The MailBag

September 2022

The Ostomy Support Newsletter Of Jacksonville, Ocala, Amelia Island, Gainesville, & The Villages

An Ostomy Bag Draining Solution

The OSTY-DRAIN® strips allow you to stand up to empty your ostomy bag versus sitting or kneeling. You will never need to kneel down on an unsanitary bathroom floor again. This practical and convenient solution, creates a worry-free lifestyle.

BENEFITS OF OSTY-DRAIN® STRIPS:

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- Use sitting or standing
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Medical Care Products, Inc.
(904) 733-8500
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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: **September 18th**
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 Lodge2121 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 - **September 13th** @ 6 pm
Saddlebrook Rec Center (near Polo Field)
Masks Required
Contact Linda tvostomy@gmail.com

Bathing with an Ostomy

Question:

I have just returned home from the hospital and have a new ostomy. I am concerned about bathing with my pouch. Is there anything I should know before I have a bath or shower?

Answer:

Bathing is often a concern for people living with an ostomy. Fears of the appliance loosening or falling off because of the exposure to water and heat, or excessive time taken to dry the appliance after bathing, can make the daily task challenging. Some techniques and products may help to make your regular cleaning routine a more comfortable and enjoyable experience.

In general, routine bathing should not interfere with the adhesion and security of your pouching system. In fact, the heat/steam from bathing can sometimes improve the adhesion, particularly in the first couple of days after you have applied a new system. However, if you like to frequently linger in long, hot baths (including hot tubs and steam baths) then you may find that the wear-time of your pouching system will be shorter than anticipated. There is no “correct” wear-time for any appliance, so you should make your decision regarding frequency of bathing and pouch changes based on personal preference and enjoyment.

Drying the appliance is somewhat dictated by the type of appliance you are using. You may dry non-tape bordered flanges and non-covered pouches with a towel. Try using the cool setting on a hair dryer for tape borders and covered pouches. Be careful not to use the hot setting, as this can distort/melt the pouch with prolonged exposure

If you use a two-piece system, then you should bathe either with the entire appliance on (flange and pouch) or with the entire appliance off (on scheduled appliance change days only). You may hear recommendations to remove only the pouch for bathing, leaving the flange and stoma exposed during the bath. This practice will contribute to premature washout or melting of the flange/barrier, thus more frequent appliance changes. Leave the system intact to preserve the barrier.

If you are using a cloth-covered pouch, you may want to switch to a stoma cap or a non-covered pouch for bathing, thus avoiding the time needed to dry your pouch afterward. Some people find that using a copolymer wipe (such as Hollister’s Skin Gel Wipes, Coloplast’s Skin Barrier Wipe, or ConvaTec’s AllKare) on the outside of a paper tape border flange will help to keep the tape dry. You may need to repeat application with every bath/shower. If it is your scheduled “change-day”, you may remove the appliance prior to bathing/showering, leaving the stoma exposed. If you do so, remember to avoid a direct shower stream on your stoma. Avoid the use of oil based soaps, shower gels, bath foams and moisturizing lotions as these will be hard to rinse off your skin, ultimately preventing adhesion of your next appliance. Once out of the bath/shower, your skin should be completely dry before applying your fresh appliance.

If you are using a one-piece appliance, then many of the same suggestions listed above may help, such as towel drying, using a cool setting on a hair dryer, and the use of copolymer wipes for the tape borders. If you are using a closed-end one-piece appliance, then you may elect to remove the pouch prior to bathing/showering (paying attention to the concerns regarding soaps, etc), or to keep the pouch on until after bathing, doing your routine change once your bath/shower is complete.

Some individuals have developed creative options for keeping the appliance dry. Shower aprons, or plastic pouch covers are products that may protect the appliance, keeping it dry. The Glad® kitchen plastic wrap product, Press’n Seal™, may be effective for individuals with minimal abdominal hair. Apply a large piece of the product over the appliance, pressing directly onto the surrounding abdomen. This provides short-term protection from water. Visible abdominal hair may interfere with the product attaching to the skin, so this may not work for all. Aprons, covers, and plastic wrap tend to work only for showering, and not for bathing. The use of these covers should be considered as optional and not as a necessity for regular bathing. Adding extra tape (e.g. waterproof tape) to the borders of the flange is generally not recommended, as this may cause skin irritation over prolonged use. If you need to wear a belt to support your appliance, then you may want to have two belts on hand so you can wear one while bathing, then switch into a dry belt afterwards. Your wet belt can dry over night, allowing you to repeat the process daily.

This series of ostomy care articles is authored by Jo Hoeflok, RN, BSN, MA, CETN(C), CGN(C), who is a Registered Nurse specializing in enterostomal therapy care. The information provided is not meant to replace care by or consultation with healthcare professionals.

THINGS I WISH I KNEW BEFORE I GOT AN OSTOMY

Lindsey KozeckeSeptember 14, 2020 Perspectives from cureourovariancancer.org

MY EXPERIENCE LIVING WITH AN OSTOMY

I was diagnosed with low-grade serous ovarian cancer in 2016. I've had both a colostomy and an ileostomy (with the same stoma). I was fortunate enough to keep the same stoma through my two resection surgeries. I've lived with an ostomy for 4 years now. If you need an ostomy as part of your ovarian cancer treatment – here are a few things you should know going in.

