



AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUP

Affiliate Group #004

Clearwater Ostomy Support Group

www.clearwaterostomy.org
clearwaterostomy@gmail.com
SUPPORT LINE 727-490-9931



September 2024

Next Meeting

Saturday, September 21,
2024

Support Meeting 10:30 am

The Masonic Lodge
1145 Highland Ave NE
Largo, FL 33770

UPCOMING EVENTS

2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

Subject to changel

October 19

November 16th

Future dates and locations are still to be determined and confirmed.

the President's Message

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are all enjoying your summer. We are having our in-person meeting on September 21st of this month. Our speakers will be Lila Watkins and Karen Burdewick. They will be talking about what they learned at the WOCN conference. We do hope to see you all at our September meeting.

Be sure to bring all of your questions to the meeting as there is a lot of help and experience at the meeting for you!

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Blessings,

Marilyn



Our meetings are open to new ostomates, the experienced ostomates, the caregivers, the families, the healthcare workers, the support persons, the nursing students, the social workers and anyone who has a connection with ostomies and would like to join us. We welcome you all!

TIPS & TRICKS

Seven Steps to Improve Your Memory

Set Priorities: “Don’t expect to be able to juggle six things at once,” says Lapp. Get mentally organized; distinguish between what’s important to remember and what isn’t’

Sharpen the Focus: Pay special attention to landmarks when you’re doing your routine driving. This will help you develop a more active sense of awareness.

Pause and Ponder: You can improve the amount of written material you can recall as much a 300% if you simply stop to think about what you’ve read.

Make Associations: Find key words, pictures, or letter combinations to help you remembers. This is known as mnemonic memory. If you meet a woman named Rose, for example, remember her name by picturing the flower.

Use Your Senses: When you order dishes at a restaurant, note the texture, the subtle flavorings, the temperature, and the colors. In general, use as many of your senses as you can to aid in remembering.

Do Your Exercises: Memorize numbers that may be important to you, such as your drivers’ license and Social Security numbers. When you’re at a party, make it a point to remember the names of at least four of the new people you meet. When you write your shopping list, try to remember all the items without looking when you get to the market.

Be Kind To Yourself: Losing the car keys or forgetting the name of your bridge partner for a moment is not a sign of mental disintegration.

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 times 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.





14 THINGS ABOUT OSTOMIES THAT DON'T INVOLVE POOP

Whether you're a newbie or ninja-level ostomate, there's always new and exciting things to learn. How much do you know about the ostomy world around you?

Here are 14 things that might surprise you, none of which have to do with poo. (There, we've fulfilled our obligatory mention of poop).

1. Ostomy bags have come a lonnnnggggg way. The first ostomy bag wasn't so much a bag as a sponge. You had to strap it to your stomach and drain it constantly - a set-up that just screams convenience, right? "readers shudder violently" Then came glass bottles (for optimal comfort, obviously) and then leather pouches, which sound somewhat better but still fairly medieval. Imagine going to the local ...leather

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smith? ...and being like, “Hey, I’ve got a weird project for you”. Next came the first rubber pouch, but don’t get too excited - this was like military-grade stuff, so thick and heavy it could maybe have deflected bullets. That was in 1920. The ostomy bags we know and love today didn’t grace us with their existence until around the 70’s. To ostomates back then, that must have been pretty groovy.

2. The word “ostomy” comes from the word “stoma” which is a Greek word that means... “Mouth”. Just think about that for a minute!
3. Ostomates have their own version of Victoria’s Secret. Not only have you dodged the glass bottle, you live in a glorious age of ostomy intimate apparel!
4. Ostomy Bag Covers Are a Big Thing. Everyone seems to be making them and you can buy them everywhere! Just look up “ostomy bag covers” on Etsy, Amazon, or Facebook... it’s an impressive list. Because if you want to cover your bag in flowers or Minions, or scary flames, that’s your prerogative! (How about a different cover for each day of the week? Scary flames for Mondays?)

