

BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE

7301 RED ARROW HWY.

STEVENSVILLE, MI 49127



OSTOMY

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2007



what matters.™

The Ostomy Support Group will meet with the Cancer Support Group at BCCS on the 16th of January and the 20th of February at 1:30 p.m.

THE MOST POWERFUL PRESCRIPTION

By C. Hagedorn, Evansville Ostomy Association
From the New Outlook Ostomy Association of Greater Chicago
March 2006

A positive attitude toward negative situations is one of the most powerful forces in the world. It not only affects how we respond to hardships and difficulties, it can actually help to change the outcome.

This can be seen first hand in many people with ostomies. In addition, many people who have overcome potentially devastating diseases have gone on to lead full, productive and happy lives. The physical aspect of life may be compromised greatly by illness or surgery. However, with a positive mental attitude and willingness to let go of self-pity and bitterness, life goes on and can even be enriched by a painful and traumatic experience.

Focusing on what we have going for us, instead of what we feel we have lost, can change our outlook for the better. Once we accept our situations, we have a starting point for moving forward. Helping someone else in need is a most healing and rewarding experience for both persons. Keeping a strong sense of humor can prevent bad days from snowballing into bad weeks.

Time is too precious to waste on "if only" and "what ifs". What makes me so smart? The caring people, who helped me through my difficult time, laid the groundwork for my positive attitude and changed my life forever.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY . . .

Monday, January 1st – HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Monday, January 15th – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Friday, February 2nd – Will Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow today?

Wednesday, February 14th – HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

Monday, February 19th – Presidents' Day

UROSTOMY HINTS

If it is difficult sleeping with straps controlling your night drainage tube, use the catheter leg strap and position it so that the tube runs down the inside of the right leg, and you can roll over and sleep much more comfortably.

If you lose the small rubber washer on the drainage plug, it is reported that it can be replaced with a rubber hinge that is used to tighten eyeglasses. If the washer on the urinary valve stretches, let it dry thoroughly.

It may help to insert 2 oz. of a vinegar-water solution ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup white vinegar to 1 quart water), through the outlet valve of your emptied appliance twice daily. Do this in the morning and once at bedtime. Lie down for 20 minutes to allow the solution to "bathe" the affected area.

Appliances should be changed first thing in the morning. Most cement is waterproof, so if a drop of urine dribbles on new cemented skin, blot it away with a tissue.

A Urostomate can have normal GI x-rays without a problem. Never allow anyone to put barium in your stoma. At times, dye is injected through a soft plastic catheter into a Urostomy for retrograde ureters and renal studies (called an ileo-loop study). It may be performed on an Urostomy with a Koch pouch. The dye will be injected via a large syringe. This can be very painful if not done slowly. Even 50cc (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup), injected rapidly can cause pressure. Remember to request that the injection be done very slowly. (Ed. Note: I would suggest you copy this article and carry it with you, especially when traveling.)

Via Battle Creek, MI-OA & Cheers & Tears, Whittier, CA
"It's In the Bag" Ostomy Association, Ventura County, Camarillo, CA

Hospital regulations require a wheelchair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet, who insisted he didn't need my help to leave the hospital.

After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down I asked him if his wife was meeting him.

"I don't know," he said. "She's still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown."

COLOSTOMY CARE
FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTERED SKIN PROBLEMS
from Metro Maryland
via Contra Costa (CA) News S. Brevard (FL) Ostomy Newsletter

-Skin problems are usually caused by improperly fitting pouches, leakage of stool on the skin, hair follicle irritation, perspiration, or the misuse of skin barriers.

-An important aspect in cleaning skin problems is keeping a seal. To keep a pouch on irritated skin, it is necessary to have dry skin first. When the skin is irritated, it does not remain dry and cannot be dried with a cloth. A basic method of drying the skin includes a warm heat lamp or hair dryer. "Heat lamp" refers to any type of lamp with maximum 25 watt bulb placed at least one foot away from the stoma and allowed to shine for only 10 minutes. You will find a desk lamp good to use. Cover the stoma itself with a piece of damp tissue or cloth to prevent a drying effect to it.

-Never use a sun lamp. This is an ultraviolet light and will burn your skin. If you have had radiation therapy to the skin around your stoma do not use any lamp or

light to dry your skin. A hair dryer, of less than 850 watts may be used if there is a cool setting.

