



OSTOMY AWARENESS DAY

Saturday, October 7, 2023



Check out all the Ostomy Awareness Day actives:

<https://www.ostomy.org/ostomy-awareness-day/>

Medical Care Products, Inc.
(904) 733-8500
(800) 741-0110

Ostomy Discounts offers ostomy supplies at great prices to uninsured or underinsured ostomates:
<https://ostomydiscounts.com/>

Check Out The MailBag Now On FaceBook

https://www.facebook.com/JaxUOAA/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

Find all the past issues of the MailBag at <http://ostomymcp.com/id6.html>

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: **October 15th**

Also join us by Zoom

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

Meeting ID: 946 4060 0811
or call +1 301 715 8592 US

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 *Has Disbanded*

To find a support group in your area visit:

<https://www.ostomy.org/support-group-finder/>

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 **Oct 10th @ 6 pm**
Saddlebrook Rec Center (near Polo Field)
Masks Required

Contact Linda tvostomy@gmail.com

If You Have a Colostomy Bag, Embrace the Freedom It Offers Cleveland Clinic The New Outlook Spring 2021

Having a colostomy is a big decision – not just because it’s a major surgery but because it will bring some changes to your life, including having a stoma bag after surgery. For many people, having a bag or pouch attached to their body is a huge emotional adjustment. It might feel odd or even scary at first. Those are completely normal feelings, says colorectal surgeon Amy Lightner, MD. But know that you can be active, wear fashionable clothes and live a happy, full life with a stoma bag.

An awkward subject, but it’s no joke

Some people only need stoma (ileostomy or colostomy) bags temporarily – usually for three to nine months while recovering from intestinal surgery. However, if you have a condition like Crohn’s or ulcerative colitis, or the sometimes imperfect surgical aftermath of colorectal cancer, that may make stoma bags a permanent part of your life. If you feel reluctant to talk with your family or friends about your bag, you’re not alone. “This topic doesn’t get a lot of attention because it’s very private and people do not want to talk about poop, stool or gas,” Dr. Lightner says. When people do talk about such subjects, it’s often in a joking or mocking fashion. But there’s no reason to feel ashamed. “Having a stoma bag is a life-changing event, and no one who requires one should be valued less than anyone else,” Dr. Lightner says. “You need and deserve to enjoy your life.”

Long-term conditions can be especially tough for young patients

While the impact is tough on anyone, the need for a stoma bag can be much more psychologically (Continued on page 4) 4 tough for younger people, given the number of years they still have ahead of them and the greater likelihood that they’ll participate in activities that could make the bag visible, Dr. Lightner says. “There is a different reality for someone who’s going to live with a bag three or five years, vs. 60 or 80 years. This brings a significant impact, in my opinion, to the pediatric population. Suddenly playing sports or going to the beach can be difficult to handle. People first see an appliance and not a person.”

Bags offer much more personal freedom

Anyone considering a colostomy should see an experienced, board-certified colorectal surgeon to have the surgery you need and be fitted for a bag. “You need the proper care from a specialist to do the surgery the right way so they can get a better quality of life,” Dr. Lightner. “It’s very important that you be in the right hands. Most people become devastated if things are not done right, and it’s very draining to require additional procedures.” The good news is that bags can offer considerably more personal freedom. For example, if you have inflammatory bowel disease, you know how often you need to visit the bathroom when your condition flares up. “The bag gives you complete control of your life,” Dr. Lightner. “The freedom and independence are there.” These days, bags and pouches are also very discreet. But it might take some getting used to. “We also need to educate society not to be cruel to these patients,” Dr. Lightner. “You need to know that you’re not alone in this. I tell everyone that if anybody is going to like you less because you have a bag, that’s not the right person for you.”

“I can be changed by what happens to me. But I refuse to be reduced by it.”

– Maya Angelou, Letter to My Daughter

Barrier Considerations to Obtain Your Fit Courtesy of UOAA (ostomy.org).

What is more important: fit, flexibility, stretch capability, or adhesion? If you cannot decide, or there are two or more that are just as important, you are not wrong. Why not have all in one for your barrier selection? You can have fit, flexibility, stretch capability, and adhesion in one pouching system!

Fit

When selecting a barrier, many considerations can come into play. When considering fit, proper application and sizing is important to help reduce leakage and create a seal around the stoma. Utilizing a stoma measuring guide or template with each pouch change is beneficial to help obtain the proper fit. Stoma size can change after surgery, so measuring is key. Deciding between a precut or a cut-to-fit barrier is also important to consider, as it depends on which option provides the best fit to your body.

Flexibility

A flexible barrier will move, bend, and stretch with your body allowing you to be comfortable as you go about your daily activities. Flexibility with stability helps achieve a seal around the stoma along with the proper fit. In day-to-day movements like, getting in and out of your car, vacuuming, getting a spice off the top shelf, or even a sport you enjoy playing, flexibility is important to move with your body.

Stretch capability

Can you have flexibility without stretch capability and vice versa? What if these two worked hand in hand to create the best seal and optimal comfort to help you with your daily activities? Think back to reaching to get a spice off the top shelf in the kitchen. You need to have flexibility in the barrier to obtain the stretch, but then when back in a normal standing position the ability for the barrier to go back to the original shape after completing the stretch—how is that obtained?

