



January 2021

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

"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

How to Have a Thriving Social Life While Living with an Ostomy

Courtesy of UOAA

Getting to a place where you feel confident in yourself and your new routine might take some time. There are many factors to consider following your ostomy surgery, but there are also many resources available to you while you are adjusting to normal life. Having a thriving social life is not out of the question, and with some time and patience with your body, you will be living your best life.

Beginning Stages

In the beginning, it will be important to keep some sort of a journal or diary as you experiment with new foods and beverages. Figuring out how different foods and beverages affect your body will influence your social life with regards to dining out. It might be helpful to eat smaller meals more often throughout your day as you record what foods tend to cause more gas or which foods are harder for your body to break down. Remember to drink lots of water and chew your food well.

As you move from bland and softer foods to a more regular and high-fiber foods, you will notice more regularity in your bowel movements. Understanding your body's schedule will be key in planning outings, dates, and events. As you begin to venture out of the house more, remember to bring extra supplies with you and locate the restrooms should you need one with short notice.



Getting Out There

As your confidence builds, and your ostomy becomes routine and normal to you, saying 'yes' to more things will become easier and easier. If you were an active person before your surgery, you will be able to resume your active lifestyle. Whether going to the gym, running along the beach, hiking through a forest, or playing a pick-up game of basketball, exercise is key to keeping you mentally, emotionally and physically fit. While you will need to be cautious in the beginning so you can fully heal, there are few limitations on what your body can do with ostomy. If you are having a hard time figuring out what clothing or specific products will help to keep things in place during your activities, Coloplast

(Continued on page 3)

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.

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, or newmarian@gmail.com.

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Central Group News

Happy New Year 2021! I hope everyone is doing well and you all have managed to stay safe and healthy over the December holidays. The good news for 2021 is vaccinations for Coronavirus are in progress. But it appears it may be a while until we are all vaccinated and can safely carry on with our monthly meetings. I want to encourage everyone to please continue to join Joan Burnham, MSN, RN, OCN, RN-BC and the Houston Methodist Ostomy Support Group's Virtual Monthly Meetings. Mark your calendars for the next meeting: **Thursday, January 21, 2021 from 6:00–7:00 p.m. The topic is Skin and Stomas.** I hope to see you there! Thank you—Joan and your team for these informative and interesting meetings!

We have an Ostomy Visitor Training Workshop every other year, so, this is the year for the workshop. Please **SAVE THE DATE: July 17, 2021 from 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.** This training carries on a service that our organization has provided for over 65 years. Upon completion of this program, attendees will be specially trained to visit with an ostomy patient before or after their ostomy surgery. Trained visitors do not give medical advice, but these visits help patients in their rehabilitation process by demonstrating an ability to live a normal and active lifestyle with an ostomy. Stay tuned for more details as we begin planning this workshop!

If you have not read Patti Suler's Ostomate Flu and COVID-19 Resources articles in our December 2020 newsletter—please do! It is full of great information specifically geared to ostomates. Thank you, Patti for compiling this important information.

Kathleen Duplessis, President, OAHA, 713-299-3180

Northwest Group News

Northwest Group is back online for Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m. Contact your group leader for login credentials

We will be hosting Presenter Jane Fellows, CNS, CWOCN-AP. Ms. Fellows is a Coloplast professional from their Professional Education Program. She will be presenting a program for both nurses, healthcare professionals and patients regarding COVID-19 care for ileostomates who are hospitalized. These tips are critical for our special needs population and educational for lay caregivers as well. Join us for this special evening.

Billy Locke, 337-515-6354

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

HOPE—TCH Woodlands, Pediatric Group News

The HOPE group will not be meeting in January. You are welcome to join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on January 21, 2021.

MaryAnne Lewis, maryannelewis@hotmail.com or 281-948-1490

Baytown Group News

As 2020 closes out, I realize how much I have missed interacting with ostomy support group participants, family and friends each month. I am hopeful that the New Year will bring progress in this area.

Despite the many challenges of 2020, there were several innovations in the ostomy world that can be helpful to new and experienced ostomates. I have listed a few of these below:

- ConvaTec is offering extra support along with the me+™ Team. Free telehealth services with a wound, ostomy and continence nurse are available by calling the me+™ Team member at 1-800-422-8811. Your concerns will be addressed and if additional virtual support is needed, you will be referred to Corstrata™ (the telehealth partner for ConvaTec). <https://meplus.convatec.com/>
- Nationwide Ostomy 101 Classes (Live – Virtual) Non-medical lifestyle classes facilitated at no cost by person living with an ostomy & collaborated by a WOC Nurse. Classes cover pouching options, accessories, what to expect in the first 3 months, bathing, swimming, sleeping, wardrobe, exercise, travel, work and more! You have the opportunity to ask questions, but it's okay if you wish to remain quiet. This is a private, password protected class for people living with an ostomy and their family members and caregivers. Ostomy 101 classes are nonprofit & vendor neutral. <https://www.ostomy101.com/>
- Secure Start—Join Hollister Secure Start services for FREE. Dedicated ostomy support for as long as you need, regardless of the brand of products you use. <https://www.hollister.com/en/consumerservices>
- Coloplast® Care: "Having an ostomy can be a life-changer. No matter how far you are on your journey, living with an ostomy is not only about the day-to-day need to change your bag – it is also about coping with everyday challenges." A free support program with nurse-validated information as well as personalized support so you can live the life you want. <https://www.coloplastcare.com/en-US/ostomy/>

I hope to "see you" soon.

