

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

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.

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.



Lynn Wolfson, with her service dog Zev, before swimming laps.

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.

(Continued on page 3)

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
60 Celebrating 60 years of helping others help themselves!

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.

In This Issue

Swimming Confidently with an Ostomy	1 & 3
Group News	2-3
WOC Nurse Directory	4
Meeting Dates/Times	5
Advertising, Support	5-7
Membership Information	7
Contact Information	8

Patient Visiting and Support Services

Doctors and WOC Nurses, please note:

Upon request from a doctor, nurse, or social worker, a specially trained visitor will be asked to contact an ostomy patient by phone or visit them in person before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. The visitor does not give medical advice, and there is no charge for this service. Please contact our Visitation Coordinator, Marian Newman at 713-392-5768.

Central Group News

At our July 18 meeting, we welcomed Kayla Graves and Megan Long with Byram Healthcare. They were kind enough to answer our many, many questions about ordering supplies through Byram and how their company differs from the other medical suppliers. One important difference is that they offer custom-made supplies. If you need personalized attention regarding your supplies, you can contact Kayla at kgraves@byramhealthcare.com.

60TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION—OCTOBER 9, 2016

Our 60th Anniversary reception will be on Sunday, October 9, 2016, from 1:00 p m to 4:00 pm at the Houston Health Museum. Invitations will go out soon. It will be a lightly-catered event and will include a mini-vendor fair. We also will have the opportunity to enjoy the fabulous exhibits at the museum. More details will follow soon, and we hope you will be able to join us to acknowledge this important milestone in our history.

NEWS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO MEDICARE—HANDLING OF OSTOMY SUPPLIES

As we have been discussing, there is a proposal to expand Medicare's competitive bidding program to ostomy and urological supplies. As stated on the UOAA's website, "because it is a medical necessity that individuals have access to a properly fitted pouching system, the one-size-fits-all policy that could result from competitive bidding is unacceptable." The UOAA is partnering with a coalition of patient organizations, health care clinicians and technology manufacturers to address our concerns. The UOAA is asking ostomates to submit their personal stories highlighting the necessity of specific fittings of ostomy and urological supplies. They believe this will be a powerful tool to convince lawmakers of the "folly of this proposal."

You can submit your story through the UOAA website, www.ostomy.org. On the main page of the website, under "Featured Resources", click on "Personal stories needed on ostomy supply access." That will bring you to the page #MyAccessMatters. At the bottom of that page, you click on "Submit Your Story." There are several blocks to complete. I contributed my story and it took about 10 minutes. Please submit your story too. This is a very important issue and we cannot assume that others will take care of this for us. We must do our part to continue to have access to the ostomy supplies we need!

AUGUST MEETING

Our next meeting is on August 15. Our speaker will be Kevin Hershey with B. Braun Ostomy Products. He's coming all the way from California so I hope you'll be able to join us.

Regards,

Lorette Bauarschi, President, OAHA, 713-582-0718

Northwest Group News

The annual ice cream social was caloric success with eleven in attendance. Additionally Kayla Graves with Byram Healthcare provided top information on Medicare allowances. Her low key and supportive presentation initiated a host of discussions between the attendees. There was a wide range of guest participation that certainly educated a new colostomy ostomate and generated a lot of responses from the older mates. The meeting ran over almost another hour.

Brownie and ice cream cups with chocolate syrup or root beer floats were offered. Byram Healthcare helped with the event funding. We missed those who were not present. Congratulations to Tony Romeo who has moved up to join the Board as our new Treasurer. Billy Locke has volunteered to become the Northwest Coordinator in his place. Go Tony and Billy, you guys rock!

Next month's program will be presented by Kevin Hershey, PPS Healthcare, B Braun Distributor for the B. Braun Flexima™ 3S ostomy appliance systems that are highly flexible with floating flanges. Additional information can be found on their website at www.bbraunusa.com.

Billy Locke 337-515-6354

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



The **United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA)**

can be contacted at:

www.ostomy.org or **800-826-0826**

FOW-USA Needs Ostomy Supplies All Year

This is the season for back to school sales. In some parts of the world children will not be able to attend school because they have no access to ostomy supplies. Your group's donation of products and financial support means that Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA can meet these children's needs. Their stories are often featured in our newsletter. To receive a copy, sign up on our website www.fowusa.org or email info@fowusa.org. Please send your unused products and donations to FOW-USA, 4018 Bishop Lane, Louisville, KY 40218-4539. We appreciate your assistance in helping us fulfill our mission.

