

BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE

7301 RED ARROW HWY.

STEVENSVILLE, MI 49127



**OSTOMY
NEWSLETTER**

May - June 2010



what matters.™

TEN HEALTH MISTAKES THAT EVEN SMART PEOPLE OCCASIONALLY MAKE

Via: ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal & Green Bay News Review

- 1) **THEY DON'T DRINK ENOUGH WATER ON A DAILY BASIS.** You should consume at least eight glasses of liquids (beer and diet soda don't count because they act as diuretics) every day to replenish what you lose through urine, bowel movements, sweat, and the moisture you expel into the atmosphere when you breathe out. If you exercise, you should drink even more water.
- 2) **THEY HAVEN'T HAD A PHYSICAL RECENTLY.** A regular checkup gives you your best opportunity to detect certain potentially deadly illnesses (from cancer to heart disease) early. Although a complete annual physical exam is no longer considered necessary for everyone, you should see your physician for a checkup as often as he/she recommends. Furthermore, some screening procedures (e. g. protein specific antigen tests or mammograms) should be scheduled on a regular basis.
- 3) **THEY DON'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP.** People who skimp on sleep have been found to suffer from a variety of impairments, including daytime fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, diminished reaction time, and heightened mortality rate.
- 4) **THEY ATTEMPT TO EXERCISE THROUGH PAIN.** Pain is the body's signal that something is seriously amiss. Unlike discomfort, when you experience pain, you must stop exercising and address the cause(s) of the pain. Attempting to work through pain will subject you to the very real possibility of either aggravating your existing condition or suffering an injury.
- 5) **THEY DON'T WASH THEIR HANDS DURING THE DAY.** Good hygiene helps to prevent infections and the transmission of germs. At a minimum, you should always wash your hands after you've used the restroom and before you prepare food.
- 6) **THEY DON'T EAT BREAKFAST.** Research shows that learning, decision making, and memory can be impaired when you restrict your food intake. Furthermore, if you miss breakfast, you may jump start your appetite in such a way that you overeat later in the day.
- 7) **THEY DON'T GET ENOUGH CALCIUM IN THEIR DIET.** Your bones are approximately 25% calcium by weight, an amount that represents about 99% of your body's calcium reserves. Accordingly, if you don't consume enough calcium, you can suffer from reduced level of bone density, which can result in fractures. The best dietary sources of calcium are low-fat or non-fat dairy products and dark-green vegetables.
- 8) **THEY'RE TOO BUSY TO RELAX.** Making time to relax is a positive step you can take to reduce your level of stress and improve your health. Studies show that as your level of stress grows, you become increasingly susceptible to physical illness and mental and emotional problems. Relaxing is an effective way to control your level of stress.
- 9) **THEY DON'T WEAR THEIR SEAT BELTS.** Wearing lap and shoulder belts while traveling in a car can substantially lower your risk of being injured in the event of an accident. For example, studies show that a passenger who is ejected during an accident is more than five times as likely to suffer a serious injury or die than an individual who remains strapped inside the vehicle.
- 10) **THEY DON'T KNOW THE MEDICAL HISTORY OF THEIR RELATIVES.** Knowing your family's medical history and responding in an appropriate, proactive way, can substantially help reduce your risk of developing serious diseases. For example, if your family medical history indicates that you are at a heightened risk for a particular disorder, you can pursue early detection screening and prevention strategies for that disease.

WHICH POUCHING SYSTEM IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

By Gwen Turnbull, BS (a pioneer ostomy nurse Via: Northern Virginia Pouch)

With so many ostomy products available, it's hard to know which one is right for you. Regardless of the brand of product or type of surgery you have, there are a few basic features an ostomy pouching system must have to give you a sense of security and confidence. First, it must contain urine or stool, gas and odor without leaking. Second, it must help protect the skin around the stoma from damaging effects of stool or urine. Third, the systems should remain in place for a sustained and predictable wear time. Wear time—This means you should be fairly certain your pouching system will remain intact without leakage for a definite period of time. That time period varies among individuals and ranges from 24 hours to 7-10 days.

Wear time- has a lot to do with the amount and character of your output, the climate in which you live, your daily activities, and the type of skin barrier you use.

Output — High volume liquid output will melt standard, pectin-based barriers faster than the more modern synthetic extended-wear barriers. Using a skin barrier paste as “caulking” around the stoma or a “bead” on the back of the skin barrier, can help increase wear time and skin protection.

Visibility/Intimacy/Cost — Once the above criteria have been met, look at other pouching system features that might impact the way you feel about yourself. For example, is the pouch visible under your clothing, and does that determine your feelings about yourself during periods of intimacy? Do ostomy supply costs, or worry about them, overwhelm you?

Your Adjustment — Researchers believe that such concern can affect your adjustment to, and satisfaction with, your life after ostomy surgery. That's why it's important to look at the fine distinctions about ostomy pouching systems. Consider a system's wear time as it relates to its costs. Calculate your ostomy supply costs on a yearly total-cost basis rather than a cost per change basis. You may find that an inexpensive pouch that must be changed daily costs more in the long run than the more expensive pouch you can wear for three days.

