



November 2020

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

Eight Reasons for Pouch Leakage

1. **Poor adherence to peristomal skin**—Apply pouch to dry skin. A warm hand over the pouch for 30 to 60 seconds assures a good seal.
2. **Wrong size of pouch opening**—Be sure that the size of your stoma has not changed. Remeasure and adapt accordingly.
3. **Folds and creases**—Ostomy paste can be used to build up an area in order to avoid leakage. Consult your WOC nurse for proper methods.
4. **Peristomal skin irritation**—Avoid irritated or denuded skin. If any of these problems develop, consult your WOC nurse.
5. **Too infrequent emptying**—Pouches should be emptied before they are full. Weight of the effluent may break the seal causing a leak.
6. **Extremely high temperatures**—Wafer melt may cause leakage in warm weather. Change pouch more frequently or try a different wafer.
7. **Pouch wear and tear**—If you are stretching your wear time, leakage may be due to wafer wearing out. Change pouch more frequently.
8. **Improper storage**—Store your ostomy supplies in a cool, dry place. Humidity may affect your pouch adhesive. Appliances don't last forever. Ask your vendor what the recommended shelf life is for your brand of pouch.

Some important information about Thanksgiving this year which was found on the CDC Website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html#thanksgiving>

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a time when many families travel long distances to celebrate together. Travel increases the chance of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others. If you must travel, be informed of the risks involved.

Lower risk activities

- Having a small dinner with only people who live in your household
- Preparing traditional family recipes for family and neighbors, especially those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and delivering them in a way that doesn't involve contact with others
- Having a virtual dinner and sharing recipes with friends and family



(Continued on page 4)

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

We had two virtual gatherings in October and I am so happy I was able to attend both of them! The Houston Methodist Sugar Land Group is doing a fabulous job with monthly WebEx meetings on the third Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m. The October 15th topic was "Come a little closer – intimacy and Stomas" with special guest speaker, Courtney Foster sharing her journey coping with a new ostomy during her first year of marriage. Courtney was just delightful and shared some great information and stories. Following Courtney's talk, Joan Burnham presented a summary of key points about intimacy and stomas.

The Northwest Group held their annual picnic virtual style on Wednesday, October 21st at 7 p.m. We enjoyed a few friendly trivia team competitions in break out rooms and some of the questions were pretty tough! And occasionally we were interrupted by the ringing of a bell which meant a door prize was about to be awarded which made the evening a lot of fun! I enjoyed meeting and getting to know everyone while learning some fun trivia. I received a virtual goodie bag and a door prize! Lucky me! I'd like to thank Patti Suler and her crew for a well planned and fun 'virtual picnic'. I am looking forward to attending the annual picnic next year IN PERSON so I can try some of Billy's rice dressing!

Please mark your calendars for Sugar Land's November 19th virtual meeting. The topic will focus on traveling with an ostomy. If traveling, I am sure this will be of interest to many of you and I hope to see you on the screen in November. I have plans to travel to Hawaii on Saturday, October 24th. I have taken my first COVID-19 test and I need a negative result for my trip—wish me luck!

Please have a safe and happy Thanksgiving. Everyone knows the drill —wear a mask, social distance and wash your hands frequently. In this newsletter check out the Thanksgiving CDC suggestions for lower risk activities for Thanksgiving dinner gatherings.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

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



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 November. You are welcome to join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on November 19.

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

Northwest Group News

The Northwest Group enjoyed their annual Picnic gathering online this month. Almost a dozen people gathered and enjoyed fellowship and games. Honored guests included Lisa Gausman, Senior Editor of *Ostomy Canada* Magazine, Kathy Duplessis, OAHA President, and Pat Thompson, HCA Northwest Medical CWON. We welcomed back Lisa P. from the Bryan area as well as many regular members of the Northwest Group.

Two teams were formed to play Trivia. The Musketeers (Kathy, Pat, Nancy and Lisa P.) versus The Goose Patrol (Billy P., Billy L., Jay B., and Lisa G.). Each team broke into individual breakout rooms to answer questions. Three rounds with 10 questions each were played on topics covering Geography, Food, Cars and Sports. The Musketeers edged out the Goose Patrol and maintained their slight lead to win 19 to 16. Patti's 2021 Calendars were offered as prizes and were awarded to each member of the Musketeers to be mailed out. Additionally everyone received an email afterwards with copies of three versions of my rice dressing recipe.



Door prizes were awarded at 20-minute intervals by picking numbers between 1–20. Pat Thompson, Jay B. and Kathy all won Amazon gift cards which were distributed via email. Everyone had a fun time and several folks stayed afterwards just to catch up and visit. We shared news and updates on several members that could not be present.

The Northwest Group will resume meeting monthly online beginning in January 2021. Our next meeting will be online Wednesday, January 20th, at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see everyone then. Safe Holidays.

Billy Locke, 337-515-6354

Baytown Group News

Baytown Ostomy Support Group will not meet in November as we are still observing social distancing requirements. We plan to stay in touch via email.

You are welcome to join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on November 19.

