

**BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE**

**7301 RED ARROW HWY.**

**STEVENSVILLE, MI 49127**



**O S T O M Y  
N E W S L E T T E R**

**November – December 2014**



## Being treated for cancer

As patients go through treatment for cancer, they use coping strategies to adjust to the stress of treatment. Patients may have anxiety or fears about:

- Procedures that may be painful.
- Side effects such as hair loss, nausea and vomiting, fatigue, or pain.
- Changes to daily routines at work or home.

Patients usually adjust well when they can compare short-term discomfort to long-term benefit (for example living longer) and decide, "It's worth it". Questions that patients may ask during treatment include, "Will I survive this?"; "Will they be able to remove all the cancer?"; or "What side effects will I have?" Finding ways to cope with problems caused by cancer such as feeling tired, getting to and from treatment, and changes in work schedule is helpful.

### *Incidentally...*

By: Marjorie Kaufman  
Los Ileos News, Los Angeles  
via: Northern Virginia *The Pouch*

No one can tell me at a glance that I have an ostomy. Only those close to me know it for sure. Perhaps that is why it is difficult for me to recognize a curious fact; some people do not realize it's a BLESSING, not a DOOM!

One wonders whether this knowledge might have some value to the human race—at least that part of the human race that tends to look upon an ostomy as a disaster.

Acceptance is part of being happy. People need happiness as much as they need food; without it they're devoured by restlessness and discontent.

How many people who think they resent an ostomy would, if they were truthful, recognize it as the thing they most needed to enjoy life again? How many could, with a simple change in mental outlook, admit it's a BLESSING?

Many people never learn; they never achieve the peace of mind and contentment this knowledge

brings. They spend their lives in a prison where an ostomy is the eternal punishment. An ostomy is not DOOM—that's a mental attitude.

Nothing is a joy or a burden; only thinking makes it so. How can we avoid that feeling of compulsion that makes an ostomy a burden? We don't disclaim it. There's no use kidding ourselves about that.

Nevertheless, there are things we can do to take the edge off the feeling of compulsion and make things more pleasant. We need to expend our mental and physical energies.

If these energies are not expended in a constructive fashion, they turn inward and poison our minds and bodies with resentment and dissatisfaction. We need that warm sense of accomplishment, to be needed, wanted and useful. We need it to give balance to our lives.

Contentment depends not so much on the BLESSING as on the attitude of the person who has it.

## GOODBYE GoLYTELY!!

By: Barb Barrickman, RN BSN CWOCN  
Are you planning on having a colonoscopy soon? We all know that this is an important screening examination to detect any abnormalities in the colon which could lead to cancer. It is highly recommended that anyone age 50 and over have a colonoscopy, with follow-up colonoscopies on a schedule determined by the results of the first exam and the person's medical history. The procedure itself isn't usually a problem. We usually don't remember that part. It is the preparation for the procedure that really sticks in our minds! The usual preparation includes a clear liquid diet for at least 24 to 48 hours prior to the procedure as well as taking a preparation to clean the bowel thoroughly. Often, this is GoLYTELY. This preparation produces diarrhea, which rapidly cleans the bowel, usually within four hours. It has proven to be very effective in cleaning the bowel. The problem with it is the amount that needs to be consumed and the taste. Although it is available in flavors now, it still involves drinking eight-ounce glasses every ten

minutes until you get the recommended amounts down. Approximately 50 percent of people taking the preparation will experience some common side effects including nausea, abdominal fullness, bloating, and cramping. One alternative to GoLYTELY is magnesium citrate liquid. This is usually a ginger-lemon preparation that is mixed with a small amount of water. It is taken in two doses. Although it is a much smaller amount of liquid, it does not taste good and is difficult for some people to drink at all. Finally, there is a new product that is in pharmacies now. It is called Visicol. This medication is in pill form. No more drinking endless gallons of fluid! It does mean taking 40 pills, however. The usual routine starts the day before the procedure. That day, you take 20 pills within an hour and a half. The pills must be taken with eight ounces of any clear liquid (water, clear carbonated beverage, or clear juice). Then the remaining 20 pills are taken three to five hours before the exam. These are taken in the same manner as before. The directions conclude with this reminder: remain close to toilet facilities. There are some contraindications for the use of Visicol. If you have congestive heart failure, unstable angina, unstable angina pectoris, or kidney disease, it should not be used. All of the preparations mentioned above should be used with caution in patients with severe ulcerative colitis. There are also some new products being introduced that might even eliminate the clear liquid diet prior to the examination. There is one company starting to market a meal kit for the day before the examination. It includes shakes, chicken noodle soup, stroganoff, and even potato chips in a special low-residue diet plan, which supposedly cleans out the bowel even more thoroughly. So, when planning your next colonoscopy, be sure to ask your physician if you can say goodbye to GoLYTELY!

### **Abdominal Noises**

via GAOA & Chattanooga Ostomy Association  
Coalesce Newsletter, UOAA Update, October  
2014

Abdominal noises happen! However, as ostomates, we are embarrassed and wonder if something is wrong. It is usually "sound and

fury, signifying nothing" important. Any of the following may be the cause:

1. You are hungry. Peristalsis goes on whether there is anything to move through or not. Empty guts growl. Eat a snack between meals. Or consider four small meals a day.
2. You are nervous, so peristalsis is increased. Try to slow down. Try to eliminate some stress (especially at meal times).
3. Coffee and tea, cola and beer-all stimulate peristalsis. Beverages consumed on an empty stomach will produce gurgles as peristalsis redoubles its movements. Add a little bit of food with your beverages. Try some crackers and/or bread.
4. Eating a high-fiber diet produces gas, so rumbles increase. Mix with other foods. Reduce amount of insoluble fiber. Switch to more soluble fiber.
5. Intestines do not digest starches and sugars as easily as proteins and fats. Reduce the amount of carbohydrates that cause you trouble. Mix with proteins and fats.

