



INSIGHTS

The Newsletter of the
**OSTOMY ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY**

www.ostomygroupsnj.org

SERVING OSTOMATES IN SOUTH JERSEY SINCE 1977

January 2018

WELCOME!

The **Ostomy Association of Southern New Jersey (OASNJ)** is dedicated to providing information, advocacy and peer support to our members, their family and caregivers, and to the area's intestinal and urinary diversion community at large.

We meet regularly to share experiences, provide mutual support and learn about the latest products and information for colostomy, ileostomy, urostomy and continent diversions.

Meetings are held at the **Virtua-Memorial Hospital Burlington County**, located at 175 Madison Avenue, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060 in the 1st floor Conference Center. We meet on the **3rd Monday of each month with the exception of July and August**. The June meeting is traditionally held in an area restaurant. Meetings begin at **7:00 pm and adjourn by 9:00 pm**. Families and friends of ostomy patients are always welcome to attend. There is no fee to attend and refreshments are served.

For more information about the OASNJ, contact us at our NEW website... www.ostomygroupsnj.org

AFFILIATION:

OASNJ is an affiliate of UOAA, the **United Ostomy Associations of America**. It has IRS 501(c)(3) Charity Status and 330 affiliates nationwide. Contact UOAA at **800-826-0826** or www.ostomy.org. For more info sign on to **Twitter.com/UOAA** or **Facebook.com/UOAAinc**.

SCHEDULE

JANUARY 15, 2018 The program will feature a discussion by a ShopRite dietitian and pharmacist.

FEBRUARY 19, 2018 Program to be announced.

MARCH 19, 2018 Program to be announced.

OASNJ Satellite Support Groups

Where: Virtua Health and Wellness Center, 401 Young Avenue, Moorestown, NJ

When: The 1st Wednesday of the month, from **Noon to 2:00 PM** .. **The next meeting is January 3rd**. The program will feature a discussion by a ShopRite dietitian and pharmacist. Contact Lois Moskowitz, **609-707-4368** for information.

Where: Virtua Health and Wellness Center, 200 Bowman Drive, Voorhees

When: The 4th Monday of the month, from **1:30 to 3:30 PM** .. **The next meeting is January 22, 2018**
Contact: Lois Moskowitz, 609-707-4368 for information

Attention Gloucester County Ostomates and anyone else that is interested! The Woodbury Ostomy Support Group meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Inspira Medical Center Woodbury, Medical Arts Building, Suite #14 Contact Kathy Pflieger at pflegerk@ihn.org for info for the **1/17/18 meeting**

Attention Cumberland County Ostomates and anyone else that is interested! The **Cumberland County Ostomy Support Group** meets the 1st Wednesday at the Inspira Medical Center Vineland. Contact: Jeanne Spencer 856-327-6505 for info for **1/3/18 meeting**.

VISITING PROGRAM: If you, or someone you know is in need of a trained ostomy patient visitor, call **Sandy Ritter** at **856-983-1433** to arrange for an in-person or telephone visit.

Production and distribution of this INSIGHTS newsletter is made possible thanks to the generosity of the:

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY.

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DISCLAIMER : No suggestions made, or any products named in any article or advertisement in this newsletter, at our meetings or recommended by a member of our organization is to be considered as an endorsement by the Ostomy Association of Southern New Jersey or the United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc.. Always consult your doctor and/or WOCNurse before using any products of ostomy management procedures published in this newsletter.