1. OSTOMY PLACEMENT AND CLOTHING

First, placement matters. I didn't realize how it would affect my clothing choices. With a colostomy, output is not often and usually firmer, so I often had an empty bag. That meant tucking my bag into tight jeans or skirts wasn't an issue and often people wouldn't even know I had a colostomy. With an ileostomy, output is frequent and liquid, so the bag feels uncomfortable tucked into pants and skirts, forcing me to have it hanging outside of clothes. This led me to make different choices, such as dresses or skirts where I could have a shirt covering my hanging bag. Where your stoma is on your abdomen changes where your pants sit, so make sure they measure you appropriately so it doesn't fall in a "fold."

2. OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUPS

Second, everyone is different, but you adjust. Support groups are so helpful in learning your new body part. Some people get sores often, or don't heal well, they need more support from an ostomy nurse and shouldn't rely solely on support groups. Others who only have occasional medical issues can use solutions crowd sourced on facebook groups. There are decades of experience that can really prove useful.

3. STRATEGIES FOR COMMON OSTOMY PROBLEMS

Third, there are always answers to problems. For instance, if you have an ileostomy, dehydration and malabsorption can be a problem. There are drugs for addressing this issue. Medications such as Omeprazole and Questran slow down your bowels so that transit time isn't so quick and helps reduce output. In extreme cases, supplemental IV fluids can be used to get you back on track. Drinking hydration drinks such as Gatorade zero can help maintain hydration.

Some answers are unexpected. If you worry about output during bag and wafer changes, eating a few marshmallows before you change your bag can slow output down temporarily, long enough to have a clean change. Constipation can be cured sometimes with simply drinking a coke. Skin irritation from leaks can be healed with Flonase and crusting (an ostomy term). Who would've thought to use Flonase?? The things you learn along the way!

4. PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AND INTIMACY WITH AN OSTOMY BAG

Finally, I know the thought of bathing and swimming and being active can be nerve wracking. But again, you adjust. I've swum in lakes, pools, hot tubs and taken long baths. I've gone zip lining, hot air ballooning, and camping with my ostomy. It takes a little bit of planning, and having some grace, but it is totally doable. Even being intimate is doable with an understanding partner. They make lacy wraps you can wear to hide your bag during intimate moments, and if you have an inactive ostomy, they have tiny bags you can use temporarily so it doesn't get in the way.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Try to remember that your ostomy is likely there to extend your life, so don't let it limit the way you live.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Lindsey is a mom to four young boys, a health policy researcher and attorney, and receiving end of life care for low-grade serous ovarian cancer. She hopes sharing her experiences can help other women going through similar circumstances.

DISCLAIMER

The suggestions contained in this article are not to be used as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment of any health condition or problem. Any questions regarding your own health should be addressed to your own physician or other healthcare provider.

My Emergency Ostomy Kit Modified from UOAA Articles to Share, April 2016 By Christine Kim

(ostomyconnection.com)

Winging It, Is NOT an Emergency Plan!! Following my surgery, my ostomy nurse at the hospital gave me a starter kit and suggested that I keep extra supplies with me at all times. It was a little black carrying case that has pockets for various supplies. As a new ostomate I remember taking that starter kit with me everywhere, even on quick errands, because I was constantly afraid the ostomy bag would leak or fall off.

First Year After Ostomy Surgery The first year was spent learning what worked, what didn't, and how to cope with the occasional accident. I remember feeling very anxious and was constantly making sure the pouch was secured and not leaking. It took some time to trust that the ostomy system would hold up, especially when doing any physical activity. Nights were spent sleeping on my back with my hand over the pouch. Nightmares of embarrassing leaks in public were common. There was so much anxiety about leakage that I decided to use a larger emergency kit with enough supplies for a week, along with extra clothes. But there were only a couple instances during that first year when I had an unexpected leak in a public place. I kept my wits and handled it as calmly as possible. Knowing that I had extra supplies gave me peace of mind.

Ostomy Living Now These days I rarely check on my pouch. I've learned which foods cause higher output, how dehydration affects wafer adhesion, and what types of clothing constrict the stoma area. I've traveled far away from home, experienced different climate conditions, and stay very active. Though I am aware that it's there, my ileostomy is certainly not at the forefront of my mind. If you're new to ostomy surgery, you might be feeling the same anxiety that I did in the beginning. I hope this gives you hope that any fears you may have are completely normal, but as time passes you'll gain more confidence and those worries will recede.

Be On the Safe Side It has been over 20 years since my ileostomy surgery, and I still carry an emergency pack, the smaller one. I leave my house with confidence knowing I will be able to handle any situation. I don't expect an emergency, but I'm prepared if I have one.

What's Inside an Ostomy Emergency Pack? Here are some ideas:

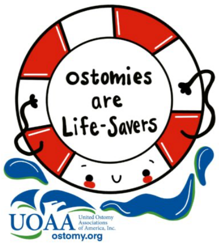
- Ostomy pouches + clips (if using non-Velcro close).
- Ostomy wafers (pre-cut).
- Moldable rings or tube of stoma paste.
- Bottle of ostomy deodorizer (sample size). • Barrier wipes (individual packets).
- Baby wipes or disinfecting wipes.
- Paper towel or wash rag(for clean up)
- Baggies
- Gauze Pads

Quick Tips: 1. Always store ostomy supplies in a cool, dry place. 2. Periodically cycle new replacement supplies, especially wafers and pouches, into the Ostomy Emergency Pack.

OSTOMY AWARENESS DAY

Saturday, October 1, 2022

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



UOAA's 8th National Conference-Postponed

AUGUST 10, 2023 - AUGUST 13, 2023

https://www.ostomy.org/event/uoaa-8th-national-conference/

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/

UOAA Discussion Board
https://www.uoaa.org/forum/index.php

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