Teamwork!

Adhesion Lastly the ability for the barrier to have adhesion to the skin. This can be a challenge outside of the barrier itself. For example, what if there is a small area of irritation, moisture, or the landscape is not perfectly flat (which is very common)? The adhesion is important to provide the tact to the skin so that the barrier has all the capabilities: fit, flexibility and stretch! Good adhesive security is obtained by gentle warmth using the body heat of your hands, and a nice gentle pressure with application from the inside (near the stoma) all the way to the edges of the barrier. This helps activate the adhesive into those small nooks and crannies that our skin has even if we can't see them with the naked eye. Essentially, there are many questions that may come up when deciding on the best barrier fit for you. Let's go back to the original question that was posed: What is more important: fit, flexibility, stretch capability, or adhesion? The answer can be any of the above, and it all depends on your own lifestyle and personal needs. Things to keep in mind when you are considering your barrier options are, "Does this barrier have a good fit to my body?", "Does the barrier allow me to stretch without compromising the seal?", and lastly, "Does this barrier give me the security to enjoy my activities?". There are options available for many body types and challenges. Reach out to your WOC nurse so they can help you answer the questions that are important to you!

Belts vs Tape

It's sometimes necessary to use extra measures to make sure that an appliance stays firmly in place. Many factors can dictate a need for further measures to ensure a worry-free fit—body shape, skin type, sports played, job demands or quantity of waste. Tape and/or ostomy belts are sometimes a solution. Each has its advantages depending on the individual. In some instances, a combination of both may be recommended. Ostomy belts are a frequent first choice because they are reusable, washable, adjustable, and don't have to be peeled off the skin. But a belt that is too tight can cause its own problems. Wearing the belt too tight will cause the elastic to become overextended which allows the elastic to curl, forming a rope-like fit instead of a flat fit around the waist. This could get mighty uncomfortable in a hurry. You want the belt to be snug, but not so snug it's digging into you. You also want to keep the belt from 'riding up,' which will create an off-center pull on the appliance. Try to keep the belt level with your flange. Wider ostomy belts might be more comfortable if one has rolls of fat around the midsection.

Most belts are about an inch wide but wider types are available. You might want to allow your pouch to fill up and then test how effective an ostomy belt might be under different tensions and body movements. Choose cloth rather than rubber or elasticized fiber. Cloth will be cooler. Always empty a full pouch as soon as possible, or better yet, don't let it get that full in the first place. Some times belts are just not practical. They may be too uncomfortable for the wearer, or spoil the look of some clothes.

Tape can be a good solution in such cases. Tapes come in a variety of materials, paper porous tape, all plastic tape or a combination of both. Some appliances come with a tape perimeter 'built-in' but you may still need to apply another layer over the top of this. Tape is relatively inexpensive so give different materials and brands a try. To properly apply tape, it should encircle the entire flange, with one half on the flange and the other half on the skin. In time you'll get skilled at applying this. A gentle pressing- on with the fingertips will ensure that it's stuck.

Most problems with tape arise from poor application technique, impatient removal or allergies to the material. Prepare the skin with careful removal of the old flange and thorough cleaning and drying of the skin. When removing the tape, use the 'two hand' method—one to gently pull the tape off and the other to hold the skin down. Too frequent or rushed tape removal can cause irritation. Either method or even both methods—tape or belt—can greatly increase your confidence and comfort. Give both a try if you have concerns about your appliance staying in place.

OSTOMY ACADEMY

Education For Every Ostomate

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 Time: 8:00 pm ET (5:00 pm PT)

Register today for the next Ostomy Academy Presentation

<https://www.ostomy.org/ostomy-academy/>

DOCTORS DO THE PRESCRIBING BUT YOU NEED TO TAKE CHARGE!

Be curious - Know what your condition is and how the drug will help you.

Don't play doctor - Never tinker with the dosage on your own.

Share your life story - The doctor needs a complete picture of your health and habits.

Make friends with your pharmacist - You can never get too much information.

Plan a review session every 6 months - One in five Americans over 65 takes at least one inappropriate prescription drug.

One size doesn't fit all - The amount of medicine you may need may vary with age, weight, gender and ethnicity.

Send old drugs packing - Review your medicines at least once a year and get rid of oldies that are no longer goodies.

Timing is everything - Some side effects can be avoided by adjusting the timing-but ask your doctor before changing.

Be aware of interactions - Drug-Herb, Drug-Drug, Drug Condition, or Drug-Food interactions are all potential problems.

Visit the Peristomal Skin Assessment Guide for Consumers
<http://psag-consumer.wocn.org/#home>

UOAA COVID-19 UPDATES

UOAA will update this blog post with any information that may affect our community.

<https://www.ostomy.org/coronavirus-effects-on-the-ostomy-community/>



Medical Care Products
Now Carrying
Ostomy Pouch Covers
TOLL FREE 800-741-0110

UOAA Discussion Board

<https://www.uoaa.org/forum/index.php>

Medical Care Products, Inc
PO Box 10239
Jacksonville, FL 32247-0239

To: