



June 2025

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.

www.ostomyhouston.org

Final Issue of OAHA Newsletter

In this our last newsletter, the Board of Directors of the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area would like to express our gratitude to all the volunteers who have given their time and energy to our support group over the last 69 years. All of you believed in our mission to help ostomates to adjust to their new lives. We also want to thank those of you who have reached out to express your gratitude for the work we have accomplished. I wanted to share with you an email we received from our friend David Frank of the Beaumont support group:

Dearest Lorette,

I can remember as a child in 1957 having my brother drive me over to Houston to attend one of your meetings.

I was barely a teenager at the time and knew nothing about how to help myself.

One has to remember that I started using freezer bags as an appliance.

Somehow I learned about a company in Minnesota that had an appliance but it did not have an adhesive. I kept it on using two belts.

But I met many ostomates that evening and was given quite a bit of information.

There is an old saying about a sprinkle of light can eliminate a world of darkness.

The Houston UOAA has done that for a lot of people.

I send you all my Best.

Warmest regards,

David

Please remember that there are still three support groups available in the greater Houston area. We will keep our website up until the end of this year. In addition, the UOAA has many resources for ostomates.

Goodbye with love.

2025 UOAA National Conference

It only happens every two years, make this the year you attend! Hotel Reservations are now open. Registration opened on January 1, 2025.

**Orlando, Florida—
August 14-16, 2025**

Save the date for this highly anticipated social and educational event! Plan a vacation with family or ostomy friends at the fabulous Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress Resort.



Visit www.ostomy.org/2025conference/ regularly for updates.



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

Ostomy Outpatient Clinics

Memorial Hermann – Greater Heights BY APPOINTMENT
Call 713-867-2432

Memorial Hermann – Northeast FRIDAY AFTERNOONS, BY APPOINTMENT
Call 281-540-6322 or fax a referral to 281-540-7107.

Memorial Hermann Rehabilitation Hospital – Katy BY APPOINTMENT
Contact Kim Dewitt, Clinic Manager
kim.dewitt@memorialhermann.org 281-579-5541

Memorial Hermann – The Woodlands BY APPOINTMENT
Contact Stephanie Wilkins 281-602-4830 or fax 281-602-4849



OSTOMY ASSOCIATION OF THE HOUSTON AREA
P. O. BOX 25164
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77265-5164
www.ostomyhouston.org

April 1, 2025

Dear Friends:

It is with heavy hearts that we inform you that the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area is ceasing operations at the end of our fiscal year on June 30, 2025.

As many of you are aware, our group has been struggling for years with lack of attendance and lack of participation. The Board of Directors finally has come to the determination that we are no longer able to fulfill the purposes for which we were created in 1956. We do not take this step lightly, as we are aware that our group is one of the oldest ostomy support groups in the country. Nevertheless, we do not see a path forward for the group as it is currently organized.

The OAHA is a Texas nonprofit organization that we established in 2005 when the original UOA disbanded and before the UOAA was created. We obtained our own tax exempt status from the IRS and the State of Texas. Accordingly, we have certain filing and other legal requirements that the Affiliated Support Groups who formed under the UOAA umbrella do not have.

We believe it is important for us to outline some of the reasons why we have reached this difficult decision:

- Attendance at the “central” support group meetings has been practically non-existent. We experimented with holding quarterly meetings instead of monthly meetings, but we saw no improvement. This is the sole support group meeting in Houston (that we are aware of) that is not facilitated by a WOC nurse. We do truly appreciate the efforts of Ama Acheampong and other nurses over the years who have attended our support group meetings. The groups we once deemed our satellite groups have either disbanded (Baytown) or have chosen to obtain their own Affiliated Support Group status under the UOAA umbrella (Northwest). It seems that the support groups run by nurses better fill the need for ostomy patients.
- There are other support groups facilitated by nurses in the Houston area – Northwest, North Houston, Sugar Land, Clear Lake and The Woodlands pediatric group.
- The UOAA has begun providing more information on their website that is useful to ostomates no matter where they are located, such as the virtual ostomy clinic and the outpatient ostomy services locator. It is our understanding that it is also working on providing ostomy “friends” (formerly, visitors) from a national database. Further, the UOAA offers an individual membership (not through an ASG) so that ostomates can receive information directly from them.
- Our membership has declined significantly from nearly 200 members in 2005 to less than 40 members in 2024.
- We send our monthly newsletter to 330 subscribers. Based on a review of our audience reports over the last couple of years, our newsletter consistently is only read by around 30 people. It is not worth the effort to produce a monthly newsletter that is not reaching many readers.

April 1, 2025

- We have not been successful in recruiting many new members to serve on our Board of Directors. Most of the OAHA Board members have been on the Board since its inception 20 years ago.
- Attending the UOAA national conference in Houston in 2023 revealed to us that there are many ostomates and nurses in the Houston area who have never heard of our group, and those who had heard of us had no interest in joining or assisting the group. We firmly believe that there is still a need for ostomy support in the Houston area. However, we do not see that our group and the effort the Board is making are having any impact on the goal of providing that support.

