

Affiliated
with...



SHORT CIRCUIT

Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group #171, Inc. — an affiliate of UOAA, Inc.
Our 52nd Year! Serving Ostomates of Eastern Iowa since 1972 www.iowaostomy.org June 2024

Welcome!

The Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group is dedicated to providing information, advocacy and service to our members and their caregivers. We also include the intestinal and urinary diversion community at large.

Who is U.O.A.A.

The United Ostomy Associations of America is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The UOAA serves to unify and strengthen ostomy support groups in America.

UOAA services include:

- Advocacy
- Non-profit Status
- Conferences
- ThePhoenix magazine
- Toll-free Help and Referral Line
- Special Interest Groups
- Ostomy Community Liaison

For more information, contact the UOAA at 800-826-0826 or visit their website www.ostomy.org.

From the Coordinator:

Hello everyone!

Well the Memorial Day holiday has passed us by. The calendar has changed to June - but I sure don't think it feels like summer yet. Don't get me wrong - I really enjoy saving that green by not running my air conditioning - but I'd also really like to get outside and work on my Vit D therapy and getting a tan. I guess we shall see what the rest of summer has in store for us.



To those that get the newsletter by email - I sent out one to see about the June meeting. I did hear back from several people and most were not able to attend the dates I sent out. The VA still hasn't gotten approval to host meetings so I am canceling the June meeting. I also put in a picnic date - nobody could do that weekend. So I'll see you in August.

If you do have a need - please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I am always willing to meet and chat - even better if food is involved. LOL I am currently talking to a few of you on a regular basis and I am so glad you are reaching out. That is what I (and the group) am here for. The phone number comes right to me - and unless I'm 100% busy (usually that means at the gym) I answer when I see the support group number come up.

For those long time members - I wanted to pass on that I saw a member pass away. Janet Monk's picture is at the bottom for those that would remember her. The obit can be found on the Cedar Memorial Funeral Home website - located in Cedar Rapids. She used to lead the Crohn's and Colitis support group many years back and was a regular attendee at our support group until her health declined. Services will not be until August for those interested in attending.

Best Regards,

Gina Carlile



Our local chapter

We meet regularly to share experiences, provide mutual support and learn about the latest products and information for ostomy, urostomy, and intestinal diversions.

Meetings are held at area hospitals, and involve informal round-table discussions on topics of interest. All of our meetings will have a question and answer session with one of the local WOC nurses. Meetings can include potential new product demonstrations, guest speakers. and insurance company speakers. Families and friends of ostomy and intestinal diversion patients are always welcome to attend.

For more information about the local chapter, contact us at 319-775-0175, online at www.iowaostomy.org, or find us on Facebook at Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group.

Need a Wound/Ostomy Continence Nurse (WOCN)?

St. Luke's Hospital
Cedar Rapids, IA
Ostomy Clinic
319-368-5582

University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA
Nurse Line
319-356-7994

Mercy Medical Center
Cedar Rapids, IA
Healing Center
319-398-6400

Mercy Hospital
Iowa City, IA
Wound Center
319-339-3967

Regional Medical Center
Manchester, IA
Wound Clinic
563-927-7511

Buchanan County
Health Center
Independence, IA
Wound Clinic
319-332-0999

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Subscriptions directly fund the nonprofit United Ostomy Assoc. of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.

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* Based on \$12.95 cover price. Canadian subscriptions: \$29.95 one-year. U.S. funds only.

The **SHORT CIRCUIT** is the official newsletter of the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group #171, and is published 7 times per year.

MEMBERSHIP is open to ostomates along with their families, friends and caregivers. Dues are \$10 per year and include an email subscription to the **SHORT CIRCUIT** newsletter. Copies are also available free on our website at www.iowaostomy.org.

Don't have email? To subscribe to the printed edition of the newsletter there is an additional \$10 charge per year (to cover the costs of printing and mailing).

Membership dues and print subscription fees are collected on the honor system. If you are reading this newsletter you are considered a member even if you are not able to attend meetings. Your membership fee is tax deductible and will help support educational activities for ostomates in eastern Iowa. Send membership dues and printed subscription fees to Vicki Kee, P.O. Box 5227, Coralville, IA 52241

NEW! YOUR OWN VIRTUAL CERTIFIED OSTOMY NURSE

Whether it's a colostomy, ileostomy or urostomy, a new ostomate learning to care for their stoma or an existing ostomate grappling with new complications, the journey can be overwhelming. **UOAA's Virtual Ostomy Clinic** provided by The Wound Company offers support through telehealth visits and ongoing touchpoints via texting and emailing to make sure ostomates have the right supplies for their unique situation and thoroughly understand how to care for their ostomy.