Best regards,

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN, 281-428-3033

Sugar Land Group News

Our December Houston Methodist Ostomy Support Group was joined by the Music 4 Life group and the Breast Cancer Support group for a presentation on FINDING JOY. Joan opened the meeting with a welcome to all participants and provided a brief five-minute PowerPoint presentation on ways to find joy through eyes of gratitude. **Please see the handout on page 4.** The program was then passed to Ashley Lundquist, BCMT, who played name that tune with various Christmas songs and lead sing-alongs with some Christmas carols. One participant beat out the groups to guess four songs and will receive a special song recording from the group Le Sorelle (lesorellemusic.com). Most group members appeared to be singing, smiling, and/or dancing during the singalongs. Alyssa Holzknect, SMT, then received help from the participants to rewrite White Christmas with lyrics suited to the Crazy COVID year we are having. Alyssa then sang the song for all the participants. Overall, the group displayed smiles and sang along with the SMT. We were all reminded how to find joy during the holidays, regardless of our situations.

Our Next VIRTUAL Ostomy Group meeting will be January 21, 2021 at 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM and the topic is Skin and Stomas.

Details on how to join the call are provided in your January OAHA Email. Please feel free to join us!

Joan Burnham, MSN, RN, OCN, RN-BC, Oncology Nurse Navigator at jmburnham@houstonmethodist.org or 281-274-0188



How to Have a Thriving Social Life

(continued from page 1)

has put together solutions for a variety of different sports and activities.

Making friends aware of your new ostomy can be intimidating at first. Preparing an informative, concise story to tell people may help ease your mind. Connecting with your friends and family can help you to stay positive and hopeful and will make the transition back to regular life much more manageable. Share as little or as much as you feel comfortable about your ostomy, but keep in mind that talking about it can be beneficial to both parties.

If you are in a romantic relationship, it is likely that your partner is already aware of your surgery and new ostomy. Good communication and honesty about your feelings and your partner's feelings will be vital to the future of your relationship. It may take time for you to feel ready to be sexually active following your surgery, but exploring this as a couple and in the timing that works best for you will go a long way in helping your relationship succeed.

Meet Others Like You

You are not alone in this new change to your body. There are many people living with an ostomy already out there who are interested in connecting and sharing their stories. It can be helpful to talk to someone who is in a similar situation and who will understand the ups and downs of this new routine. Getting connected to a group or network that shares your story can be radically healing and help with your confidence and self-esteem, not to mention broaden your social network. If you aren't ready to venture out to a group just yet, you may want to begin by watching and hearing stories from others living with an ostomy to see how they were able to travel, date, go back to work, stay active, and enjoy a healthy sex life.

Whatever stage you are at in your recovery and healing process; if you are adapting to a new routine with your pouching system or working your way to sexual confidence with a partner, know that it is possible. While it may feel daunting to say yes to a date or go out to dinner with a group of friends, with just a little extra planning and the support of others, you can have a thriving social life with an ostomy.

Editor's note: This article is from one of UOAA's digital sponsors, Coloplast. Sponsor support along with donations from readers like you help to maintain the UOAA website and the free trusted resources of UOAA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Finding Joy

December 17, 2020

Counting your blessings is one way to start viewing life in a more positive note. Our brains are wired for negativity – it helps us recognize when something is bad that we need to avoid. This negativity can also rob us of the good things that occur, and we miss the chances to see things in a positive light. By focusing our view on things that we are grateful for we allow ourselves to see what makes us happy. Knowing what we are grateful for also helps us to know what to surround ourselves with to be happier, have less stress dealing with negativity and set goals to increase our joy from day to day. And people like us better when we are happier, joy helps bring people closer together in a positive way.

How does one recognize gratitude? There are many ways to find joy and the things that you are grateful for in your life. Documenting what you see as good things can be done by journaling or writing three positive things daily in a notebook. Sometimes it may be hard to think of things that you are thankful for so some prompts may be helpful:

- What was the last thing that made you laugh?
- Was there someone who showed you compassion today?
- What do you enjoy about your pet or other animals?
- What are your daily rituals? How do they help you find peace and make your day possible?
- What does your spouse or significant other do for you that you are grateful for?
- What freedoms does being single allow you?
- Who are people from your past for whom you are most grateful?
- Is there an inspirational quote that you live by? How does it inspire you?
- Are there any special dates in your life that make you feel happy?
- If you have lost someone, what aspects bring the least amount of pain along with a positive feeling?
- What is one thing in your day that you could call a “tiny gift”?
- What are your favorite clothes and why do you like them?
- Who in your life makes you feel good when they smile at you?
- What memories from your childhood make you happy?
- What music makes you feel like dancing or singing?