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Torbot (800) 545-4254
Trio Ostomy Care USA (844)-331-8746

• WOUND, OSTOMY and CONTINENCE NURSES SOCIETY ... www.wocn.org

Area WOCNurses:

Kathy Judge (856) 247-7260
Arlene Peahota (856) 764-6634
Kathy Pflieger (856) 845-0100 x 3725

Diane Wagner (215) 707-3092
Gillian Reeve (856) 809-4311

Nancy Fonte, WOCN ... (609)-484-7300 ext 185 ... Nancy.Fonte@atlanticare.org

Ostomy Support Group meets 2nd Wed of each month at 4:00 PM at the Atlanticare Center, 2500 English Creek Avenue in EHT, in the Fitness Building, Egg Harbor Township, NJ

• WHEN TO CALL A DOCTOR OR WOC NURSE

1. If cramps last more than two or three hours.
2. If you get a deep cut in your stoma or bleeding at the juncture of the skin and stoma.
3. If you have excessive bleeding from the stoma opening or a moderate amount in the pouch after several emptying.
4. If you have a strong odor lasting more than a week.
5. If you have severe skin irritation or deep ulcers.
6. If you have severe watery discharge lasting more than five or six hours.
7. If you have an unusual change in the size or appearance of your stoma.

What to Do When You Feel Overwhelmed with Ostomy Life

by Stephanie Horgan, LCSW via OstomyConnection December 15, 2017 issue

The experience of managing an ostomy or chronic illness can be a lot to handle. Add in the demands from our busy lives and it can all feel completely overwhelming. No doubt stress may be a normal part of everyday life.

It might seem like there's nothing you can do about this stress. The medical bills won't stop coming, there's always ostomy supplies to order, and the responsibility of taking care of a stoma is ongoing. But you have a lot more control than you might think. Here are eight tactics that can help you deal with ostomy overwhelm.

1. Know how long things take.

I'm notorious for assuming tasks take much less time than they actually do. For instance, I'll block out 15 minutes for an appliance change and then discover it actually takes 30 minutes. I've learned this simple rule: whatever time you think a task will take, double it. That way, when your stoma suddenly acts up, you'll feel much less stress because you know there's extra time to apply the system properly.

2. Simplify your life.

Is your life too complicated? Take a good look at everything you do and ask yourself if there's a better, easier way (or maybe not do it at all). When we're anxious and stressed, it's easy to look at all of the tasks ahead of us and become overwhelmed. Technology can help us organize our lives. Many medical suppliers offer automated reordering and there's a handy app called Ostobuddy which alerts you when ostomy supplies are low or when to refill a prescription.

3. Start daily habits.

One of the most important things you can do for yourself is daily self-care. For instance, I start each morning with a hydration routine by drinking water as soon as I wake up. Next, I might take vitamin supplements if I'm not eating well. Then I'll pack healthy snacks and my water bottle. I always change my pouch prior to eating breakfast and make sure I have extra supplies in my purse. These daily habits allow me to feel prepared for the day. And if you're not a morning person, plan things the night before.

4. Allow for Murphy's Law.

No week is complete without something going wrong, so plan for it. Take for instance that terrifying feeling of your appliance peeling off while you're at work, or a very inconvenient leak at the movie theater. Allow time in your week for preparing an emergency ostomy kit and extra clothes, and always carry it with you! You're better off knowing these things are readily available just in case you need them.

5. Lean on others for support.

The first step is being honest about your needs because having an illness or ostomy might be a lifelong condition. When you ask for help in a considerate way (and understand they may need to turn you down), there's no need to feel guilty about leaning on others. It can be something as simple as having someone bring dinner over when you're feeling fatigued, or seeking donated ostomy supplies if you're drained from paying out-of-pocket.

6. Be kind to yourself.

If you're having ongoing ostomy issues, this kind of overwhelm can lead to feelings of depression and anxiety. This is not the time to beat yourself up. It's extra important to pay attention to your mental radio and turn down the volume on your inner critic station. Practice self-compassion by giving yourself some credit for everything you've been through. Talk to yourself as if you were talking to a loved one or best friend. To lift your spirits it also helps reading inspirational stories from other ostomates like those found in UOAA's *The Phoenix* magazine. You can subscribe on-line at www.ostomy.org

7. Dump it all on paper.

When you're fed up with your ostomy, sometimes taking time to write down your frustrations can help. Try writing a letter to your stoma including all of your truest emotions and thoughts. Profanity is definitely allowed if necessary, but including gratitude and appreciation are key. Writing it down you can rid it from your system.