- Assess a person's ostomy in one comprehensive telehealth assessment by Zoom in the beginning of the 30-day period
- Assist ostomates and their caregivers in choosing supplies and recommend pouching options that fit the person's lifestyle and health goals
- Help ostomates and their caregivers prevent and manage skin irritation, rashes, and other complications around the ostomate's stoma.
- Answer ostomy questions from ostomates over email or SMS for the 30-day program.
- Provide personalized education, care, and support throughout the program, including tips on diet, nutrition, hydration and intimacy.
- Follow up with one additional comprehensive telehealth assessment during the program when necessary.
- Provide a summary of the assessment and recommendations for ongoing care after each telehealth assessment.

WEBSITE ADDRESS: <https://www.ostomy.org/clinic/>



Officers of the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group

Gina Carlile, Support Group Coordinator

Vicki Kee, Treasurer

Newsletter Editor

PO Box 5227

New Ostomate Support Visitor

Coralville, IA 52241



Upcoming Meeting Info

June 2024

CANCELED

Thursday, August 22, 2024

**Support Group Meeting @ 6:30 pm
Mercy Hospital- Cedar Rapids
Location TBD**

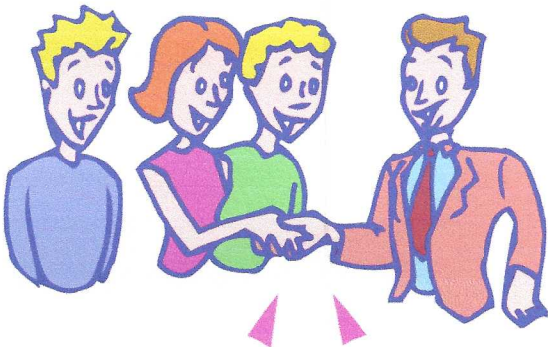
Tuesday, Sept 10, 2024

**Support Group Meeting @ 6:30 pm
U of I @ Iowa River Landing
Basement Meeting Room
AGENDA: Convatec Rep**

Thursday, October 17, 2024

**Support Group Meeting @ 6:30 pm
UnityPoint Health - St Luke's Campus - Cedar Rapids
Room 163 Behind Gift Shop
Sound Therapy and Your Health**

Meeting cancellations — If it becomes necessary to cancel a support group meeting due to weather conditions, the information will be posted on our website:www.iowaostomy.org. If you receive the Short Circuit via email, you will also receive an email notice of cancellations. If you suspect a meeting will be canceled because of inclement weather but don't have access to email, just give the group number 319-775-0175 a call to find out the status of the meeting.



Zoom Meeting Info

NO JUNE MEETING FOR 2024

HOPEFULLY 2025 we can meet with VA Hospital, Iowa City

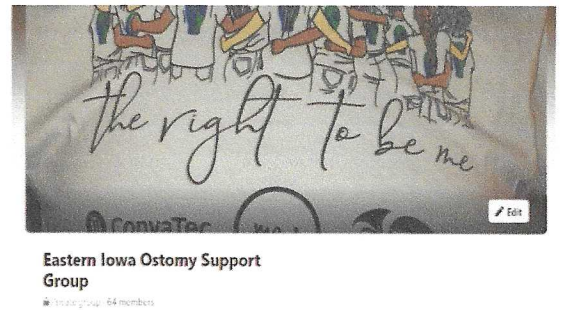


FIND US ON FACEBOOK

LEFT IS FB page to like (friends can see you like this)
<https://www.facebook.com/iowaostomy>

BELOW IS FB group managed by me (Gina - and as a private group nobody will see you're a member or anything you post)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EasternIowaOstomySupportGroup>

Page 7 you will find information on a few new programs for help on Embracing Ostomy Life. It talks about Team HOPE and being paired with an ostomate. You need to go through the UOAA "Ostomy Friends" Training if you are interested in doing Team HOPE. Please let group coordinator - Gina Carlile know by email or give her a call at the group phone number. She can get you a link to complete it. This is done totally online - at your own pace. Timeframe is a few hours but you do not have to do it all in one sitting.