### **HINTS FROM HERE AND THERE**

*Via: Kankakee IL*

To keep urine acid, take two Vitamin C tablets daily, if it is all right with your doctor. It also helps omit odor, be sure to drink lots of fluids. Bacteria can't live in acid urine. Eating bran muffins a simple and delicious way for colostomies to solve constipate problems. When the lock is broken on the restroom door, a wad of folded tissue will sometimes hold it shut. Carry an extra tail closure or rubber bank with you in case yours goes down the drain. It could prove critical to your entire program. Don't be afraid to take a shower without your appliance. Soap cannot hurt the stoma. Just rinse well. Ziploc sandwich bags are useful for disposing of used pouches and taking care of odor of used pouches. Three cups of tea contain the same amount of potassium as one quart of ileal effluent. Coke and orange juice are also good potassium replacements Gatorade is a good source of electrolyte replacement and is easily obtained. Does your stomach gurgle? Try eating solid food first at meals and then drink. But, be sure to get enough fluids too, so you don't become dehydrated. Please note that the proper appliance will confine odor! Don't call attention to yourself

by using deodorants too generously. The less an ostomate eats, the more gas he has, so don't skip meals before going out. In fact we would be better off with six meals a day so we would never have an empty stomach. Empty stomachs growl. After bathing with the faceplate off, hold a cold compress over the peristomal area for a few seconds to close the pores before changing. If your stoma bleeds during cleaning and appliance change, don't panic. A healthy blood supply is what gives your "rosebud" a bright red color. Tiny capillaries are easily damaged and just as easily repair themselves. If bleeding continues long after the appliance has been changed, check with your doctor. Use a hand mirror for a better view of the stoma. It is about the only way you can see under it.

### **COLOSTOMY HINTS**

*Metro Maryland & The Osto-mee News,  
Hamilton, Ohio*

Save money by making your own elastic belts for holding your irrigation sleeve or appliance. Save the end attachment from the old worn-out belt and transfer to the new elastic. A cup of buttermilk in irrigation water can help control odor. If you irrigate, try adding about 1/4 cup of Vaseline Intensive Care Bath Beads into the irrigation sleeve when you are cleaning it. Rinse with clear water. Odors will be gone and fecal matter will slip out easily. Water cans with long, curved spouts are excellent for rinsing reusable appliances. If you notice a persistent odor after changing your appliance, check to see if you have cleaned the tail piece properly. It isn't necessary to clean the inside of an appliance (as it is acting like the inside of your colon), but the end of the tail flap is exposed to the outside and will cause odor if fecal material is not removed. A careful swipe with a piece of tissue will do the trick. Always carry an extra appliance and an extra closure clip for emergencies. Check it periodically to make sure that it is not showing wear and tear. When traveling, carry a collapsible plastic cup for water, a packet of tissues, and a small plastic bag for any other unforeseen need. Check your stoma whenever you change your appliance. You want to make sure that you catch any possible problems early. Look for changes in color, shape, or function. Also, look around the stoma for changes in the skin. If you spring a leak while wearing your

best "dry clean only" winter whites, get them to the cleaners quickly. Explain the nature of the stain. You can help educate the public and you have the best chance of getting the stain out if you "come clean" as to what caused it. If you can't eliminate odor from your faceplate, try taking an old toothbrush and scrubbing the faceplate with toothpaste. If you find the scissors sticky when you cut Stomahesive wafers, lubricate the scissors with KY Jelly or clean the blades with rubbing alcohol. Try using one of those small seam rippers (available in any fabric store) for cutting the size you need from Stomahesive. It is quick and gives a nice smooth edge ... but be careful. Be careful with zippers. The pouch can get caught in the zipper when zipped in a hurry. Be careful with what you place in your pockets. Ballpoint pens, keys, nail files, tooth picks, and other sharp objects could puncture the pouch.

### **HINTS & TIPS**

Rounding off the square edges of a firm wafer, or skin barrier, will decrease the chance of the belt catching on the corners. Male ostomates who suffer painful collisions between the pouch tail clip and key organs, should try angling the pouch toward a pants leg instead of pointing it straight down. Wear briefs and pass the pouch through a leg opening in the brief to hold it in place. To slow down stoma activity, before changing appliances, eat a tablespoon of creamy peanut butter beforehand or eat four or five marshmallows, fifteen minutes before changing. Spearmint is one of the gentler mints. A bit of spearmint vinegar in a glass of water calms the stomach and digestive system. It also relieves gas and adds a tangy zest to iced tea. Check your rubbing alcohol if you are cleaning skin with it. If it contains glycerin this will prevent securing a good seal of the appliance. Alcohol should only be used occasionally to degrease the skin. Stretch away tensions when a headache begins, **STRETCH**. It helps ease tense necks, headaches, and lower back pain. Stretching brings needed blood to tight muscles and a feeling of well being. Stretch slowly, hold, do not bounce or strain.

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

**OUR MISSION:** To provide compassionate in home skilled nursing care and supportive resources for those affected by cancer or related illnesses in Southwest Michigan.

**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 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 office.

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 office. We have endowments with both the Berrien Community Foundation and the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation. To make this type of donation, please send payment directly to the addresses below indicating our name on your check.

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.*

**OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP**

2nd Tuesday of each month- 6:00 p.m.

**Lakeland Regional Medical Center**

Community Room

1234 Napier Ave

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (269) 983-8804

**BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE, INC.**  
7301 Red Arrow Highway  
Stevensville, MI 49127

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