



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

If errors are noted in your name or address, please bring these to my attention. If you know of someone to add or delete from our mailing list, please notify me. I can be reached at work, 325-670-4302, or by email, callen@hendrickhealth.org. We are now sending our newsletter electronically to those who request it be sent that way. Please send me your e-mail address if you would like a link to the newsletter.

If you know of someone who would be a good speaker at one of our meetings, please contact us.

– Charlotte Allen, MSN, RN-BC, CWOCN



LAST MEETING

For the January 9 meeting, Vina Gilbert, WOC nurse, talked about ways to get us moving, including sports and fitness for the ostomate. She gave some really good exercise tips.

NEXT MEETING

For the February 13 meeting, Marka Riddle, registered dietician, will talk to the group about dietary issues specific to ostomates and general dietary information.

MAY & JUNE MEETING

For the May and June meetings, we will hold visitor training. This program trains ostomates on how to visit patients with new ostomies. Mark your calendars now to attend. The WOC nurses really want volunteers to be encouragers to new ostomates!

Everyone is welcome. Bring your spouse or a friend or come alone.

We meet in the Diabetes Center at 1742 Hickory (corner of Hickory and N. 18th) at 6:30 p.m. Hope to see you there!

CONTACT US

For more information, please contact us at 670-4302.

Newsletter Editor & Professional Advisor:

Charlotte Allen, RN, CWOCN
670-4302
email: callen@hendrickhealth.org

Laughter

An Essential Ingredient of Good Health

UOAA Update 10/23/2013

For years, *Readers Digest* has featured the column “Laughter, the Best Medicine.” It contains jokes, riddles and humorous musings designed to tickle the funny bone. But just how important is laughter in our everyday health?

It turns out that when we laugh we produce natural killer cells which destroy tumors and viruses. Plus there’s an increase in the production of Gamma-interferon (a disease-fighting protein), T-cells (important for our immune system) and B-cells (which make disease-fighting antibodies). Besides lowering blood pressure, laughter increases oxygen in the blood, which also facilitates healing.

Laughter helps us to deal with stress, cope with loss, work through tragedy, hide our embarrassment and calm our fears. Laughter helps the body relax. It lowers blood pressure, increases immune system functioning and assists in warding off disease.

In terms of mental health, laughter:

- Helps us connect with others—humor is often used as a means to help us collectively cope with grief, fear or loss.
- Makes us more productive—happy people have more energy.
- Releases negative emotions such as anger, fear, sadness, resentment, depression—increases the likelihood that we will feel happy.
- Releases endorphins in the brain that help you feel good.

Did you also know that laughter is a form of aerobic exercise? You may even feel fatigued if you laugh continuously for any length of time! Just remind yourself to laugh well and often in order to experience the aerobic benefits of laughter.

What steps can you take to increase the amount of laughter in your life?

- Surround yourself with positive upbeat people who laugh a lot—laughter is contagious!
- Find out what makes you laugh—is it funny movies, watching the comedy channel, reading funny material? Whatever it is—do it more often.
- Don’t take yourself, or anyone else, or even life for that matter, so seriously.

Always remember, happiness is your birthright...so laugh and when you do, laugh loud and often!

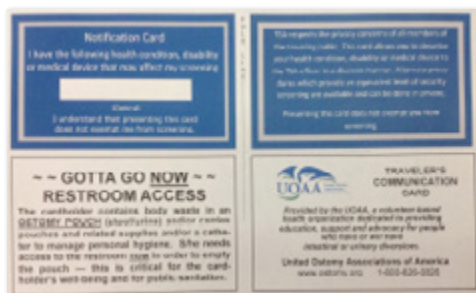
TSA Presents Community Participation Award to UOAA

As an active participant in the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Disability and Multicultural Coalition, United Ostomy Associations of America was the recipient of a Community Participation Award in appreciation of invaluable service and continuing contributions to the TSA and its efforts to enhance the traveler experience and ensure that the traveling public is treated in a fair and lawful manner.



At the ceremony, TSA's Administrator Peter Neffenger, left, presented the award to, right, UOAA's TSA liaison and representative on the Coalition, George Salamy. "We have been working with the TSA for over three years now and have established an excellent working relationship," Salamy said. "Recognition by the TSA with this award illustrates how we are helping our constituents, the ostomates, who want to travel with little inconvenience."

Editor's Note: Remember that the UOAA has a Travel Communication Card available on its website (www.uoaa.org) that you can print and present to TSA screeners as needed when traveling.



Urine Salt Crystal Deposits

Midland-Odessa, TX Detour, UOAA

Urine salt crystal buildup around urinary stomas is one of the most difficult skin care problems I find with urostomates. Urine secretes a certain amount of salt, but whether the urine is acid or alkaline determines the amount secreted. Alkaline-based urine secretes more salt than acid-based urine; thus, we have more salt crystal buildup when we have alkaline urine.

How can you tell if you have urine crystals? First, they can be seen as a growth, white or light brown in color, around the base of the stoma. The stoma and the area which the growth involves is very likely to be tender and sore. Sometimes the stoma will be completely covered by the crystals and can no longer be seen.

