8029
First Vice President	Floyd Swinger	281-463-0069 or swingcon@ev1.net
Second Vice President	Mary Harle	713-782-7864
Treasurer	Chuck Bouse	281-495-1840 or dewitt@houston.rr.com
Secretary	Denise Parsons	713-665-8082 or rockynme2@aol.com

Appointed Positions

Baytown Group Coordinator	Cindy Barefield	281-420-8671
Grants Coordinator	Denise Parsons	713-665-8082
J-Pouch Group Coordinator	Ron Meisinger	281-491-8220
Library Coordinator	Barbara Bouse	281-495-1840 or dewitt@houston.rr.com
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