Journaling is not the only way to find your joy. You may choose to do artwork or engage in a hobby that you enjoy. You may go through photos or a photo album and remember fun times and relive memories that make you happy. You may find a song that makes you feel like dancing or singing along – Do It!

Maybe it is physical activity, like walking, or dancing, or yoga, that makes you feel good. It could be your pet that makes you feel good and loved. We all have a favorite food that gives us warm and fuzzy feelings of comfort and joy. And the blessing of touch, a hand holding, a hug, or even a shared smile can do wonders for our emotional well-being.

We encourage you to try some of these activities for at least 10 to 14 days and see if you don't feel better and have a more positive outlook on your life and your mood.

Happy Holidays and Be Safe!!

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: No meeting in January—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on January 21.
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841 rockynme2@gmail.com

Baytown Group

Date: Monday, January 18, 2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual Webex Meeting (Current Baytown Support Group members have been invited.)
Contact: Cindy Barefield, CWOCN, 281-428-3033

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Wednesday of the month
Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2021
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual Meeting—January 20, 2021 (Contact your group leader for login credentials.)
Program: Jane Fellows, CNS, CWOCN-AP, Coloplast Professional Education Program “COVID-19 Care for Ileostomates”
Contact: Billy Locke 337-515-6354

Sugar Land Group

Monthly: Third Thursday of the month
Date: Thursday, January 21, 2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual Webex Meeting (Information is provided in the email of your January Newsletter.)
Program: “Skin and Stomas,” RSVP to Joan at 281-274-0188 or jmburnham@houstonmethodist.org
Contact: Joan Burnham, MSN, RN, OCN, RN-BC, Oncology Nurse Navigator (info above)

Woodlands Pediatric Group

Monthly: Second Sunday of the Month
Date: No meeting in January—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on January 21.
Contact: MaryAnne Lewis, maryannelewis@hotmail.com or 281-948-1490

J-Pouch

For J Pouch questions, attend any of our group meetings, or call or text Ron Meisinger at 281-491-8220

Opportunities and Announcements

Use Those Shopping Cards

Kroger (LB326) and Randalls (3698) 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.

AmazonSmile

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted to select a charitable organization from the list of organizations. You can change your selection at any time. To change your charitable organization: Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Select Ostomy Association of the Houston Area as your charity.

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? Changing Your Email Address?

Please make sure we have your current contact information so we can reach you by email, U.S. mail, or phone. Send updates to Lorette Bauarschi at lorette@bauarschilaw.com.

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

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
 Attn: Mike McGinity, 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.)



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

WOC Nurse Directory

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN (281) 428-3033
Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital
cbarefield@houstonmethodist.org

Pat Thompson RN, BSN, CWON (281) 397-2799
Patricia.Thompson6@hcahealthcare.com



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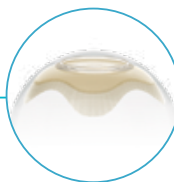
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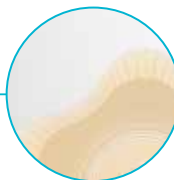
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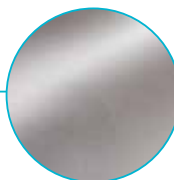
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Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, Attention: Treasurer
P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164

Date: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ E-mail: **(required)** _____

Surgery Date: _____ Birth Date: _____ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other _____

Reason for surgery ☐ Crohn's ☐ Ulcerative Colitis ☐ Cancer ☐ Birth Defects ☐ Other _____

In addition to English, I also speak the following language(s). Foreign language spoken: _____

Why do we ask this? We have a patient visiting program and we are occasionally contacted by ostomates who are not fluent in English and we look to our membership to assist with communication.

Procedure or Relationship:

To help us complete our records, please answer the following.

Check all that apply.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Urostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Family Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary Diversion | <input type="checkbox"/> Pull-Through | <input type="checkbox"/> Physician |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> J-Pouch | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse |

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Monthly Support/Information
Meetings, Social Events,
Monthly Newsletter*

☐ I would like to attend meetings with the **(please circle one)**:

Central Group Baytown Group Northwest Group Sugar Land Group Woodlands Pediatric Group

☐ I would like to become a member but cannot pay dues at this time. *(This will be kept confidential.)*

I learned about the Ostomy Association from

☐ WOC Nurse ☐ Physician ☐ Newsletter ☐ Surgical Shop ☐ Website ☐ Other: _____

I am interested in volunteering. ☐ Yes ☐ No

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