8. Connect with others who understand ostomy life.

There are many ostomates who have gone on before you. It is ideal to find others going through similar experiences because we can all learn from each other. The UOAA has 326 affiliated support groups nationwide that hold peer group support and educational meetings. Patient visiting programs are available for 1 on 1 meetings. At www.ostomy.org UOAA has online discussion boards and a listing for all support group locations.

3 Jolly Reasons to Declutter Your Ostomy Supplies in the New Year

via Ostomy Connection December 30, 2017 Issue by Editorial Team

From accessories that didn't work out, to the stash of boxes you no longer need or want, taking time to declutter your ostomy supplies can make a huge difference to someone in need.

Donating your extra supplies is important to the ostomy community for so many reasons, below are just a few, along with five organizations that accept donations and give back to ostomates all year long.

1. Your donation helps change lives for the better. You've seen pictures, read testimonials, and know firsthand that giving makes a difference. Simply put, donating ostomy supplies lets others know they matter.

[Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA](#) (FOW-USA) is a volunteer run non-profit organization that collects donated ostomy supplies from individuals and organizations and sends them to ostomates in need worldwide. Please mail donations to this address:

**FOW-USA
4018 Bishop Lane
Louisville, Kentucky 40218-4539**

NOTE: Include your mailing information inside your packages, as well as on the outside, to ensure they know who you are.

2. Giving is contagious. When you donate, share it over social media. Supplies are desperately needed with all the natural disasters this year, as many ostomates are dealing with emergency situations.

[Ostomy 2-1-1](#) is a non-profit organization offering support to ostomates, their families and caregivers. Their emergency supply pantry distributes donated ostomy items to those in need who live in the United States.

Please mail donations to this address:

**Ostomy 2-1-1
c/o Olivet Baptist Church
1201 NW 10th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106**

NOTE: There is no charge for ostomy supplies, but they do ask for a small donation (\$20. minimum) to cover expenses.

3. Give because it will make you happier. Philanthropy in all its forms – generosity, compassion and caring – has the potential to reward the giver as much as the recipient

[Osto Group](#) is a non-profit organization founded in May, 2008 that receives donations of unused ostomy products. They've created an online shop where you can search for items and all you'll pay is shipping and handling.

Please mail donations to this address with your name and address inside for an acknowledgement.

**Osto Group
3500 45th Street, Suite #16A
West Palm Beach, Florida 33407**

The Story of My Grandma Mabel's Ostomy Surgery in 1938

By Paul Riome via OstomyConnection December 29, 2017 issue

My Grandma Mabel had ostomy surgery in 1938 and went home with no supplies. How did she cope? How did she live with her ostomy? Let's try to imagine 1938... and then imagine living with an ostomy in 1938. This was before the internet, before cell phones, before microwaves, before TV, before plastics. The stock market had crashed in 1929, followed by a decade named The Great Depression. It was a challenging time to live.

In parallel, there was a decade of drought and crop-failure in the entire Midwest of North America, appropriately named the "Dirty 30s." This was before the 2nd World War. This era was also before flanges and pouches or any other ostomy gear was invented. Ostomy patients were sent home after surgery with no collection device. **No collection device!?!** How did Mabel live with an ostomy, without ostomy equipment?

Mabel lived on the prairies in Western Canada, where summer temperatures rose to +104 degrees F and winter temperatures dropped to -40 degrees F. The only heat in the house was the stove which burned coal, and when they had money, wood. There was no cold running water, it was pumped from a well – winter and summer. There was no hot running water, they heated water in a large pot on the stove. There was no shower, no bathtub. No bathroom in the house, just an outhouse – a seat perched over a pit, in a small building 50 yards from the house. This outhouse experience, in winter when it was -40 degrees, was the origination of the expression "so cold it would freeze your ass off!" Personal ostomy clean-up was in the outhouse, probably with a pail of cold water. With no collection device supplied, available, or even invented yet, Mabel made do with rags or towels.