Best regards,

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN 281-428-3033

Sugar Land Group News

Our virtual meeting was started at 6:00 PM. Topic was “Come a little closer—Intimacy and Stomas” Our Guest Speaker, Courtney Foster, presented information on her journey with her ileostomy following a massive abdominal infection. She was newly married and after a prolonged hospital stay, she came home to discover she really did not know anything about how to care for her stoma. She and her husband learned together and she found many resources online and in books. Her husband actually put on a pouch and filled it with chocolate pudding then proceeded to jump around and basically try to dislodge the pouch without success. They were not able to make the bag burst, despite slamming into a wall face first. And flopping onto a bed face first! This gave her comfort in the security of her bag not leaking during intimate moments. The visual of seeing her husband with a bag on his abdomen helped her to realize that her stoma was not who she was and that her husband was all-in and that he loved her, including her ileostomy. Ashley shared that she and her husband have learned to be intimate with her stoma using a stoma cap (so that things are not flapping) and an ostomy belt (to hold the stoma cap in place). She also displayed a couple of belts that showed the pocket where the bag is held firmly, and some undergarments that also hold the bag flat against the skin.

Resources that Ashley uses include:

Helpful Web Sites

ostomysecrets.com
vblush.com

Providers for supplies

- Target
- Amazon
- Etsy—ostomy bag cover
- Coloplast—Coloplast Assure one-piece stoma cap with filter

Resources for more information

Brenda Eslagher books: https://www.amazon.com/gp/aw/d/1936953137/ref=dbs_a_w_dp_1936953137

ISBN-13: 978-1936953134

ISBN-10: 1936953137

Joan Burnham then presented a summary of key points regarding intimacy and stomas:

(Please note links in article to Websites are hyperlinks.)

1. Trust and communication are the true keys to intimacy. The more you share about your ostomy, how you feel, and what you need, the stronger the bond between you and your partner.
2. How you see yourself will influence how your partner sees you. Take time after surgery to acknowledge the changes your

body has been through, check in with your emotions about how you feel post-surgery, and share your feelings with your partner. You'll find that acceptance of your body after surgery comes with time.

3. The organ of your body that is the sexiest is your brain—all of your other senses feed into your brain and how your brain interprets those sensations is what makes something sexy.
4. Stomas do not have nerve endings and cannot transmit pain but can bleed if irritated or rubbed. Trying different positions can help you avoid any issues.
5. Plan ahead and empty your bag and wear a small pouch. For intimate moments, [special pouches](#) are available that are designed to be smaller and less bulky.
6. Covers can help with appearance. If your stoma makes you uneasy during intimate moments, cover your pouch with specially designed underwear, lingerie or pouch cover. We offer a stylish line of [undergarments, intimacy wraps](#) and more that can help take your mind off your ostomy and allow you to focus on your partner.
7. Oral contraceptives can be ineffective with a short gut. If you use the pill, you may need to change your birth control—particularly if you've had an ileostomy. Oral contraceptives are often not absorbed with a shorter small intestine. Talk to your doctor or ostomy nurse about the best form of birth control for you. Other medications can interfere with sexual desire, erection, and sexual functioning.
8. For people with abdominal stomas, sexual function may or may not change. Women could sometimes have pain during sex. Men may have trouble getting and keeping an erection. Their sexual potency may sometimes be affected for a short time. These problems usually get better with time.

For Women—After surgery, many women experience vaginal dryness. Try a lubricant or ask your doctor about other options to treat vaginal dryness. KY Extens/Gyne-Moistren or long acting lubricant once every 3 days

For Men—Some men may experience erectile dysfunction symptoms (*i.e.*, achieving/sustaining an erection or inability to ejaculate) the first time they are intimate following surgery. Don't worry or panic! This can often occur—it may be related to the surgery itself or to worries/concerns over being intimate post-surgery. If you experience continued problems maintaining an erection, call your healthcare provider. Most likely, there is a solution.

(Continued on page 4)

Sugar Land Group News *(continued from page 3)*

9. Pregnancy is possible for women who have had ostomy surgery. The ostomy itself is not a reason to avoid pregnancy. But before you plan to get pregnant you should talk about it with your doctor. If you are healthy, the risk during childbirth appears to be no greater than for other mothers. Of course, any other health problems must be considered and discussed with your doctor.
10. Regardless of your sexual orientation or gender identity, giving and receiving pleasure can be expressed in many ways—hugging, kissing, cuddling, holding hands, masturbation, oral sex, stimulation with the hands, and even sleeping in the same bed.

Odor is a turn off for any partner—What do we know about odor from a stoma—it really is not there. And people do fart during sex without a stoma, at least with a stoma your gas can be contained!

Older people don't have sex—Ha! Many seniors, including ones with an ostomy, are sexually active.

11. Things you should include in your communication:
 - Physical limitations (vagina dryness, problems with erections)
 - Pain, if present
 - Fears (of being unlovable, naked, leakage, odor, rejection)
 - Your mutual expectations
 - What sexual activities you like to do
 - What sexual activities you do not like to do
 - Anger, resentment, guilt or other emotions that interfere with the desire to share sex

All this information and more can be found in the United Ostomy Association of America booklet- Intimacy After Surgery Guide: <https://www.ostomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Intimacy-After-Ostomy-Surgery-Guide.pdf>

A discussion Q&A followed regarding some experiences of the attendees on their own journeys with a stoma.

