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# Antelope Valley Ostomy News

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## **Happy Birthday, America!!**

*Local News...~ by Ann Wright, RN,  
CWOCN, CNS, Editor Lancaster News*

Hi, everyone – I hope you all had a wonderful July 4<sup>th</sup>! The summer is well on it's way to hot-hot-hot! But too soon, we'll have our wonderful cool weather and wonder where our summer went!

It was such a delight to have such a nice turn-out for our picnic at Apollo Park June 24<sup>th</sup>. We had a great time, despite some sizzling temperatures and little breeze. But it was so nice to have a chance to visit again. Thank you all who came and brought such great picnic treats! (I hope you all didn't have melt-down after the picnic!)

Last month I sent a Happy Birthday greeting to Augusta May, one of our dear friends...well...I was a few months early. Or late, depending on how you look at it. (Augusta's birthday is in November – oops...”my bad”). So...at the risk of erring again, I'd like to wish ANYONE who has a birthday in July...Happy Birthday. So there!  
☺

Our next meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM** at the Lancaster Senior Center. I sure hope to see you all there. And if you are away on vacation,

have a safe trip and plan to join us later this summer for a possible “Beach Bus” outing, and for our regular meeting in September!  
**See you July 16<sup>th</sup>!!**

## **KEEPING COOL – Check the Fabric!**

*~ Ostomy Newsletter, S. Brevard, FL*

Wow! Temperatures in the 90's and up. So how to keep cool in the good old summertime? I don't claim to be an expert, but during the past five summers since my ileostomy surgery, I have given the problem a great deal of thought. The first thing I discovered about summer was that if I got too hot and perspired, I scratched. Look out skin! A great revelation came to me—I must keep this area cool and dry. First of all, you must use an absorbent barrier between your skin and the appliance. You can buy fancy pouch covers or make your own. Use 100% cotton material. Make several and keep one in your purse for a change when the one in use gets damp from perspiration. A sprinkling of baby powder under the pouch may help also. Something I've learned about dressing this summer is: Throw away the polyester knit. Polyester doesn't breathe, so it's hot in the summer (and cold in the winter). The natural fabrics, like cotton, linen, and silk are the most comfortable for summer wear. If the fabric is a blend, the higher percentage should be the natural fiber. Cotton is the best—it's

cooler, takes no special care, is less expensive, and is "in style." **For the ladies:** I like to wear an undergarment that will support the weight of the appliance.

Support or control top pantyhose are great for this in the fall and winter. In summer, I wear a brief that is 65% cotton and 35% polyester that supports my appliance and keeps it smooth under shorts or pants. So, next time you're out shopping for summer wear, give as much attention to the fabric as you do to style and color. It will make a difference in your summertime comfort.

## **BACTERIA IN THE SMALL INTESTINE**

~ *The Greater Cincinnati Ostomy Association*

Bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine can be a hidden, unsuspected cause of chronic bowel problems such as indigestion, bloating, abdominal pain, gas, and irregularity. Normally, far fewer bacteria inhabit the small intestine than the ample growth found in the colon. The secretion of gastric acids and the rapid movement of digested foodstuffs through the intestines (called "intestinal motility") normally keep the small intestine relatively free of bacteria. A wide range of abnormalities and malfunctions, however, can encourage bacteria to multiply in the small intestine. There, the bacteria ferment carbohydrates, producing gases such as hydrogen and methane. These gases cause the gas and bloating seen in individuals with carbohydrate intolerances and, over time, can lead to irritations of the intestinal lining. The most common causes of bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine usually relate to a decrease in gastric acidity or digestive enzymes, which create an unsterile environment for the small intestine. Other possible causes of bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine include