Mabel's husband Walter was a practical and inventive man. He devised a tin-can with a belt-strap to contain the stool. This was leaky and stinky, but a big improvement over the very messy rags. The tin-can had to be strapped tightly around her waist to reduce the leakage (not prevent leakage... just reduce it). The edge of the tin-can bit harshly into Mabel's skin, and left a nasty red compression ring. Walter was a horseman who made his own horse-harnesses, so he built a leather collar to cover the tin-can edging. This was certainly more comfortable and leaked less, but it was difficult to clean the leather collar and the device still smelled. Mabel considered a glass container which would be easier to clean than the tin-can, but adding a leather collar and attaching a belt would be difficult and the risk of glass breakage would be a big concern. The tin-can with leather-collar strapped around her waist was her best (and only) ostomy equipment. The 4-inch circle around her stoma was constantly covered with stool, and I expect she had many rashes, breakdowns, infections, and damage to her skin. The salves used for harness-burns on horses would've been Mabel's only relief from these skin problems.

There was no "support group" for Mabel. She never talked about her ostomy. My father, who lived at home for the first six years of Mabel's surgery was never told about her ostomy and he never saw anything that would indicate she had an ostomy. He never saw a bulge on her dress. While her husband designed and built her ostomy-gear, that would be the last time he participated and the last time they would talk about it. It just wasn't ever discussed. For 15 years, Mabel lived silently with the inconveniences of an ostomy without proper medical supplies and with no-one to talk to who could relate.

My grandma Mabel was one tough lady. She was the sole steward of a 1-acre vegetable garden. She dug the entire garden with a shovel, planted seeds and hoed weeds. In the fall, she dug out the potatoes and carrots, harvested and preserved corn and peas and beans for each cold winter ahead. For 15 years, from ages 52 to 67, she worked that garden with an ostomy. Mabel was British, Victorian, stoic, and content... and she never complained. She was so thankful that her ostomy gifted her 15 years of good living.

There have been days that I've complained about my colostomy. With the imagination to re-live Mabel's ostomy experience, I will not complain again about my ostomy... Ever!

Tender Loving Skin Care

by Wil Walker, MBA, BSN, RN, WOC Nurse Manager, Clinical Education, Hollister Incorporated

Soothe peristomal skin with these helpful tips ...

Even the most experienced people with ostomies will attest to the fact that the skin around the stoma and under skin barriers (also known as peristomal skin) can become irritated. This can happen for a variety of reasons. The good news is that there are simple ways to remedy and prevent the situation. Use these tips to give your skin the care it needs.

Sometimes my stoma bleeds a little when I wash it. Is this normal?

Your stoma may bleed easily when rubbed or bumped—this is normal. The bleeding should resolve quickly. If bleeding does not stop, contact your Wound Ostomy Continence (WOC) Nurse or healthcare professional.

The skin around my stoma is red and irritated. What can I do to remedy it?

The peristomal skin should not show signs of irritation, rash or redness. It should look similar to the skin anywhere else on the body. A properly fitting skin barrier and the right barrier formulation help protect the skin from being irritated by the stoma drainage. If red, broken or moist skin around the stoma is discovered, seek the assistance of your WOC Nurse or contact Hollister's Secure Start services at [1.888.808.7456](tel:18888087456).

What does stoma powder do and how often should I use it?

Stoma powder (not talcum powder) is used to absorb moisture from broken skin around the stoma. By absorbing the moisture the ostomy skin barrier will be able to adhere well and allow the skin to heal. When using stoma powder, make sure to brush off the excess before applying your pouching system. Too much powder can interfere with your pouch seal and cause leakage.

How often should I change my skin barrier?

Wear time of a pouching system is based on personal preference and stoma characteristics and output, but three to four days is considered “normal”. The best time to change your pouching system is in the morning before having anything to eat or drink.

How do I remove my skin barrier to avoid tearing the skin and causing skin damage?

To remove the pouching system, gently peel the barrier away from skin, starting at the top and working downwards, while pressing against the surrounding skin. This may avoid any skin tearing associated with an adhesive barrier.

What type of product should I use when washing the skin around my stoma?