Our plan is to terminate operations (including the monthly newsletter) at the end of June 2025 and dissolve the non-profit corporation. We will file our final Form 990N with the IRS. We plan to keep a static version of our website up through December 2025, which will show the dates and times for the current support groups operating in the area and include a notice of our termination.

The Board is formulating a plan to distribute any funds remaining at the end of 2025. We must distribute such funds to charitable organizations who support ostomates in the Houston area. We would be happy to hear suggestions from you that we could consider.

We are heartbroken that we have had to make this decision. We have appreciated working with you over the years to help ostomates. Individually, we Board members are not going anywhere and are happy to assist you in your important roles if you find that you need us. None of us is any less passionate about providing support to ostomates.

Sincerely,

OAHA Board of Directors



Ostomy Association
of the Houston Area
ostomyhouston.org

Houston Southeast Group (Clear Lake)

Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025
(4th Thursday of every month)
Time: 6:00 p.m. (In person)
Place: HCA Healthcare Clear Lake, Rm. 111
450 Medical Center Blvd., Webster, TX 77598
RSVP: Colorectal Coordinator 281-381-3619
Webex : Web Ex Call In #1 415-655-0001
Meeting Nbr. 2664-756-6169
Password: JijJMSDH623
For Info: 281-338-3665

Northwest Group

Date: Wednesday, June 18, 2025
(3rd Wednesday of every month)
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: In-Person Meeting:
Montgomery County South Regional Library,
2101 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands, TX, 77380
Contact: Mary Kinsey, BSN, RN, CWON
936-443-2565 mkinsey815@gmail.com

Sugar Land Group

Date: Thursday, June 19, 2025
(3rd Thursday of every month)
Time: 6:00–7:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual
Program: Dawnette Meredith from Ostomy 101
Contact: Jennifer Cerda, MSN, RN, OCN, Nurse Navigator,
346-901-2012 jcerda@houston.methodist.org

J-Pouch

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

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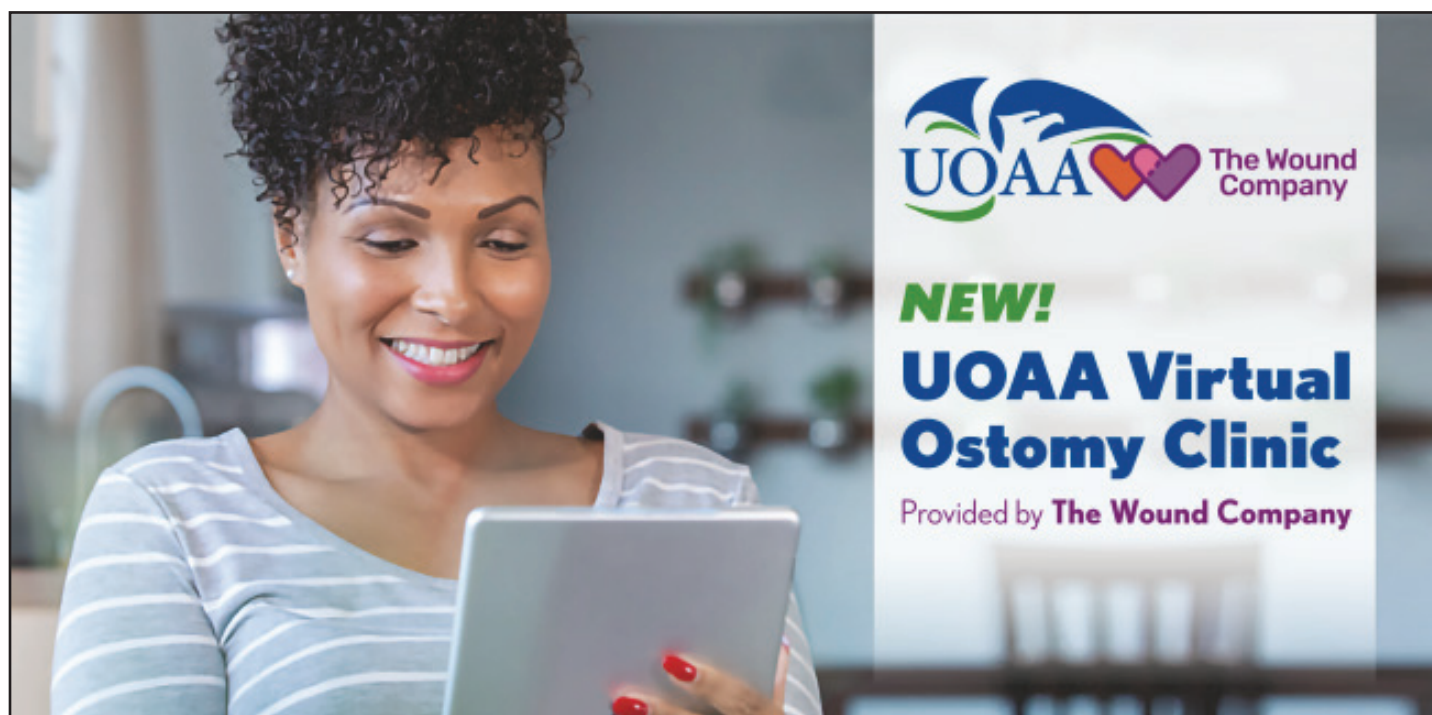
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Reference: 1. Lessons Learned About Peristomal Skin Complications: Secondary Analysis of the ADVOCATE Trial. Salvadellena, Ginger, Colwell, Janice C.; Skountrianos, George; Pittman, Joyce.
 2. Maria Teresa Szewczyk, MD, PhD; Grazyna Mjewa, RN, ETN; Mary V. Cabral, MS, FNP-BC, CWOCN-AP; and Karin H. Izel-Priontek, RN; The Effects of Using a Moldable Skin Barrier on Peristomal Skin Condition in Persons with an Ostomy: Results of a Prospective, Observational, Multinational Study. Ostomy Wound Management 2014;60(12):16-26.
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Your Own Virtual Certified Ostomy Nurse for 30 Days!