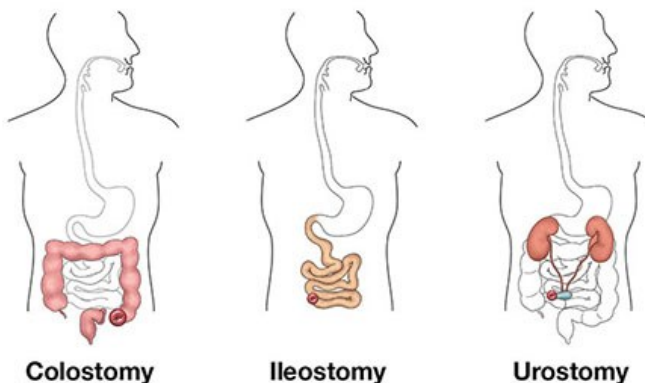


5. Some people wear the bag sideways. Jackie Zimmerman, founder of Girls with Guts breaks down how to do this in a handy video, and apparently there’s a secret enclave of ostomates who wear it this way. Note of caution: consult your ostomy nurse or doctor before attempting. Some recommend against it - best to ask before going horizontal.
6. The variety of ostomy systems out there will BLOW YOUR MIND. Let’s again emphasize how far we’ve come since the sponge era. Today, there are enough brands that each could sponsor an NFL team. (Wouldn’t it be fun to watch manufacturers, B. Braun’s team play the NuHope’s?) There are night time pouches, mini pouches, opaque/clear/neutral gray color choices, convex wafers, oval or round openings, drainable and closed end pouches, hypoallergenic, one-piece & two-piece systems, vented or filtered pouches, cut to fit flanges or pre-cut, and 100’s more (not to mention all the accessories)...seriously, someone needs to create a periodic table of ostomy products to get this all sorted out. If you’re new, you may need to go on a bit of spirit quest to determine what’s best for you, but that’s what experimenting’s for.
7. Speaking of experimenting.... You can totally order free samples from most manufacturers, so let someone else fund your spirit quest! Plus, a marvelous vegan stoma person up-keeps a fairly comprehensive list of all of the manufacturers that dish out the free goods.
8. Former President Dwight Eisenhower had an ostomy. Napoleon did, too. Didn’t seem to stop him from conquering most of Europe.

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9. Teddy bears wear ostomy bags too. Ostobear is a teddy bear with a life-like stoma and an attachable bag! So perfect for our little ostomate friends who need lots of encouragement and practice ... a cuddly companion who's just like them.
10. The whole world celebrates ostomates every three years!!! The International Ostomy Association stages World Ostomy Day every three years.
11. There are LOTS of people who have an ostomy ...and the number grows each year. If you're brand new to this whole "intestines outside the body" thing, you might feel like you're the only one - but that couldn't be further from the truth. In the United States alone, there are about a million ostomates walking among us, according to the United Ostomy Associations of America. Meanwhile, Coloplast estimates there are about 2.5 million ostomates worldwide. domination may not be happening anytime soon, but together we can really make some noise.
12. Where did this ostomy thing come from anyways? Only sporadic accounts of ostomy surgery can be found before the 1700's. ANSWER: It was Monsieur Littre who in 1710, first suggested that a surgically created colostomy may preserve life in infants born with an imperforate anus. Littre performed an autopsy on a baby who had died from complications of imperforate anus. His observations caused him to suggest the following: It would be necessary to make an incision in the belly, open the two ends of the closed bowel, and stitch them together, or at least bring the upper part of the bowel to the surface of the belly wall, where it would never close.
13. Calendars featuring ostomates are absolutely a real thing! The calendar sales season has begun but in the digital age, why is the paper version so popular? To see your colon-less comrades all-year round, of course. This unique publication provides unparalleled support and education with in-depth layouts of young adult colorectal cancer survivors, their scars and inspiring journeys. Stay connected on Instagram@colonclub or Twitter @ColonClub. Also, the UK ostomy support charity, Stomahesive created their first ostomate calendar four years ago.
14. Urostomies are for peeing. This type of surgery is for the bladder. This means having a bag outside your body to collect urine. It's also called an ileal conduit (pronounced eye-lee-al con-do-it). And just in case you didn't know already ... urostomates are wonderful, incredible, fantastic, fabulous, magnificent, awesome, spectacular people.

The 3 Types of Ostomies



Can Dehydration Affect Your Blood Pressure?

Dehydration can be serious. If it's left untreated, it can lead to life-threatening complications, like heat-related emergencies and kidney problems. Additionally, dehydration can cause potentially dangerous changes in blood pressure.

Dehydration and low blood pressure

Low blood pressure (LBP) is when your blood pressure (bottom number) reading is lower than 60 mm Hg. Dehydration can cause LBP due to a decrease in blood volume. Blood volume is the amount of fluid that's circulating in your blood vessels. When you're very dehydrated, your blood volume can decrease, leading to a drop in blood pressure. When blood pressure drops too low, your organs won't receive the oxygen and nutrients they need and you could potentially go into shock.

