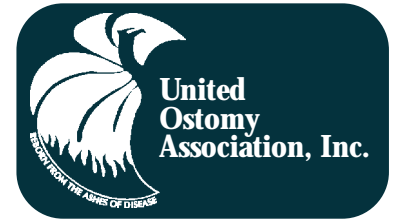


SO YOU HAVE OR WILL HAVE AN OSTOMY...

SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE

The UOA is a volunteer-based health organization dedicated to providing education, information, support, and advocacy for people who have had or will have intestinal or urinary diversions.



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You Are Not Alone

There are approximately one million people in the United States who lead full, productive lives after ostomy surgery. The United Ostomy Association is a nationwide organization of local support groups that offer assistance through their visiting program, mutual-aid meetings, and educational publications for ostomates.

What is an ostomy?

An ostomy is a surgically created opening in the intestine or urinary tract, through the abdominal wall, for discharge of bowel or bladder wastes. Different types of ostomies are named for the organ involved. The most common types of ostomies are:

Ileostomy - created by the removal or bypass of the large intestine. The end of the small intestine is brought through an opening in the abdomen, creating a stoma;

Colostomy - created by the removal of a damaged or diseased portion of the large intestine. A surgically created opening in the abdomen called a stoma permits the elimination of body waste from the remaining portion of the large intestine;

Urostomy - created by the removal or bypass of the bladder. The urine is diverted from its usual route and the urine is passed from the body through a stoma.

An ostomy may be necessary when cancer or disease involves the bladder or digestive tract. Some may be temporary to allow a disease process or operative site to heal and others will be permanent.

Ostomates may wear an external pouch to collect liquid or food waste. Some newer procedures allow for internal pouches, which eliminate the need for external collection devices.

Ostomates come in all sizes, shapes, descriptions and with major health care problems. Ostomy surgery saves many lives and returns people to better health and a new way of living.

Can I wear normal clothing?

Most individuals are able to wear their entire wardrobe, including tight clothing and bathing suits. Maybe you should skip the bikinis!

Will there be odor?

Those with ileostomies and urinary diversions will be fitted with pouches which are odor-free. Colostomates control odor with diet and odor-free pouches or stoma coverings (for those who choose to irrigate). In addition, for all ostomates, there are deodorants for external use and odor-reducing compounds to be taken by mouth, should they be needed.

Will there be noises?

Everyone produces gas and rumblings, including ostomates. You can place your hand over your stoma area or maybe a little cough to cover up the noise. You will experience less gas and noises as your digestive system settles down after the surgery. Avoid gassy foods, drinking through a straw and chewing gum.

Will I feel the waste discharging?

The intestines have very minimal feeling. Colostomates will probably be aware of intestinal movements when it happens. Those with urinary diversions will probably be unaware of kidney draining.

Check the pouch occasionally to see if it needs emptying before it gets too full and may cause a leakage problem. Always empty prior to going out of the house and away from a convenient toilet.

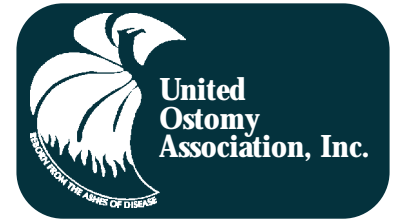
Will I be a captive of the bathroom?

At first you may find yourself spending lots of time in the bathroom until you become proficient with the management of your stoma. But then, your routine will not involve any more time than normal visits to the bathroom, except for changing the pouch. Also, irrigating, for the colostomate who chooses this type of management, will take longer.

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Will I be on a special diet?

Follow doctor's orders regarding nutrition at each stage of your adjustment. Begin with small portions, introduce new foods slowly and chew well. A good practice for all ostomates is to drink plenty of fluids.

Will I be a social outcast?

Only your own attitude and morale will affect your companions. You should determine who, when and how much to tell about your surgery. Most ostomates return to the same physical and social activities that they enjoyed prior to their illness and subsequent surgery.

Ostomates are dating, mating and having babies after ostomy surgery. Good marriages grow stronger by sharing life experiences.

Can I still go swimming?

With a securely attached pouch, or properly managed colostomy, you can shower, take a bath, swim and scuba dive. Go for it!

Where Can I Get Help?

United Ostomy Association (UOA)

The United Ostomy Association with local chapters throughout the United States will provide you with support, education, and information to help you return to a productive life after ostomy or related surgery. UOA certified visitors are available on request.

Visit the UOA web site www.uoa.org for valuable information and links to many other helpful ostomy related sites.

Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society (WOCN)

The WOCN is the professional organization for ostomy nurses and health care professionals. WOCN's mission is to provide education, research, certification and collaborative

atmosphere to support state-of-the-art health care management for individuals with wounds, ostomies, and incontinence.

For more information contact your local hospital or visit www.wocn.org.

American Cancer Society (ACS)

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy, and service.

For more information, contact the local unit of the American Cancer Society listed in the white pages of your telephone directory or call toll-free (800) ACS-2345, or visit their web page at www.cancer.org.

Local Ostomy Chapters

Local chapters provide person-to-person help for new ostomates of all ages. Most meet monthly and have educational programs, group discussions and issue bulletins or newsletters. Chapter members visit new ostomates. Every ostomate will find it helpful to join and be active in a local chapter. To find a chapter near you, visit www.uoa.org or call the number below.



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