Conclusion — Investigate the size, shape, color, contour, profile and ease of application and emptying of a variety of pouching systems. Which one will be right for you? The one YOU FEEL is right for you!

IS IT ALWAYS NECESSARY TO USE SEALANT ON MY SKIN?

Via: The Right Connection & Southern Nevada's Town Karaya

Skin sealants such as Skin-Prep by Smith & Nephew, Skin Gel Wipes by Hollister, Allkare by ConvaTec and Bard Skincare Protective Film are available in different forms, such as small wipes, sprays or applicator bottles. These products contain a plastering agent as their main ingredient and are used to provide a thin protective film on the skin surface. This film helps prevent injury to the surface layer of the skin during appliance removal. It also acts as a moisture barrier. For people with dry skin, the film actually improves appliance adhesion. Skin sealants also contain variable amounts of isopropyl alcohol. Because of the alcohol content of the sealant, burning and stinging often occur when the sealant is applied to damaged skin. Therefore, skin barrier powder should be used rather than a skin sealant on irritated skin. It is also important to know that skin sealants may not be recommended for use under certain skin barriers. The protective film may reduce the adherence of the barrier.

HOW CAN OSTOMY SURGERY AFFECT YOU?

By: Robert H. Phillips, Ph.D., Via: Springfield MA, OAGS Newsnotes & S. Brevard Fl, Ostomy Newsletter

Each person is unique and deals with the circumstances surrounding ostomy surgery in a different way. You need to analyze your situation to determine how to best live with your illness. Because having ostomy surgery affects different people in a number of ways, you may experience some or many of the following concerns: Interference with daily activities; Interference with physical functioning; Changes in lifestyle and/or personality; Emotional reactions such as depression, anger, anxiety, helplessness, or guilt; Changes in relationships with family members; Alteration in your social life; Interference with your sleep; Feeling that you have less control.

What can you do? Your ultimate goal is to take charge and live a happier life, despite having an ostomy. Here are a few strategies that can help you better handle your ostomy and improve your overall health, happiness and productivity.

1. Be a person— not a patient. Make this the foundation of your thinking. You are a person who has had ostomy surgery, not an ill person. The only time you are a patient is when you are in the doctor's office or the hospital. The way you see yourself living with an ostomy is an essential part of coping successfully.
2. Understanding the unique way that your ostomy affects you and your life. Identify the ways that your ostomy causes problems for you. Are you experiencing any problems with the pouch system, leaking, odor, skin breakdown? How does having an ostomy affect others around you? Does it limit your activities? There are many other factors that may affect you. You'll want to identify them and determine how you're going to deal with them.
3. Set overall goals for improving your life. You'll find that your efforts can include many of the following: Improving your ability to cope with a situation; Setting reasonable, realistic and achievable goals; Aiming to control your life; Improving day-to-day functioning; Improving your perspective on any problems you may be facing; Being more assertive and taking an active part in your healthcare (including dealing with medical personnel); Accepting and improving your ability to deal with the emotional consequences of your ostomy; Increasing your ability to handle negative emotions; Focusing more on your strengths and diminishing the impact of weaknesses or limitations of having an ostomy; Doing things that you like and spending less time on things you dislike; Enhancing positive relationships; Improving participation in your social network; Improving your life satisfaction and quality of life.
4. Pinpoint what you need to help improve your life. Think about all the difficulties you have living with an ostomy. Write these down on the left side of a folded piece of paper. On the right side, next to each item, write down things you can do to improve each one. Note as many alternatives that you can. Ask others for additional ideas, especially if you are not sure what to do about certain things. Keep adding to your list and plan how you will use these ideas to improve your life.
5. Anticipate the negative. There are negative things that can happen during life with an ostomy, but some of these things could happen if you didn't have an ostomy! The more you anticipate and prepare, the better you will cope. Isn't this true of us all—ostomy or not?

COMMON OSTOMY PROBLEMS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Excerpted from an article in the Huntsville, Alabama "Re-Route"

Food blockages. Symptoms may include no output from the stoma for more than 4 hours, cramping in the abdomen, nausea or vomiting and high watery output. Solution: Drink hot tea and increase your fluid input. Take a warm bath or shower and massage your abdomen. Have a glass of wine. This will help relax your abdominal muscles. Get down on all fours with your backside in the air. An undignified position, but it does help some people move a blockage. If the blockage persists for more than a few hours, seek medical advice from your nearest hospital.

Mucous and bleeding from the rectum. Solution: This is completely normal if your rectum is still intact, although annoying, since the mucosal lining of the rectum is still working. Try wearing a sanitary napkin to save soiling your underwear. If the bleeding is profuse, see your doctor.

Odor. Solution: Simple solutions that work for some ostomates are to place mint tic tacs or mint mouthwash into your bag. Deodorants, either taken orally or placed in your bag, are available from your ostomy supplier. DO NOT place aspirin in your bag in an attempt to eliminate odor—doing so can cause damage to your stoma.