-If you find you need to purchase any new skin products listed under remedies, it would be advisable first to call your E. T. Nurse for suggestions. You may be familiar with the use of one or two products from your hospitalization. If you are comfortable using them, go ahead.

-Rash can be located under the tape, under the face plate and on any part of the skin where the pouch comes into contact with the skin. A generalized reddish appearance that covers an entire area, similar to a diaper rash, will be seen. It is caused by a leaking appliance; perspiration; allergies to tape, and hair follicle irritation.

To remedy, use a hair dryer to dry the skin; sprinkle a small amount of powder (karaya, stomahesive) on the skin, wipe off the excess, then blot with a skin sealant to seal the powder to the skin; powder the skin on which the pouch lies (not under the face plate); make or buy a cover. Wearing a pouch belt too tight may break the seal; and if the rash does not clear up in two to three days, consult an E. T. Nurse.

-Ulcerated areas on stoma can appear anywhere on stoma because the stoma opening of the pouch was too small and/or activities were causing the face plate to nib or cut into stoma.

To remedy, enlarge the size of the pouch opening. (Opening should be at least one-eighth inch larger than stoma.) Evaluate your activities; you may need a different size or shaped face plate; loosen your belt; if too tight, the belt may cause the face plate to press into the stoma; if this does not clear up in two to three days, consult an E. T. Nurse.

-Weeping skin can prevent a pouch or a skin barrier from adhering to the skin for long periods. If your skin is severely irritated and weeping, it may be necessary to change your pouch more frequently to prevent leaking and further damage. The hair under your face plate should be removed by an electric razor or a safety razor.

SOME TRAVEL TIPS . . .

Compiled through UOAA Sources

Put items that may leak in a plastic zip-lock type bag.

Precut your ostomy supplies before leaving. Only scissors less than 4" in total length are allowed in carry-on baggage on airline flights. Scissors may be placed in checked luggage.

Emotional pressures and over-fatigue might cause bowel upsets. Avoid becoming overly tired.

If this is your first time traveling with an ostomy, make a two or three day local trial run. This will not only build your confidence, but you may learn some important essentials.

Beware of pressurized cans in airplanes. They have been known to explode.

Bring some sanitary supplies; i.e., soap, toilet paper, towelettes, etc., which may not always be available.

Watch what you eat and drink. Make a list of your problem foods and avoid these foods. Try to maintain normal eating and drinking patterns.

Water that is not fit to drink is also not fit to irrigate or to rinse out your pouch.

For those accidents that never happen at home, but are almost inevitable at a friend's house or a hotel, take along a piece of plastic and use it as a mattress cover under the sheets.

*Empty your pouch more frequently.
Go to the washroom when you have the opportunity.*

BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE
7301 Red Arrow Highway – Stevensville MI 49127
Stevensville: (269) 429-3281 Niles: (269) 683-7460

OUR MISSION: To provide free skilled home nursing services, equipment, information and supplies at cost for cancer patients and their families in Berrien County.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION: at BCCS, we accept donations of ostomy supplies. We would be happy to give these supplies to anyone who can use them. Please have your supply numbers ready and call our Stevensville office to see if we have what you use!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP . . .

Contributions to our non-profit 501(c) (3) corporation are tax deductible.

Donations to our General Fund help to balance our current budget.

Memorial contributions are made in memory of a friend or loved one who has passed away. For memorial contributions, we need to know the name of the person being memorialized as well as the name and address of their next-of-kin so that we may send them a tribute card.

Honorary contributions are made in honor of someone yet living. For honorary contributions, we need to know the name and address of the person being honored so that we may send them a letter of recognition.

Any contribution may be mailed or brought to our Stevensville or Niles offices.

ENDOWMENT FUND

The Berrien County Cancer Service has its own Endowment Fund to ensure that we will be available for as long as needed. Donations to this fund may be mailed or brought to our Stevensville or Niles offices. We have partnered with the Berrien Community Foundation and the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation to enable donors to take full tax credit advantage from the Michigan Community Foundation Tax Credit.

To make this type of donation, please send payment directly to:

Berrien Community Foundation
2900 South State Street, Suite 2 East
St. Joseph MI 49085

Michigan Gateway Community Foundation
111 Days Avenue
Buchanan MI 49107

A letter to be used as a receipt and for tax purposes will be sent for all donations.

Before you follow any medical advice in this newsletter, or any other publication . . . check first with your doctor or ET.

**PRINTING COURTESY OF LAKELAND CENTER FOR HEALTH
ENHANCEMENT.**