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intestinal obstructions caused by Crohn's Disease, adhesions, radiation damage and lymphoma. Treating bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine has been shown significantly to alleviate chronic symptoms, such as diarrhea and abdominal pain, in patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome. For this reason, healthcare experts recommend that a laboratory evaluation for small bowel bacterial overgrowth be performed in patients with IBS, when indicated by their history. The "Bacterial Overgrowth of the Small Intestine Breath Test" measures breath hydrogen and methane gases in response to a lactulose challenge. Because both gases may be produced in the intestine, testing for both hydrogen and methane is considered more sensitive than testing for hydrogen only. Without proper detection and treatment, bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine can eventually go on to cause health problems more serious than chronic indigestion. By inhibiting proper nutrient absorption, bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine can lead to systemic disorders such as altered permeability, anemia and weight loss, osteomalacia and vitamin deficiency. The incidence of bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine increases with age, particularly in people aged 80 and older. Elderly patients may develop malabsorption secondary to bacterial overgrowth. It has been suggested as the major cause of clinically significant malabsorption in the elderly and linked to the "failure to thrive syndrome" seen in older patients.

*Editor's Note: Normally, there are 300-400 types of known bacteria in the colon with a concentration of roughly one trillion bacteria for every milliliter of stool. However, the small intestine should have less than 1,000 bacteria per milliliter of stool.*

## OSTOMY TIPS FOR THE POOL

~ Via: Philadelphia UOA Journal

*"Can I go swimming with an ostomy?"* The answer is a resounding YES!!! Swimming is an excellent exercise—an opportunity for a good cardiovascular workout without overly stressing your joints (like knees and hips) or your spine. The pool is a great place to work on those range-of-motion exercises, too. The water helps support your body while you move and water exercises can be done in the deep end or while sitting in the shallow end of the pool. Best of all, swimming is an activity you can enjoy with family and friends of all ages and abilities! So why are so many of us afraid to get back into the water? Here are some of our issues and solutions...

***"I'm afraid that my appliance will leak or come off while I am in the pool"***. This is by far everyone's number one concern. The thing to remember is that your pouching system is designed to be leak-free and water-proof, and your wafer adhesive actually gets stronger in water. As long as your seal is strong and intact, strap on your swim fins and jump in.

**Tip # 1:** Don't go swimming right after you've put on a new wafer.

**Tip # 2:** Make sure your pouch is empty.

**Tip # 3 :** Picture framing your wafer with water-proof tape isn't necessary, but may give you the extra confidence you need.

**Tip # 4 :** Avoid wearing pouches with filters into the pool. Water may get in through the filter.

***"I'm concerned that people will be able to see my pouching system under my bathing suit."***

Dark colored suits with a busy pattern will

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camouflage your appliance better than light colors like white or yellow, which can become almost transparent when wet. Note—your pouch will dry just as quickly as your suit will, so no need to worry about a tell-tale damp spot.

**Tip # 1 :** For women, choose a suit with a small, well-placed ruffle or skirt.

**Tip # 2 :** For men, choose a suit with a higher cut waist or longer leg.

**Tip # 3 :** You may wish to wear a smaller, non-drainable pouch: those designed for intimate moments work well here too!

**Tip # 4 :** If you have a colostomy and you irrigate, you may try wearing a stoma cap while you swim.

***"I'm embarrassed about changing into/out of my bathing suit in the locker room and people noticing my ostomy appliance."***

Some of us don't care who sees what, while others are more modest when it comes to who knows about our ostomies and pouching systems. If you're a little on the shy side, try to find a spot that is out of the way or less crowded. Don't let the possibility of problems arising when changing prevent you from an enjoyable afternoon with family or friends.

**Tip # 1 :** You may wish to change and towel off in a convenient bathroom stall.

**Tip # 2 :** Put on a dry, over-sized T-shirt as a cover up while you change.

**Tip # 3 :** A dry suit is easier to take off than a wet one. Relax by the side of the pool with a good book or a talkative friend before heading for the locker room.

**Tip # 4 :** Wear your bathing suit under a jogging suit or sweat pants and don't worry about changing at all. What about using the hot tub or Jacuzzi? Go ahead. Again, as long as your appliance seal is good and your pouch is empty you should have no problems with your ostomy.

