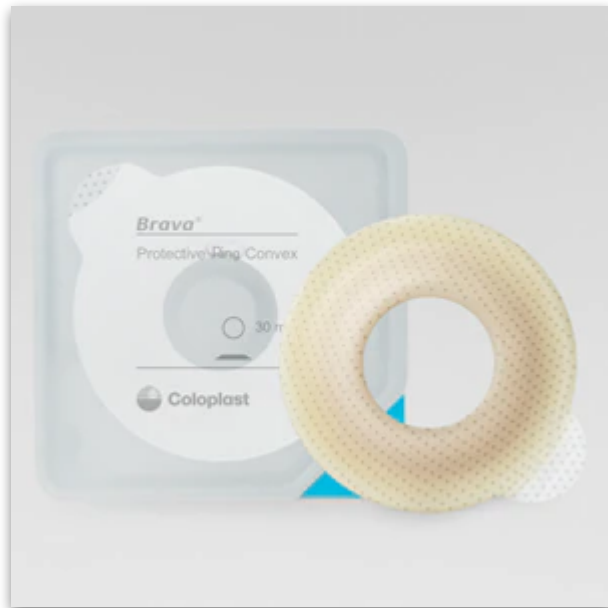




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Jacksonville Contact Information:

Patti Langenbach
(800) 741-0110
(904) 733-8500

patti@ostomymcp.com

Support group meets the 3rd Sunday of each month 3 p.m.

4836 Victor Street

Next Meeting: **January 16th**

Also join us by Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/94640600811>

Meeting ID: 946 4060 0811
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Gainesville Support Group Contact info:

JoAnne Bell at 352-284-4214

Meets the 1st Sunday of each month (except Holidays)

at Hope Lodge 2121 SW 16th St
Gainesville, FL

Next meeting: **TBA**

Ocala Support Contact info:

Karen Franco 352-304-1309

Meets the 2nd Sunday of each month (except July & Aug) at 2 p.m. at the Sheriff's Station 3260 SE 80th Street between Ocala and Belleview.

Next Meeting: **TBA**

Citrus County Support Group

Meets third Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM in the Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center, 6201 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34428, in the Community Room of the Medical Office Building

Next Meeting: **TBA**

Amelia Island Area Ostomy Support Group

(904) 310-9054

Meets second Monday of each month at 6:30pm

Next Meeting: **TBA**

The Villages Ostomy Support

We meet on the 2nd Tuesday evening of each month at 6:00 PM at (except July & August

Linda Manson

tvostomy@gmail.com
865-335-6330

Next Meeting: **via Zoom**

Contact Linda tvostomy@gmail.com

Ostomy Advice for the New Ostomate by Lauren Wolfe RN, BSN, MCISc-WH, NSWOC, CWOCN Macdonalds Prescriptions-Fairmont; via Vancouver (BC) Ostomy HighLife

Living with an ostomy can be daunting in the first few weeks post-surgery. In this article, I hope to provide you with recommendations that you may find helpful. Let's start with the stoma, skin around your stoma, and your ostomy appliance.

1. What is the best time to change your ostomy appliance?

a. The best time to change your ostomy appliance is usually in the morning before you eat your breakfast. Most individuals find their ostomy to be less active at this time. However, this is not the case for some, and determining when your stoma is less active may be required.

2. Will you always need to cut your ostomy pouching system to the size of your stoma?

a. In the first few weeks, your stoma will change shape, but once the size has stabilized and your stoma is round, you may be able to go into a precut system. Depending on the ostomy appliance you are wearing, not all companies make every size a precut.

b. Oval stomas usually cannot use a round precut without added accessories.

3. Which ostomy company has the best products?

a. There is no best company, despite what others may imply. The best company is the one that you like and the one that works with your body contours to achieve the best seal or wear time.

b. Test-trialing products to find what works best for you is a great way to determine which product you like. Your ostomy nurse can provide you with samples that will ensure they work with your stoma and contours of your abdomen. I always recommend waiting until you are independent in doing your ostomy changes. It's like test driving a car. When you are the passenger, you see things differently than when you are the driver.