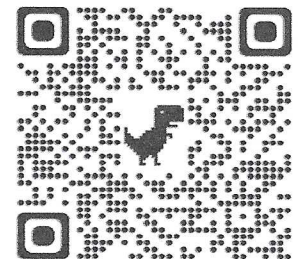


QR Code For Support Group Website

Ostomy 101 Mobile App

Free on IOS & Android Devices - scan barcode for app

- Ostomy Surgeries Explained
- Clinician led Ostomy Education Videos in English & Spanish for Adult & Pediatric
- Free New Patient Classes
- Telemedicine Appointments with a Certified Ostomy Nurse (WOCN)
- Ostomy Lifestyle Videos, Blogs & Podcasts
- Free Manufacturer Samples & Coupons
- Ostomy Pouches & Accessories
- Free Recovery Programs
- Free Virtual Support Groups, Classes & Events
- More!



What Is A Fistula?

via New Outlook OSG Newsletter in Chicago - National Institutes of Health

A fistula is an abnormal passage, or tunnel, between two organs—called an internal fistula—or between an organ and the outside of the body—called an external fistula. In the lower GI tract, both internal and external fistulas can occur. Fistulas can develop during gestation or at any age after birth. Fistulas that develop during gestation are more common in boys than girls.

Fistulas may occur as a result of:

- complications following surgery—the most common cause
- childbirth—a fistula can develop between a mother's vagina and rectum
- Crohn's disease, a chronic inflammatory bowel disease that can affect any part of the GI tract
- diverticulitis, an inflammation or infection of small pouches called diverticula that are created by bulging, weak spots on the colon
- infection
- trauma

Some people with a fistula in the lower GI tract have no symptoms; others may experience:

- abdominal pain that begins in one spot and spreads throughout the abdomen
- dehydration
- diarrhea
- fatigue, muscle cramps, or slow growth due to malabsorption—a condition that occurs when the small intestine cannot absorb nutrients from food
- fever, with or without chills

People with any of these symptoms should be evaluated immediately by a health care provider.

External fistulas can be found during a physical examination. Internal fistulas can be seen during an upper or lower GI series, CT scan or colonoscopy. Internal and external fistulas may close on their own, although this process could take weeks or months. The doctor may prescribe antibiotics to prevent or treat infection resulting from leakage of intestinal contents. Some people may need to stop eating and receive nourishment intravenously to ensure proper healing. If a fistula does not close on its own, a surgeon may perform intestinal resection surgery.



Your Ostomy Pouching System and Wear Time

Hollister Secure Start

Many factors can affect the frequency of your pouching system changes, including your stoma type. Explore what impacts wear time and how you can extend it. Learn about pouching system wear time. Some of the most common questions people have after ostomy surgery are about how often a pouching system should be changed. Let's look at some things that can affect the life of your pouching system, as well as some ways to increase wear time.

Many variables can affect how long you can wear your skin barrier and pouch. A lot depends on the stoma type, location and type of output. Here are a few other factors that will likely impact your wear time:

- Type of stoma output - liquid, pasty or more formed
- How much your stoma sticks out from your skin
- Climate, your activity level and how much you perspire
- The condition of the skin around your stoma
- Creases, folds and wrinkles in areas around your stoma
- Type of skin barrier used (manufacturer and regular vs extended wear barriers)
- Skin products used underneath the skin barrier



Proper fit, good skin hygiene and a regular schedule will help maximize wear time. With good ostomy care habits, you can wear your pouching system longer for greater convenience and fewer issues. Plus, you'll get the most from your ostomy supplies. Here are a few things to consider:

- A skin barrier is usually changed every three or four days (or about twice a week). Every person has their own routine, however, so find what works best for you.
- Plan your pouch change for a time that works well for you. Don't wait until your pouch begins to leak or pull away from your skin.
- If your wear time becomes unpredictable, consult your ostomy care nurse
- If you have trouble getting your skin barrier to stay in place on your skin, you may need to get some help with fitting and product selection. Talk to your ostomy care nurse.

Urology Concerns

via Inland NW (ID & WA) Insider Newsletter

Germs are all over the world, but when they are in the urinary tract, either in the conduit, the ureters, or the kidneys, they are in an abnormal location, and that can cause an infection. What causes infection? Mostly, the reasons are unexplainable. Why do some people get more colds than others?

Infections can be caused by obstructions, kidney stones, tumors, cysts, or scar tissues. Almost synonymous with obstruction is infection, and then too often comes stone formation. Once you have stone formation, it's hard to get rid of the infection. It's a kind of a cycle that goes around and around.