**General Tips:**

\* Do some planning—you know your body

better than anyone and how long after eating your ostomy starts to work. Try to arrange your swimming for a time when your output will be minimal.

\* If you are still concerned about entering the pool with your appliance, try this—put on your bathing suit, fill your bathtub with water and sit in it for half an hour. You'll feel more confident when you see there is no leakage. You'll also get to see what your suit (and your covered pouching system) look like wet.

\* A support garment or bike shorts under your suit or a snug, Lycra bathing suit can help to keep your pouching system in place and prevent your pouch and clip from migrating to the groin area. Some ostomates sew pockets into the inside of their suits as a way of providing additional pouch support if needed.

\* If you wear an ostomy belt, you should know that cloth belts stretch in the water—wear a rubber one if you want to wear a belt in the pool.

\* Again, remember to get your doctor's okay before you take to the water to begin any exercise program.

\* Most of all—have fun!

### ASSORTED OSTOMY TIPS

~ *Via: Stillwell-Ponca City, OK*

→ If odor is a problem, after emptying the pouch, try rinsing the pouch with water containing a small amount of mouthwash (Scope works well), or antibacterial soap.

→ If you use a two-piece appliance and rotate pouches, the pouch not in use can be soaked in denture cleaner.

→ For rinsing the pouch when emptying it, a small watering can with a curved spout works very well.

→ Smith & Nephew cement improves the seal obtained with some ostomy appliances. → A transparent one piece pouch may help you change your appliance better by allowing you to see what you're doing. (Editor's note: Not all "transparent"

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pouches are equally transparent.

ConvaTec's are extremely transparent; Hollister's are more translucent.)

→ If your pouch fills with gas, remember to empty it just as you would empty more liquid or solid contents. If you use a two-piece appliance, you can partially open the flange to "burp" the pouch, and avoid complete emptying protocol. You can also avoid gas build-up by using a pouch with built in gas filter.

→ It has been reported that barrier wipes should not be used with some Hollister appliances. Actually, there's an incompatibility between barrier wipes and Hollister's newest (Flexextend) barrier material. But there's no problem using barrier wipes with Hollister's older appliances (those with Standard wear barriers).

→ Perhaps the most important advice: Learn all you can about managing your ostomy, but also be somewhat skeptical of the advice you hear and read.

### "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 hooklet and the  
strapping of the face-plate  
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 scorning,  
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, T'was 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, ner'er again would I  
ignore,*

*Not those certain signs of  
warning would I ne'er again  
ignore- - Quote me, raving,  
“Nevermore”.*

## I WANT TO KNOW

~ Via: Dayton Ostomy Chapter

### **Q. How may I slow activity before changing my appliance?**

A. Some ostomates eat peanut butter or marshmallows before changing the appliance to slow activity before showering or taking a bath. Many urostomates change their appliance early in the morning on the “change” day at a time when urine discharge is less frequent.

### **Q. I have a urostomy - How can I keep my skin dry before changing my Appliance?**

A. Bend forward several times before removing the appliance. It helps discharge the urine from the kidneys and ureter into the appliance.

### **Q. When will the stoma heal so that it isn't red anymore?**

A. The red color will not go away. It's actually a good indication that the stoma is healthy with a good blood supply.

### **Q. Why is the tea bag, an ostomates best friend?**

A. You can drink tea as an anti-spasmodic, which is soothing, to an upset stomach. It also provides fluid containing potassium and electrolytes so frequently lost from diarrhea.

### **Q. What is a simple way to control stoma noise?**

A. Two or three tablespoons of applesauce with breakfast seems to control stoma noise and the pectin in the applesauce seems to have a thickening effect on liquid discharge.

### **Q. What foods besides bananas are high in potassium?**

A. Bananas are frequently mentioned as a food high in potassium, but potatoes actually contain nearly twice as much. One large banana has 450 milligrams of potassium while a large baked potato with its skin contains 850 milligrams (the skin alone has 235 mg).