What are some of the underlying factors which cause urine crystals, other than alkaline urine? In my opinion, and with most patients I have seen with this problem, two factors are usually dominant. The stoma opening in the appliance in all cases has been too large, and these patients were wearing a rubber-type appliance. These two aspects may not always stand true, but in those cases I have seen, these two factors were present.

Another aspect is that some of these patients did not use a night drainage system, thus allowing urine to remain in the appliance while they sleep, continually bathing the stoma with urine. Also, personal hygiene, not only of the skin area around the stoma, but the cleaning and proper care of the appliance, was poorly done.

Our next question must be what to do in case you have a urine crystal buildup problem. Solutions include:

- Determine the circumference of the stoma and purchase a correctly sized appliance (preferably semi-disposable). The appliance should be changed every two or three days.
- Every time the appliance is changed, vinegar and water solution should be used to bathe the stoma. Use one part vinegar to three parts water. Bathe for several minutes with a cloth. This solution may be used between changes by inserting some in the bottom of the appliance (a syringe may be used for this) and lying down for about 20 minutes to let the solution bathe the stoma.

T: Train *Used with Permission from Brenda Elsagher from: Id Like to Buy a Bowel Please: Ostomy A to Z, www.livingandlaughing.com*

There were several people with ostomies at the first international conference held in Denmark for the 20-to-40 year-olds. Minnesotan Amy Finley, an ileostomate since 1979 at the age of 18, was amongst them. She and a few friends decided to walk to the station to take the train into town. As they were all trying to figure out where and how to purchase their train tickets, they noticed the train was arriving.

As they hurriedly boarded the train, one of the women was slow in getting on. It appeared she was having problems at the doorway. Someone rushed to help her and saw the predicament. Even though the friend had the straps of her purse over her arm, the body of the bag that contained her money, passport and ticket was stuck in the door outside of the train.

As they arrived at the next stop, they witnessed the curious looks of the bystanders to the purse hanging midway in the door. Being all ostomates in the car, Amy made the comment, "I can just see the headlines now. Ostomate gets bag caught in train." A group of people were seen laughing heartily as the doors opened to their platform.

MISCELLANEOUS...

Hints collected from the UOAA

- If you are staying overnight, consider carrying a “chuck pad” (plastic backing) for your piece of mind. No need to worry!
- Always carry an extra replacement pouching system in case you spring a leak while away from home.
- Carry an extra pouch closure (clamp) in your pocket or purse... just in case you drop one. Or keep a few rubber bands in your wallet (could be lifesavers).
- Some men with excessive hair find it painful to remove the wafers/barriers. Shaving with an electric razor or trimming hairs with scissors is helpful.
- If you do not use pre-cut wafers...try using a small seam ripper (for fabric) for cutting the size you need for barriers/wafers.
- Put Skin Prep (spray or wipe) around the inner edge or cut edge of the wafer to help prevent the wafer from “melting” away so quickly.
- Don't expect to get the same pouch wear time in the summer months.
- Sew or purchase a pouch cover if the plastic pouch against your skin is uncomfortable.
- If you participate in very active sports, use a 10 inch strip of two-inch tape to secure the pouch and barrier/wafer to your abdomen (as a picture frame).
- Ziploc sandwich bags are useful and odor-proof for disposing of used ostomy pouches.

Get Ostomy Answers!

Save 38%*

The Leading Source for Information, Education and Inspiration!

Each *Phoenix Ostomy Magazine* answers the many questions about returning to a full and active life after surgery. Topics include diet, exercise, intimacy, skin care, odor control, new products and so much more. Medical doctors and nurses offer concrete advice and solutions while personal stories show that almost anything is possible with an ostomy. - **Subscribe Today!**

Privacy Guarantee: The Phoenix is mailed with discretion. Your contact information will never be given, rented or sold to a third party.

FREE New Patient Guide!

Get real-world answers to common questions after ostomy surgery. Yours free with a subscription.



New Patient Guides are made possible by the UOAA, www.ostomy.org.



Choose Your FREE New Patient Guide: Colostomy Ileostomy Urostomy

Please send me FREE ostomy product samples, special offers and product information**

One-year \$29.95 (Save 25%*) Two-years \$49.95 (Save 38%*)



Send Magazine To:

Name _____ Email (opt.) _____

Address _____ Apt/Suite _____ Phone (opt.) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Send Payment to: The Phoenix magazine, P.O. Box 3605, Mission Viejo, CA 92690

Satisfaction Guarantee!

*Based on cover price of \$9.95. \$39.95 for Canadian one-year subscription. U.S. funds only. **Your contact information will be disclosed to third party companies to fulfill the request. Published March, June, September and December. If you are not satisfied for any reason, we will gladly refund the unused portion of your subscription.

ASC0516

You have adjusted to your ostomy when...

- You can move about freely, without holding your appliance as though it might fall off at any minute.
- You make that first trip to the mailbox without taking along your ostomy supplies.
- You stop grabbing your abdomen when the grocery clerk asks if you need help to the car with your bag.
- You begin to think how lucky you are to be alive instead of how unlucky you are to have an ostomy.
- You stop spending all your spare time in the bathroom waiting for your stoma to work so you can empty the pouch right away.
- You attend the monthly ostomy support group meetings with the expectation of learning more about your ostomy rather than staying at home worrying about it all.