Infection can be caused by urine being forced back to the kidneys through the conduit. This could happen if you fall asleep with the pouch full of urine and accidentally rollover on the pouch, causing urine to be forced back through the stoma and the urinary tract with tremendous pressure. Invariably, the urine in the pouch is contaminated.

In general, to prevent and treat infection, you need a good flow of urine, much like a stream. That not only dilutes the bacteria or germs in the urine but also helps wash them out. Two and one-half liters (quarts) of liquids daily are required for the average adult. Also, antibiotic therapy is used to fight infection.

Night drainage is recommended. Otherwise, you run the risk of urine backing up into the kidneys which can cause irritation or infection. This is especially important for urostomates with only one kidney.

It's important to be aware of the symptoms of a kidney infection: elevated temperature, chills, low back pain, cloudy urine, or decreased urine output. People with ileal conduits normally produce mucus threads in their urine which give a cloudy appearance, but bloody urine is a danger sign. You must see your doctor if any of these symptoms occur.



Thrive with an Ostomy

UOAA Articles to Share, April 2024

peer support

Ostomy surgery saves lives but it's normal to feel overwhelmed, whether it is temporary or permanent. Accepting that you're going to the bathroom in a whole new way can take time. The emotional hurdles are often more challenging than any physical ones.

With the right knowledge and support, people don't just survive but can thrive in life with an ostomy pouch. Here are a few things which our ostomy community says lead to success:

- Seek out an ostomy nurse specialist and custom-fit your pouch. Certified Wound, Ostomy, and Continence (WOC) nurses are the experts in ostomy care. They can help you find the ostomy pouching supplies that will work best for you to prevent leaks and skin irritation. Your stoma and body contours may change over time so it's important to consult with one.
- If you don't have a certified nurse near you, there are telehealth options at [ostomy.org/clinic](https://www.ostomy.org/clinic).
- Contact a medical supply company to get your prescribed supplies and to sample new ones (from manufacturers themselves).

Find peer support and trusted information. Ostomy nurses are wonderful, but nothing can compare to talking with someone who has been through this profound change before. You are not alone. United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA) estimates up to a million people are living with an ostomy or continent diversion in the United States. UOAA has hundreds of peer support groups and also events to connect with people like you. Ask for advice on returning to work, sex, and how to talk about your ostomy with others. You'll find that many ostomates even name their stoma and celebrate their "stomaversary." UOAA's website [ostomy.org](https://www.ostomy.org) is considered the most trusted place to find educational resources, self-advocacy tools, supply information, and details on topics like nutrition and peristomal hernias. Fact-check here anything you may discover on social media.



Don't Limit Yourself. You don't have to want to climb mountains or run marathons, but you should know that plenty of people living with an ostomy do. Read realistic but positive ostomate stories you can relate to. If doing what you love means going out with friends and not worrying about the nearest bathroom, you may discover an ostomy is a big improvement. Everyone should expect to swim, play sports, or do whatever makes you, well you!

Signs and Symptoms Not to Ignore

via New Outlook OSG Newsletter in Chicago - from Mayo Clinic Staff

Take note of important signs and symptoms — from unexplained weight loss to sudden flashes of light — and know when to seek medical care. Chest pain, sudden loss of vision or speech, and severe abdominal pain require immediate medical attention — but what about more subtle signs and symptoms? It can be tough to know what to do. Here's a list of seven signs and symptoms that merit attention.