Our next meeting is November 19, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a WebEx virtual platform. Our topic will be: "Traveling with an Ostomy" **Details on how to join the call are provided in your November 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

Thanksgiving *(continued from page 1)*

- Shopping online rather than in person on the day after Thanksgiving or the next Monday
- Watching sports events, parades, and movies from home

Moderate risk activities

- Having a small outdoor dinner with family and friends who live in your community
- Lower your risk by following CDC's recommendations on hosting gatherings or cook-outs.
- Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizer before touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to maintain social distancing
- Attending a small outdoor sports events with safety precautions in place

Higher risk activities

Avoid these higher risk activities to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Going shopping in crowded stores just before, on, or after Thanksgiving
- Participating or being a spectator at a crowded race
- Attending crowded parades
- Using alcohol or drugs, which can cloud judgment and increase risky behaviors
- Attending large indoor gatherings with people from outside of your household



HOW TO TREAT ILEOSTOMY BLOCKAGE



What You May Experience (Symptoms)

- Thin, clear liquid output with foul odor; can progress to no output.
- Cramping pain in the abdomen (belly); may be near the stoma or the entire abdomen.
- Decrease in urine output; urine may be dark in color. This may happen from dehydration due to not wanting to drink fluids because you don't feel well.
- Swelling of the abdomen and stoma.

Note: After abdominal surgery, a blockage of the small bowel can happen for many reasons including from scar tissue (adhesions). If stool is not coming out of your stoma, it is best to call your doctor or go to the emergency room (ER) immediately to determine if you have a stoma blockage related to food, or a small bowel obstruction.



If you suspect a blockage that may be due to food particles collecting inside your stoma (stoma blockage), follow step one.

If you are vomiting, or have abdominal pain, or have additional concerns, call your doctor or go to the ER before trying these steps.

STEP 1

Call your health care provider's office to let them know about any change in function lasting more than 2-4 hours even if there is no pain or vomiting.

- If your stoma starts to swell, replace your pouching system. Cut the opening of your wafer a little larger than normal to accommodate the swelling.
- If there is no output from your stoma, and you are not nauseated or vomiting, stop eating solid food and only consume liquids such as juices, warm broth or tea.
- Take a warm bath or shower to relax the abdominal muscles.
- A heating pad placed on a low setting may be helpful to relax the abdominal muscles.
- If possible, take a short walk or just walk slowly around your house, as long as it's not too painful.
- Try several different body positions, such as a knee-chest position, or lie on the side of your stoma with knees bent, as it might help move the blockage forward.
- Massage the abdominal area and the area around your stoma. Most food blockages occur just below the stoma and this may help dislodge the blockage.

If you do not have any output for several hours, have abdominal pain and/or you are vomiting, your abdomen is distended (swollen), and the symptoms continue, or your stoma is edematous (swollen) or the color of the stoma has significantly darkened; follow step two.

STEP 2

- Stop eating and drinking.
- Call your doctor.
- If you are unable to reach your doctor, go to the emergency room (ER) immediately.
- Take your pouching supplies with you to the ER as they may not have your particular products.
- Take this card to the ER with you and give it to the admission nurse or medical professional caring for you.

**For tips to help prevent blockages, see UOAA's
Eating with an Ostomy ~ A Comprehensive Nutrition Guide for Those Living with an Ostomy**

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: No meeting in November—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on November 19.
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841 rockynme2@gmail.com

Baytown Group

Monthly: Second Monday of the month
Date: No meeting in November—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual meeting on November 19.
Contact: Cindy Barefield, CWOCN, 281-428-3033

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Wednesday of the month
Date: November 21, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Program: No meeting in November—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual meeting on November 19.
Contact: Billy Locke 337-515-6354

Sugar Land Group

Monthly: Third Thursday of the month
Date: November 19, 2020
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: **VIRTUAL WEBEX MEETING (Information is provided in the email of your November Newsletter.)**
Program: “Traveling with an Ostomy” RSVP to Joan at 281-274-0188 or jmburnham@houstonmethodist.org.
Contact: Joan Burnham, MSN, RN, OCN, RN-BC, Oncology Nurse Navigator, 281-274-0188

Woodlands Pediatric Group

Monthly: Second Sunday of the Month
Date: No meeting in November—Join the Sugar Land Group Virtual Meeting on November 19.
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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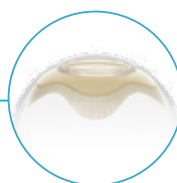
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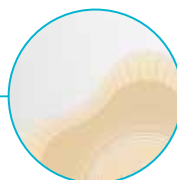
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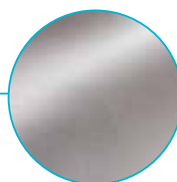
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Membership Application

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

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.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Ileostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of Child with procedure |
| <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 |

*Membership benefits include:
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

I have enclosed an additional \$_____ as a donation to support the association's mission of helping ostomates.



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