Bleeding. Solution: First, determine if the bleeding is coming from the surface of the stoma or from internally. If it is internally, then it's wise to seek medical advice. If the bleeding is from the surface of the stoma, it should stop quite quickly. Stomas are made from the same type of skin as the inside of your cheeks and you know how easily they bleed. Even the slightest little nick can cause it to bleed. If bleeding is profuse or doesn't stop quickly, seek medical help. Cuts to the stoma can also be caused by the wafer riding off center. Try "picture framing" the wafer with some tape to stop it from moving.

Phantom rectal pain, ie., you get the urge to go to the toilet in the "old way", even though you know you can't. Solution: This pain is because your body needs time to adjust to its new plumbing and still thinks it needs to go to the toilet in the old way. Try going and sitting on the toilet anyway, even though you know it's pointless. A lot of people find this alleviates the pain. The good news is that over time, phantom rectal pains become less frequent and eventually disappear altogether.

Stoma is placed on or above the beltline. Solution: This is more common in men than women for some reason. DO NOT let them site your stoma on or above the beltline if at all possible. Belts will stop the stool from flowing into the pouch so try wearing trousers a size bigger than you would normally wear and wear braces or suspenders to keep them up rather than a belt.

Seatbelt of cars ride right over the stoma site and are uncomfortable. Solution: Try using a clothes peg at the top of the seatbelt where it slides into the door. This will enable you to wear the seatbelt looser than normal but still protect you in case of an accident. Use a small cushion or pillow between you and the seatbelt. Remember, a broken stoma is much easier to put back together than a whole person!

Stoma shows through a tight dress. Solution: Try wearing bike pants or similar lycra pants under your outfit that will smooth out the line of the bag. Empty frequently.

The Ostomy Support Group will meet with the Cancer Support Group at BCCS on May 18th and June 15th.

TENDER LOVING CARE - YOUR STOMA NEEDS IT TOO!

Via: Boston (MA) OAB BULLETIN, & S. Brevard (FL) OSTOMY NEWSLETTER

Most ostomy patients would agree that there is no substitute for TLC. That is one of the reasons that the specialty of ET nursing exists. It ensures that nurses with a special sense of caring and with special education are taking care of the ostomy patient's needs. Once you are discharged, remember that your stoma needs TLC also. A few pointers might be helpful. Generally speaking, it is good to set aside a time for giving priority to stoma care. It might be during your morning shower, after breakfast, or at bedtime. It's important to make it fit into your routine. Don't change your schedule for the stoma. Make it change for you. Having a regular time for pouch changing, etc. helps put some order into your schedule. It will also ensure that leakage or other problems can be kept to a minimum. If you know that your pouch always leaks on the fourth morning for instance, then begin changing it on the third night, if that time is convenient. Don't be rough with your stoma. It's not unusual for it to bleed a little when washed. Just be careful not to be too brisk with the washcloth or whatever you use, as that might cause excessive irritation. Eat a well-balanced diet; following special instructions from your physician, dietician, ET, etc. Drink sufficient water and fluids unless you are medically restricted. Persons with ileostomies and colostomies should chew their food very well. Avoid eating too many hard to digest and gaseous foods at one meal. Urostomy patients need to be sure to have sufficient fluids, unless told otherwise by the doctor, as fluids help prevent infections. Rinsing the pouch daily with a solution of 1/3 white vinegar and 2/3 water helps prevent crystals from building up on the stoma, and the wash will also keep the inside of the pouch acid. Acid conditions prevent growth of bacteria. Patients can usually shower with the pouch off or on unless instructed otherwise. Water will not hurt the stoma. Peristomal skin especially needs TLC. A properly fitting pouch, changed regularly, usually accomplishes this. Never tape the pouch if it is leaking. Change it!! If you have frequent leakage and have to change too often, call your ET to make an appointment for re-evaluation. Perhaps another type of pouch would be better suited, or perhaps your stoma and peristomal skin need re-assessment. There might be some new products that will work for you. Don't hesitate to make an appointment.

NEW UROSTOMY PATIENTS

Via: Roanoke (VA) Valley News & South Brevard, FL

Train yourself to shut the pouch valve as soon as you have emptied the pouch! If you forget, the resulting disaster within the next 10 minutes could ruin your day. Be sure to take the plastic waste basin and clear measuring container home from the hospital! They are very helpful as you establish a daily routine of washing your night time equipment. Gallon bottles of white vinegar and cheap liquid detergent make the daily washing-up an inexpensive chore. If you change the pouch first thing in the morning, there is less chance of the stoma misbehaving as you do the change. Irrigate the pouch daily with a solution of 4/5 water and 1/5 vinegar. A five quart pail with metal handle (Home Depot, Wal-Mart, etc \$1-\$2) is a great night bottle or bag container by the bed and also a safe way to carry this equipment to the bathroom in the morning. The hospital plastic wash basin is an ideal container for supplies when traveling and can be used to hold the night drainage bag. In the morning, it is handy for washing-up wherever you are.. It fits nicely into most carry-on bags and is not heavy. In most cases, urostomy patients enjoy a completely normal diet. Cranberry juice, yogurt, or buttermilk will help combat urinary odors. Asparagus should be avoided as it produces a strong odor in urine.

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.

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