- 1. Unexplained weight loss.** Losing weight without trying might sound like a dream come true, but in reality it can signal a health problem. If you're not obese and you've lost more than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms), or more than 5 percent of your body weight, during the past six to 12 months consult your doctor. An unexplained drop in weight could be caused by various conditions — including overactive thyroid (hyper-thyroidism), diabetes, depression, liver disease, cancer or disorders that interfere with how your body absorbs nutrients (malabsorption disorders).
- 2. Persistent or high fever.** A fever isn't necessarily a cause for alarm. Fever seems to play a key role in fighting infection. Persistent fever can signal a hidden infection, which could be anything from a urinary tract infection to tuberculosis. In some cases, cancerous (malignant) conditions — such as lymphomas — cause prolonged or persistent fevers, as can some medications. Call your doctor if your temperature is 103 F (39.4 C) or higher or you've had a fever for more than three days.
- 3. Shortness of breath.** Shortness of breath could signal an underlying health problem. Very strenuous exercise, extreme temperatures, massive obesity and high altitude all can cause shortness of breath. Outside of these examples, shortness of breath is likely a sign of a medical problem. If you have unexplained shortness of breath, especially if it comes on suddenly and is severe, seek emergency medical care. Causes for breathlessness might include chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchitis, asthma, pneumonia, a blood clot in the lung (pulmonary embolism), as well as other heart and lung problems. Difficulty breathing can also occur with a panic attack — a sudden episode of intense anxiety that triggers severe physical reactions when there is no real danger or apparent cause.
- 4. Unexplained changes in bowel habits.** What's considered normal for bowel movements varies widely. Consult your doctor if you notice unusual or unexplained changes in what's normal for you, such as: bloody, black or tarry-colored stools, persistent diarrhea or constipation or unexplained urges to have a bowel movement. Changes in bowel habits could signal a bacterial infection — such as campylobacter or salmonella infection — or a viral or parasitic infection. Other possible causes include irritable bowel disease and colon cancer.
- 5. Confusion or personality changes.** Seek medical attention if you have sudden poor thinking skills, difficulty focusing, sustaining or shifting attention or behavior changes. These changes could be caused by many problems, including infection, poor nutrition, mental health conditions or medications.
- 6. Feeling full after eating very little.** If you consistently feel full sooner than normal or after eating less than usual, get checked by your doctor. This feeling, known as early satiety, also might be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, bloating or weight loss. If so, be sure to tell your doctor about these signs and symptoms as well. Possible causes of early satiety include gastroesophageal reflux disease, commonly known as GERD, and peptic ulcers. In some cases, a more serious problem — such as pancreatic cancer — could be a factor.

7. Flashes of light. Bright spots or flashes of light sometimes indicate a migraine. In other cases, sudden flashes of light could signal retinal detachment. Immediate medical care can help prevent permanent vision loss.



Embracing Ostomy Life Programs Launched in 2024

Embracing Ostomy Life (www.embracingostomylife.org) has been Rolf Benirschke's dream since he had his ostomy surgery in 1979 which almost ended his NFL career. After securing their 501c3 status in the spring, their team has been hard at work laying the groundwork for the two programs expected to launch in early 2024:

Alive & Kicking—a 30-day ostomy recovery program delivered via email with tips on adjusting to a new life that features videos and information from physicians, WOCNs, physical therapists, nutritionists, mental health professionals and "veteran" ostomates. **Website is:** <https://embracingostomylife.org/align-and-kicking/>

Team HOPE (Helping Ostomates through Peer Encouragement) will match volunteers who have completed the UOAA "Ostomy Friends" training course with new ostomates based on factors like gender, type of ostomy, lifestyle, age and other relevant factors. **Website is:** <https://embracingostomylife.org/team-hope/>

Looking for information on ostomy products or ostomy related organizations? Contact information below

Major Manufacturers

Manufacturers are the companies that make each type of ostomy supply. Most have an ostomy nurse on staff to answer your questions about products. Call or go to their website for free samples!

Coloplast	888-726-7872	www.coloplast.us
ConvaTec	800-422-8811	www.convatec.com
CyMed	800-582-0707	www.cymed-ostomy.com
Hollister	888-808-7456	www.hollister.com/us
Marlen	800-321-0591	(via Edgepark)
Marlen	216-292-7060	www.marlenmfg.com (directly)
Nu Hope	800-899-5017	www.nu-hope.com

Suppliers

They will send a free catalog featuring many brands of ostomy supplies. Suppliers stock all type of supplies from each manufacturer. This is a great way to compare different manufacturer's products!

AOS Medical Supply	800-858-5858	www.mmsmedical.com/aos
Byram Healthcare	877-902-9726	www.byramhealthcare.com
Duke Medical Supply	888-678-6692	www.dukemedicalsupply.com
Edgepark Medical	800-321-0591	www.edgepark.com
Liberty Medical	888-844-2651	www.libertymedical.com/ostomy
SGV Medical	800-395-6099	www.sgvmedical.com

Organizations

Great resources outside of our local chapter for ostomy related questions.

American Cancer Society	800-227-2345	www.cancer.org
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation	800-343-3637	www.ccfa.org
Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA	Donate unused supplies	www.fowusa.org
Osto Group - free product for the uninsured	877-678-6690	www.ostogroup.org
United Ostomy Associations of America	800-826-0826	www.ostomy.org
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society	800-224-9626	www.wocn.org