All you really need to clean around your stoma is warm water. If you prefer to use a soap, be sure it is a mild soap and does not contain any oils, perfumes or moisturizers as they may interfere with the skin barrier from adhering. Be sure to rinse any soap from the skin and dry well before applying your new pouching system.

I have itchy adhesive residue on my skin and it won't come off with water.

What's the best way to remove it?

Consider using a universal remover wipe in this scenario. A universal remover wipe is a pre-moistened wipe with a built-in remover that helps dissolve residues from adhesives and tapes. These wipes are made specifically for use on your skin.

Transition Smoothly (continued)

My grandson is six years old and very bright. He was upset when he heard I was having surgery and keeps asking me questions. How do I explain my condition to him?

Young children may want to know why you have to have surgery. It's good to be prepared ahead of time and anticipate some of these questions. How much or how little you decide to tell your children or grandchildren may depend on the nature of your family as well as the age of the child. Honest and simple explanations are important and help form the basis of good relationships with younger family members. There are a variety of ostomy-related resources available to you, such as books and dolls that can help you answer some of these questions.

I'm concerned that my ostomy will change the great relationship I have with my fiancé. How much should I tell him?

Questions from your relatives and friends are likely inevitable because they are concerned about your well-being. There is no need to go into detail unless you choose to do so. You may consider satisfying curiosity by explaining that you had a serious illness that became a threat to your health. Because of this illness, you had a major surgery and now wear an ostomy pouch. You could also offer more details when you are contemplating or have been involved in a sexual relationship. In either case, your stoma will not remain invisible and you will want to be prepared to talk about it

I am an accountant and anxious to get back to work. How long should I wait after surgery?

You will need to decide when you are ready to return to work after your surgery. The time for this varies from person to person. The severity of the disease, the reason for your surgery, your recovery time, age and the type of job you do affects how long it will take you to get back to work. It is best to discuss returning to work with your healthcare professional. It's important to remember— try not to rush going back to work, if possible. Take your time. Going back to work before you are ready may cause more problems in the long run. Feeling tired can be a real problem, even months after your operation. If you are experiencing low energy, it may help to know that this can happen to almost anyone. If it is an option, you may want to return gradually, perhaps by working part-time before going back full-time.

My job involves a lot of bending and stretching and I'm worried about injuring my stoma. Do you have any advice?

If you have a job that calls for a lot of bending and stretching, two useful things can help. First, wear a pouch that can be attached to a stoma belt for added security while you are working. Second, wear loose-fitting clothing and avoid constrictive belts and tight trousers.

I work outdoors as a foreman and though I don't do a lot of heavy lifting, I tend to perspire a lot. What can I do to make sure my pouching system stays in place?

If your job is fairly active, you may perspire at the area where the pouch is attached to the skin. This can be particularly frustrating because sweat and/or oily skin can reduce the effectiveness of the adhesive holding your pouch in place. You may need to change your pouch more often. An option is to use a skin barrier that copes better with perspiration. Your WOC nurse or your supplier can provide recommendations.

What should I bring with me when I go back to work to make things easier?

Carry a change of supplies with you in the car or in your work bag. Do not leave your products in a car during heat or extreme cold. Also, keep a change of supplies in your desk drawer or locker at work.

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix magazine provides answers to the many challenges of living with an ostomy. From skin care to nutrition to intimacy, in-depth articles are written by medical professionals, ostomy experts and experienced ostomates. Subscriptions directly fund the services of the United Ostomy Associations of America.

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~~~~ ✂ ~~~~~ **TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE** ~~~~~ ✂ ~~~~~  
**OSTOMY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY**

Membership in the Ostomy Association of Southern New Jersey is open to all persons interested in ostomy rehabilitation. Membership dues are only **\$10.00 per year**.

**PLEASE PRINT THIS INFORMATION:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE:** \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Urostomy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner/family member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urostomy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ileo-anal Pull Thru | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend                       |

**Date(s) of Ostomy Surgery:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check payable to "OASNJ" and mail to:  
 Ken Aukett, P.O. Box 318, Collingswood, NJ 08108**