Dehydration and high blood pressure

High blood pressure is when you have a systolic (top number) reading of 160 mm Hg or higher, or a diastolic (bottom number) reading of 90 mm Hg or higher. Dehydration has been linked to high blood pressure. Although more research is needed, it's worth noting that dehydration can lead to an increase in blood pressure due to the action of a hormone called vasopressin. Vasopressin is secreted when there's a high amount of solutes (or sodium level) in your blood, or when your blood volume is low. Both of these things can happen when you lose too much fluid.

When you're dehydrated, your kidneys reabsorb water as opposed to passing it in urine. High concentrations of vasopres-

sin can cause your blood vessels to constrict which can lead to an increase in blood pressure.

Other symptoms of dehydration

In addition to changes in blood pressure, there are other dehydration symptoms to look out for.

These symptoms include: Thirst, dry mouth, urinating less often, urine that's dark in color, feeling tired or fatigued, lightheadedness or dizziness, or confusion.

Additionally, children who are dehydrated may have the following symptoms: No wet diapers for several hours, absence of tears when crying, irritability, sunken cheeks, eyes, or soft spot on the skull (fontanel), or listlessness.

Causes of dehydration

Other than not drinking enough fluids, there are other possible causes of dehydration. They can include:

Illness. A high fever can lead to dehydration. Additionally, vomiting and diarrhea can lead to a significant loss of fluids and electrolytes.

Increased sweating. Water is lost when you sweat. An increase in sweating can occur in hot weather, during exercise, and if you're sick with a fever.

Frequent urination. You can also lose fluids through urination. Medications like diuretics, underlying conditions such as diabetes, and alcohol consumption can all

cause more frequent urination.

When to get medical attention

It's important to seek prompt medical attention if you have any of the following symptoms:

Diarrhea that's lasted longer than 24 hours, inability to keep fluids down, a rapid heartbeat, extreme exhaustion, disorientation, or confusion, or stool that's black or bloody.

For low blood pressure

A lower than normal blood pressure reading, without other symptoms, may not be a cause for concern. However, if you have low blood pressure readings along with other symptoms, it's important to get medical care. Symptoms to look out for include: Feelings of lightheadedness or dizziness, nausea, feeling tired or fatigued, or blurry vision.

Shock is a medical emergency that needs immediate care. Call for help if you have much lower than usual blood pressure and symptoms like: Skin that's cold and clammy, quick shallow breathing, a pulse that's rapid and weak, or confusion.

For high blood pressure

High blood pressure doesn't usually cause symptoms. Most people find out about it during a routine checkup with their doctor. If you regularly take your blood pressure and find that your readings are considerably high, see your doctor.

How much water should you drink

each day?

Daily fluid recommendations can depend on several factors, including things like: Age, sex, weight, your overall health, weather conditions, activity level, and pregnancy or breastfeeding.

According to the Mayo Clinic, a good goal to aim for is to drink at least eight glasses of water a day. If you find it hard to drink plain water, you can also stay hydrated by drinking: Water infused with slices of fruit, like lemon or cucumber, sugar-free sparkling water, smoothies made with fruits and vegetables, decaffeinated herbal tea, milk, or low sodium soups.

Also, remember that you can get water from some food sources, particularly fruits and vegetables.

Tips to Stay Hydrated

Always drink when you feel thirsty. Remember to drink more water when you're being physically active, in a hot climate, or have a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. Carry a water bottle with you as you go about your daily activities. Choose water instead of sugary sodas, energy drinks, sweetened beverages, or alcohol drinks.



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 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 group meetings to learn more about your ostomy rather than staying home worrying about it all.



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Loads of information can be found at the United Ostomy Association of America website.



UOAA's Main Website -
www.ostomy.org

UOAA Discussion Board -
www.uoaa.org/forum

Facebook: [Facebook.com/UOAA](https://www.facebook.com/UOAA)

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Phoenix Ostomy Magazine:
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Need Emergency Ostomy Help?



Bay Breeze RX is a proud sponsor of the Angel Closet in affiliation with the Clearwater Ostomy Support Group. The Closet offers free supplies for all types

of Ostomy and wound care. Bay Breeze also provides consultation services by appointment. These services are offered by Karen Burdewick BSN, RN, CWOCN at no charge.

Appointments can be made directly with Lila Jane at 727-744-2660. **Bay Breeze RX** is located at 3350 East Bay Drive. Largo, FL 33771. www.baybreezerx.com

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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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