4. What do you do if your ostomy pouching system leaks and you are unsure how to put a pouch on?

a. A leaking ostomy appliance can be scary. The first step is to acknowledge that it is just poop or urine (depending on which kind of stoma you have) and have a good laugh. The second step is to gather your supplies and the hospital's instruction sheet that your stoma nurse provided. Have a quick read through the instructions. If you are not sure about them, don't worry. Thirdly the most critical step is to try to get a pouch on after cleaning your skin. It doesn't matter if it's not perfect or you forget a step. The last step is to call the community nurses to say you need help. They most likely will not be able to come immediately but should be able to help you soon. If not, you can always try your stoma nurse. Remember, you can do this even if it's not pretty.

5. What should you do if you are experiencing itchiness or pain at the site of your ostomy pouch? Is this concerning?

a. Itchiness or pain usually indicates that your pouching system is leaking. It may not be visible or coming out the side of your flange, but the poop or urine is sitting on your skin, causing damage. You need to remove your pouch, clean your skin, and do a quick check of your skin. If it is red, raw, and painful, see crusting instructions below.

6. When you change your pouch, you notice your skin is red and painful?

a. This usually means you have sprung a leak, which means the poop or urine is causing damage to your skin.

- b. After completely removing your pouching system, clean your skin gently with warm water and a paper towel or a cloth.
- c. You can follow the crusting instructions below if you have ostomy powder (different companies call these different things) and skin prep.
- d. If you do not have ostomy powder and skin prep, I suggest you reapply a new pouching system and make an appointment with your ostomy nurse.

7. You are feeling weak and tired after the surgery, what should you do?

- a. Depending on the type of ostomy you have, it could be residual effects after your surgery.
- b. If you have an ileostomy, you may be dehydrated and low on certain electrolytes.
- c. I would suggest you drink electrolyte replacement like Nuun or hydralyte. Chicken soup is also good as a homemade replacement. It is best to sip on fluids and eat some salty crackers as well. Gulping fluids will not help your body absorb the liquids.
- d. If you do not feel better over the next few days, consult your medical team.

8. When should you see an ostomy nurse?

- a. I would recommend seeing your stoma nurse within the first 2 weeks of discharge from the hospital
- b. After that, it will depend on your stoma, skin, and how you are managing.
- c. 1–2 times a year once you have stabilized and if you develop skin issues or have questions.

9. Managing your ostomy supplies

- a. Where should you store your ostomy supplies? Ostomy supplies should be stored in a cool, dry place. Your bathroom is not the best place due to the humidity, which will affect your pouching system. Extreme temperatures, too cold or too hot, will affect the barrier adhesion.
- b. How many supplies should you have on hand at any given time? This will depend on your wear time, frequency of change once you know which supplies work for you. I suggest you always have an extra box (10 per box) for each item you are using (flange, pouch, and rings).

What Else Comes Off? by Alexis Wasson, Tulsa Ostomy Association Secretary

Grandpa Evans had false teeth and a glass eye. One day he was entertaining a small group of his grandkids. The children were fascinated when he took out his teeth and were in total awe when he popped out his glass eye. As he was assembling himself, one of the younger ones asked: “Grandpa, what else comes off?” If you’re an ostomate, you’re probably wondering, “what else comes off?”

As we age, we lose our youth. We lose our hair, teeth, eyesight, skin elasticity, hearing, and we even begin to shrink and lose height. On the flip side, we gain unwanted weight & wrinkles, grow hair in the wrong places, and have standing appointments with our doctors and dermatologists. If we’re cancer survivors, perhaps what we’ve lost can’t be seen by passing strangers, but the losses are great and grievable. Even though I was well past the childbearing age, I still mourned the loss of my body parts when my bladder removal also included a complete hysterectomy. Parts of me were rerouted, and a segment of my colon removed to create a stoma. Internal and

external parts were sewn shut, and a new one opened in an area not intended to be used as an “out spout.” My stomach became “no man’s land” (literally) as I now sported a bag of urine and surgical scars.