Ann Favreau, President
Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA

Baytown Group News

“ConvaTec Product Updates & the NEW Me+ Program” enticed 10 participants out of the heat in July for Baytown’s support group meeting. Ostomy Specialist Kerriane Pelz delivered a dynamic presentation that included show and tell on the latest updates with ostomy products and an overview of the Me+ Program.

ConvaTec continues to offer traditional choices in ostomy systems for colostomy, ileostomy and urostomy. Kerriane showed the traditional cut-to-fit one piece which is very popular as well as the new Esteem moldable which is the first ever one piece pouch with moldable technology! A two piece system with Adhesive Coupling that provides flexibility and a lower profile under clothing is also available. “A customized system that works best for your ostomy type and lifestyle” is the mantra of the ConvaTec product line. Kerriane provided cards for participants to request samples if desired.

Kerriane noted that the ConvaTec website is designed with you in mind and has recently been updated. The Ostomy Care video library has short video clips that are helpful regarding products and services and are supportive to the new ostomates. The Me+ community members and former Great Comeback winners share their story with fellow community members. This is a great resource for new ostomates!

Baytown Support Group is looking forward to the next few months. In August, we have Chaplain Steve Spidell speaking on “Managing the Stresses of Change.” In September, Michelle Jernsletten, Physical Therapist will be back with us to present “Fun with Fitness 2.0”.

I hope you will plan to join us!

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWCN
281-428-3033

Swim Confidently with an Ostomy *(from page 1)*

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.

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 Manager, Jeanine Gleba, 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.

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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

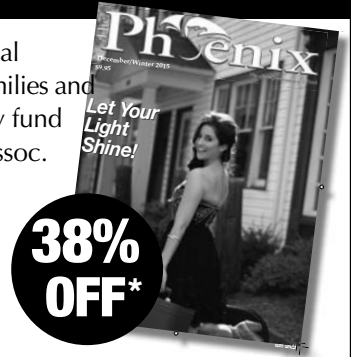
Pat Thompson RN, BSN, CWON (281) 397-2799
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Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: **August 15, 2016**
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841
 rockynme2@aol.com
Program: **Guest Speaker: Kevin Hershey**, PPS Healthcare, B. Braun Distributor for the B. Braun Flexima™3S

Baytown Group

Monthly: Second Monday of the month
Date: **August 8, 2016**
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
Program: **Guest Speaker: Chaplain Steve Spidell** speaking on "Managing the Stresses of Change"

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Wednesday of the month
Date: **August 17, 2016**
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: Billy Locke 337-515-6354
Program: **Guest Speaker: Kevin Hershey**, PPS Healthcare, B. Braun Distributor for the B. Braun Flexima™3S

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: **August 15, 2016**
Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment
Place: **Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193**
Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311
 Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

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

Opportunities and Announcements

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/>

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.

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 Tony Romeo, Treasurer, at 936-588-4031 or sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net 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: Tony Romeo, 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.)

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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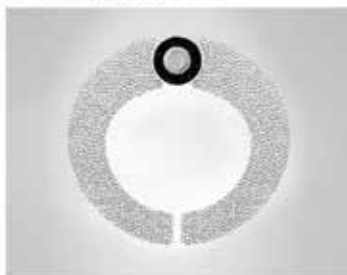
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Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area requires one easy payment. Please complete the following form and mail as directed with payment as shown.	
Dues of \$25.00 per year are payable to: Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, Attention: Treasurer P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Colostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary Diversion <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Continent Ileostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Urostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Pull-Through <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of Child with procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Family Member <input type="checkbox"/> Physician <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to attend meetings with the (please circle one) : Central Group Baytown Group Northwest Group J-Pouch Group	
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to become a member but cannot pay dues at this time. <i>(This will be kept confidential.)</i>	
I learned about the Ostomy Association from	
<input type="checkbox"/> WOC Nurse <input type="checkbox"/> Physician <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Surgical Shop <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
I am interested in volunteering. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
I have enclosed an additional \$_____ as a donation to support the association's mission of helping ostomates.	

*Membership benefits include:
 Monthly Support/Information
 Meetings, Social Events,
 Monthly Newsletter*