

BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE

7301 RED ARROW HWY.

STEVENSVILLE, MI 49127



**OSTOMY
NEWSLETTER**

July – August 2010



what matters.

**Sooooo-How Do I Clean This Pouch?
Via:Hemet-San Jacinto, CA**

If you are cleaning a drainable two-piece pouch for reuse, use warm, rather than hot or cold water. Cold water doesn't lift stool or urine as readily from the plastic and the pouch is less pliable. Hot water will cause the pouch to wear out faster and may increase the likelihood of odor. If you want to rinse the pouch while you're still wearing it, use a small squirt bottle to get the water in it, slosh it around by holding the end and let things empty into the toilet. Unless you have no option, it's best to remove the pouch entirely for cleaning. A bit of ordinary dish detergent with warm water, or, if bacteria are a concern, a bit of white vinegar mixed with water will do the trick. Fill the pouch with the warm water/soap/vinegar solution and slosh it by hand over the toilet, drain and repeat as necessary. It's not recommended that you wash these things in the sink - - the drains are usually too small to handle this sort of waste and the result will not be hygienic. Once you have things reasonably clean, you can hold the pouch under the bathtub faucet and let it rinse. Tub drains are larger and so long as you let a good flush of water follow, and scrub the bathtub on a regular basis (which you do anyway, right?) your bathroom will not smell. Baking soda in the wash water and down the drain is an excellent deodorizer. You can hang the wet pouch by the ring on a hook to dry or just leave it flat on a towel and it will be ready for use the next day. The inside doesn't have to be bone dry for use, but the outside and ring should be. A lot of products have a thin fabric covering on them—nice against the skin and dry but very uncomfortable if damp. Make sure that part is dry before putting it back on.

COLOSTOMY BLOCKAGE AND ITS CAUSES

by: Dr. J. Hopkins, Asst. Prof. Surgery, Lankenau Hospital, No. Alabama

Dr. Hopkins states that poor bowel habits probably begin in childhood with people being "bowel conscious." They erroneously think that a daily bowel movement is necessary for body and bowel functions. He states that four requirements for normal bowel passage are:

- 1) A balanced diet including some roughage. Attempting a rigid diet after a colostomy is futile and unnecessary. By trial and error one can eliminate those foods which may cause diarrhea and constipation.
- 2) Exercise to maintain a good body tone.
- 3) Effects of emotion. This may be difficult.
- 4) Adequate fluid intake. He says that colostomy blockage may be due to mechanical defects or failures. The most common cause of this type of stricture is a narrowing of the opening of the stoma. Another mechanical cause is herniation around the stoma. Blockage may also be the result of strangulation, or a sharp bend in the colon. The mechanical problems can be corrected by your surgeon. Other causes of blockage may be improper diet, medication and the effect of your emotions on your digestive system. Also the position in which one irrigates (somewhat doubled over, for instance) may result in difficulty in elimination. Exercising of abdominal muscles would not be harmful to the colostomy and would promote good muscle tone in the area. Dr. Hopkins recommends that his patients use the newer cones and tips for irrigations for safety.

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.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Via: The Tomy Tabloid, Editor: Charlotte Allen, RNC, BSN, CETN

Q: Do you think it is a good idea to rinse out my colostomy bag when I empty it?

Answer: I usually teach my patients the proper procedure for rinsing out your pouch when emptying it, but then leave it up to you if you want to continue to rinse it or not. By proper procedure, I mean rinsing the pouch up to the level of the bottom of the stoma. I find sometimes people rinse the pouch too vigorously and cause the adhesive seal around the stoma to loosen from inside the pouch by introducing water at the seal. Some people feel more comfortable using an opaque colored pouch and not having to worry about rinsing it at all. Again, I think it is a personal preference with what you are most comfortable with. Many people get along just fine without ever rinsing the pouch.

Q: When a colostomate gets a blockage from eating too much food, should a laxative such as prune juice be taken? Should heat be applied? Would it be a good idea to irrigate?

Answer: When a colostomate gets a blockage, in most cases, it is due to constipation caused by eating constipating foods, a lack of physical activity, or use of pain medications. It is quite OK for a colostomate to take a mild laxative. The use of prune juice is an excellent suggestion. Foods with fiber, like bran, make the stools less constipating. For a person who has not irrigated, the other methods should be tried first.