In the healthcare system today, too many ostomates are underserved and do not have the regular access to a certified ostomy nurse they need for a successful health journey. That's why UOAA has partnered with The Wound Company - to bring certified ostomy nurses to ostomates and their caregivers virtually, wherever they may live across the United States.

For a one-time direct payment of \$125, The Wound Company's certified ostomy nurses provide people with personalized support via Zoom, text SMS and email for **30 days** - in the privacy of their own home.

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- ✓ Answer ostomy questions from ostomates over email or text SMS for the 30-day program.
- ✓ Provide personalized education, care, and support throughout the program, including tips on diet, nutrition, hydration and intimacy.
- ✓ Follow up with one additional comprehensive telehealth assessment during the program when necessary.
- ✓ Provide a summary of the assessment and recommendations for ongoing care after each telehealth assessment.



Visit www.ostomy.org/clinic for complete details and schedule your personalized support today!



Or SCAN HERE
to visit www.ostomy.org/clinic



Join UOAA National Memberships

www.ostomy.org/membership



As a National Member of UOAA, you are helping us to achieve our goal to support, educate, empower and advocate for people who have or will have ostomy or continent diversion surgery. By joining UOAA, you will also help increase the influence and voice the ostomy community has on a national level.

You can join annually as a National Individual Member or as a National Medical Professional Member.

As a UOAA member you will receive a packet of our educational resources, national membership and stoma rose pins, be the first to receive any new publications, and can be nominated to be elected to UOAA's Board of Directors. You will also receive a special promotion code to subscribe to *The Phoenix* magazine at a discounted rate.

Sign up for UOAA's monthly newsletter at www.ostomy.org/e-news-sign

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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

Kinsey Ostomy Care
info@kinseyostomy.com

Amanda Dominguez, BSN, RN, CWOCN (202) 742-WOCN
Brazos Valley Ostomy & Wellness, PLLC
www.BVOstomyandWellness.com

Find Outpatient Ostomy Services Near You!

Link to the search page:

<https://www.ostomy.org/outpatient-ostomy-services-locator/>

To help ensure ostomates receive continuous care following stoma creation and/or revision surgery, UOAA has developed the first-ever “Locator” to improve access to care. Some practices/clinics only see patients who had their surgery in their acute care facility. Some require a referral. Generally, there are guidelines for each facility and they are subject to change over time.

Search for outpatient ostomy services by city, state, or zip code. Along with the name and address, if additional information was provided or visibly public on a listings’s website such as hours of operation, it will be shown with the listing. This is not an all-inclusive list.

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Donating Ostomy Supplies?

Here are a few options if you would like to donate ostomy supplies. These non-profit organizations are all volunteer run.

Local Community Ostomy Donation Closet 1740 W. 27th St., Suite 234, Houston, Texas, 77008. Open by appointment for donation drop off or pickup Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please call or text Ericka Pitman, RN, WCC, OMS 346-263-9658, or contact Mary Kinsey, BSN, RN, CWON, 936-443-2565 to arrange access.

NEW! Woodlands Area Donation Site Mary Kinsey has started a donation closet at the Woodlands. Please contact Mary Kinsey, BSN, RN, CWON, 936-443-2565 to arrange access.

Medical Bridges: they collect medical supplies locally. On their website, click the Get Involved link and then the donate supplies link. It provides you with various options. <https://www.medicalbridges.org/>

Friends of Ostomates USA: Provides ostomy supplies and educational resources at no cost to ostomates in need around the world. Their warehouse is located in Louisville, KY. Please go to their website for details: <https://www.fowusa.org/>

Kindred Box: Is dedicated to improving the lives of people with ostomies and they distribute donated ostomy supplies to support the care of uninsured and underinsured ostomates in America struggling with financial hardship. Go to <https://www.kindredbox.org/> and find out what ostomy products they can accept and to learn about their Postage Program which helps with your shipping expenses. The Kindred Box is located at 4653 Nall Rd., Suite F12, Farmers Branch, TX 75244.

More options can be found on the UOAA’s website: <https://www.ostomy.org/donate-ostomy-supplies/>