In order to keep the rest of me intact, maintenance is never ending. Exercise and diet are the key...or so I’ve heard. As an alternative to healthy living, a good sense of humor goes a long way. Feeling good about yourself goes even further; I’m at the age where I’m not out to impress anyone.

As children, none of us ever said, “When I grow up, I want to be an ostomate.” But here we are, with stuff that has come off and other stuff that’s stuck on. For us lucky ones, we’ve learned to cope and it becomes a part of humdrum living. For others, it’s a nightmare often fraught with pain and continued surgeries. Lie’s a crap shoot. And for some of us, it’s a “crap, shoot!” Rollin’ the dice, Alexis Wasson

HYDRATION

Having ileostomy surgery at 21-years-old, I did not take hydration very seriously. Many ostomy nurses told me that maintaining fluids was a lifelong obligation, but that advice unfortunately didn’t sink in until my mid 30’s. I’ve had many trips to the emergency room due to dehydration and blockages, but thankfully I started feeling better after an hour or so hooked up to an IV solution. For many years sports drinks, soda and fancy coffee drinks were my main beverages of choice (no wonder I was dehydrated). I’ve learned that those beverages are filled with artificial ingredients, synthetic additives and food dyes—that’s not good. These days I look for healthy alternatives that work for my body, not against it. Here are five beverages that help me stay hydrated with an ostomy.

1. Lemon Water This one is really simple—but the effects are pro-found! Adding this powerful citrus fruit to water is a tasty way to stay hydrated and keep my digestion in motion. What I do: start the day with a big glass of water and a few squeezes of lemon first thing in the morning. It energizes me!

2. Natural Herbal Tea Ginger root tea and peppermint tea have been known to improve digestion and there’s some evidence to back that they can have a powerful effect on headaches too. Herbal teas have distinct scents and taste, plus many are naturally caffeine free. Ehamomile is one of my favorites because it has a calming effect. What I do: Boil water. Place mint leaves, peeled gin-ger root or tea sachets in a cup and cover with water, steep for about 5 minutes. Remove after steeping, or sometimes I just leave them in.

3. Golden Milk Golden Milk (also called turmeric tea) is the ultimate bedtime concoction, it’s soothing and delicious. The combination of turmeric, coconut milk, sweeteners, and spices is warming and it’s something that helps me with sleep issues. And bonus—the recipe is easy! What I do: Warm 2 cups of coconut milk and 1teaspoon of turmeric in a pot, whisk until fully mixed. Then add a dash of cinnamon, honey or maple syrup to taste.

4. Infused Filtered Water Water is the best thing I can put in my body, yet I snubbed it for years because it’s sort of boring. I need to drink water to stay hydrated, prevent head-aches, and my ileostomy does not function as well without the proper intake. There are simple, delicious recipes that can make drinking water interesting again! Fruit and herb infused water is so popular that you can even buy infuser water bottles and pitchers. What I do: I drink at least half my body weight in ounces of water each day (ex. If you weigh 120lbs, drink 60oz of water).

5. Green Drink I never ate fruit or vegetables on a regular basis prior to my ostomy surgery, so I think that's why I had so much trouble digesting them with an ileostomy (that and dehydration). Eating fresh organic greens is important for my health, so I found an alternative in smoothies and green drinks. I've been making green juice for over five years, it's rare that I miss a day. What I do: Juicers are great, but it's easy to use a blender and pour blended greens through a fine mesh strainer. The big challenge for me is—how do I remember to drink plenty of fluids every single day? I set out tea and water cups where I can see them. I fill up re-usable water bottles the night before, so they're easy to grab when I leave the house. But the real hydration happens when I drink fluids that my body embraces.

SOURCE: Vancouver Ostomy High Life via-Christine Kim Mar 30, 2017, Ostomy Connection

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