Ileostomates should take NOTE: Treatment for blockage for persons with an ileostomy is different from the above. AVOID laxatives, DO NOT irrigate, and consult with your ET nurse about the best procedures for you to take.

OSTO - TIP

If you find your stoma gurgles a lot, try this: At meals, eat the solid foods first, then take your beverages. Do not eliminate your beverages. Daily intake of fluids is needed to prevent dehydration.

“With Apologies to Edgar Allen Poe”
A poem by Marjorie Kaufman, Hemet-San Jacinto, CA

Once upon a midnight dreary,
While I fretted tired and weary,
Feeling just a little leery,
Yet reluctant to explore;
While I lay there barely napping,
I was conscious of a gapping
Twixt the hook let and
The strapping that I wore.

“Tis but loose”, I mused in silence,
Only this and nothing more.”
Yet into the darkness peering,
While I lay there wondering,
Fearing, doubting, with that
Certain feeling I was scoring,
But I’d wait until the morning;

“So, I pushed aside the warning
And the omen that it bore.
“It will last until the morrow,
Getting up is such a chore.
This it is and nothing more.”
Then into the pillow sinking:
With my sleepy eyes a-blinking.
I’ll forget it, I was thinking,

And to dreamland I would soar;
But I knew I was pretending”
That no danger was impending,
And although it needed tending,
Not before the night was o’er.
“It will last”, I kept repeating,
“It will last, it has before”.

So to sleep and nothing more.
With a start, I woke up knowing
Twas a puddle neath me growing,
As I felt the moisture flowing,
From the face-plate that I wore;

Bolt upright, I cursed my daring,
Out of bed I leaped declaring,
vowing, arduously swearing,
ne’er again would I ignore.
Not those certain signs of warning
would I ne’er again ignore- -Quote me, raving,
Nevermore.

The Ostomy Support Group will meet with the Cancer Support Group at BCCS on July 20th and August 17th.

KEEPING WEIGHT DOWN

Via: Ostomy News Review, Green Bay WI

Keeping weight down is especially important for ostomates. Even a few extra pounds can affect the fit of our appliance and cause the stoma to recess. For new ostomates, extra weight may put pressure on healing tissues. Here are a few ways to drop or maintain weight. Eat your biggest meal at noon and then have a very light dinner by 6 p.m. Eat an apple, or two bread slices, or other fiber-type food 20-30 minutes before dinner. It will help curb your appetite at the table. These foods, combined with a glass of water, will expand in your stomach and reduce your capacity to eat. Chew well and eat slowly. It takes up to 20 minutes for the brain to receive the messages of fullness from the stomach. Don't eat after 6 p.m. Resist snacking late at night, and your body will reward you with more restful sleep and lots more energy in the morning. Food eaten in late hours will generally go directly into fat production because the body's energy needs are low at night. Remember that vegetables are considered free of calories when not covered with dip, butter, or other extras—so you can have these healthier foods without guilt. Finally, instead of plunking down in front of the TV until bedtime, how about a relaxing evening stroll? You'll sleep better and feel better in the morning.

GASTRIC REFLUX

By: Bob White, Via: S Brevard (FL) Ostomy Newsletter

A recent article in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* purports to deal with the possible association between certain drugs and the incidence of esophageal Aden carcinoma (cancer in the esophagus) as a result of gastric reflux. It is, unfortunately, more likely to confuse the layman than to educate him. First, incidents of esophageal cancer demonstrably are on the rise among men in America and Western Europe. It has a 5-year survival rate of 11%. Gastrointestinal reflux—the backward flow of stomach fluids into the esophagus—is a risk factor in this cancer. Second, the research group, from Sweden and the Harvard Center for Cancer Prevention, theorizes that certain drugs may loosen the sphincter at the base of the esophagus, making reflux more likely. Third, the drugs include nitroglycerin, asthma medications such as albuterol and aminophylline (a bronchodilator), and Valium. The research considered the cases of 600 people with the cancer, between 1995 and 1997, as compared with a control group of healthy men who had taken the medicines in question. The rate of cancer was almost four times more common in those who had taken the drugs daily for more than five years. Then, the researchers concluded that the findings “could be seen” as “reassuring” for users of the drugs, because “our data suggest that persons who use these drugs (for short periods) may be at little increased risk.” A logical rebuttal might hold that, if you use these drugs on anything approaching a daily basis, and you are experiencing the symptoms of gastric reflux (they're hard to miss!) be sure your physician knows about the situation.

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.

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