Sacramento, Placerville and Carmichael Ostomy Associations Newsletter

Three Individual Groups
With One Mission…

To provide
Encouragement,
Education
And support for our members
and their Families

Support Group Newsletters from…

Sacramento Ostomy Association
Sutter Memorial Hospital
The 2nd Sunday of each month.
Dave Lund 916-996-9680

Placerville Ostomy Association
Marshall Cancer Resource Center
The 3rd Thursday of each month.
Jeff Nelson and Leana Garner
916-687-4800

Carmichael Ostomy Association
Mercy San Juan Hospital
The 1st Saturday of each month.
Linda Fleig 916-435-3038

Always find a reason to Laugh. It may not add years
to your life, but it will surely add Life to your Years!
Our April meeting was attended by 23 members and our guest speaker, Joyce Moss, a CWOCN nurse from the V.A. Hospital at Mather Field. Joyce gave a very informative talk on hydration, which is important with the summer weather coming up shortly. Her talk challenged many of us regarding those liquids that deplete our electrolytes. So the upshot of the talk is drink more water, stay hydrated and consider drinks that add electrolytes!!!

We brought up our summer BBQ which will be held early this year because Sherron West is planning on being in town the end of May. The BBQ will be on Sunday May 31. We will have directions etc. at our regular meeting Thursday May 21.

We got an update from Carolyn on her cancer surgery and learned that they now do post surgery genetic testing on tissue taken during surgery. In Carolyn’s case it revealed a 30% likelihood of cancers return!! She is electing to receive chemo therapy as a result.

Our group subscribes to the motto of "Laughter is the best Medicine" and today was not an exception. Our speaker, Joyce, along with Carolyn left us laughing.

We are sponsoring 15 yr. old Cole Franklin to the summer youth rally and today we received about $200 in donations. With pledges we anticipate somewhere close to $400. Being raised. The rally will pick up what we can not raise. A very heartfelt thank you to all who were able to donate.

Cole will return after the summer camp and give us a report on how it went. Cole attended today’s meeting, informing us that today was "Tie dye" day at his school. He was the most colorfully dressed attendee today. As several people mentioned he is a pleasure to have in attendance. He relates well with all the older folks and is not shy about sharing.

Liza, a recent visitor to our group, had surgery at UCSF on Wednesday the 15th to remove her large intestine. Our thoughts and prayers are with her on her recovery. We will try to post an update in a week after she has recovered from the initial surgery.

We wish all the best to all our members in this upcoming month. Jeff Nelson

A note from the Secretary...
Please include the following members in your thoughts and prayers for speedy recoveries. Donna, Dolores, Carolyn S., and Gertrude. Thank you, Tim and Alice, for picking up Cole at his school and bringing him to the meeting. Our speaker for May will be Joy Leak from Hollister.

Placerville Ostomy Support Group Annual Barbecue and Pot Luck
At the home of Donna and Jim Sauber–4271 Oak Meadow Road, Placerville 1-530-626-4329 Sunday, May 31, 2015. Starts at 1:00 to… A special treat... Sherron and Paul will be visiting from Idaho! Please bring a small dish to share... salad, chips, entrée, dessert, water, or an appetizer. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided by POA. Please RSVP to barbarachoffman@yahoo.com
The Sacramento Ostomy Association is a support group for people who have had or will have intestinal or urinary diversions. Family members are also welcome. Meetings are typically held on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Sunday of each month at 2:00 pm unless otherwise stated. Meetings are held in the auditorium at Sutter Memorial Hospital located at 52\textsuperscript{nd} and F Street.

Thomas Jefferson wrote: “Nothing can stop the man or woman with the right mental attitude from achieving his or her goals; nothing on earth can help the man or woman with the wrong mental attitude.”

I know that is a little over simplified. And some people definitely have a harder time than others, but there is a lot of truth in that statement. And when I think about having an ostomy, sometimes I think, is my ostomy going to control me or am I going to control my ostomy? All I can say is that over time, things get easier. I am 6 years into this and I feel very well, and I’m thankful for all the doctors, nurses and friends and family that have cared for me and supported me. Surrounding ourselves with friendship and support is a big part of getting better.

And I want to share with you an experience I had over the last month. I had my first blockage experience since I got my colostomy over 6 years ago. I was out of town and had gone to the movies to see Liam Niesen in “Run All Night” and I bought one of those giant tubs of popcorn, which I devoured all by myself. I have done this before, which I know I shouldn’t have done, and this time, it got to me. It wasn’t until the next night that I noticed something was wrong. I didn’t have a lot of activity during the day, so I knew something wasn’t right. Well that next night I started feeling a little sick to my stomach. And when I went to bed, I pretty much tossed and turned. I laid in bed trying to decide what to do. I got out my smart phone and started reading everything I could about how to deal with a blockage. Since I was out of town in the bay area, I couldn’t just go home easily, and I rent a room in a house, when I work in the bay area, and I didn’t want to disturb everyone by getting up in the middle of the night and taking a bath. So, I just laid in bed, pulling my knees to my chest and rocking back and forth trying to relieve the pressure and get things moving. I also drank a lot of water. Well, eventually I fell asleep and when I awoke in the morning, things were starting to move better. Well, I was fine, and if things had gotten really bad I could have driven to the hospital or gone home. Anyway, I share that to say that there are some unpleasant things, but overall life is good.
We had a great meeting in April, and had two new ostomates come to the meeting, Brian and Chris. We hope we can be of help and please feel free to reach out at any time. We hope to see you at the next meeting. And Joy Leek from Hollister came and shared new product information and answered a lot of questions. It was very informative, and we appreciate her support!

Next month, our WOCN, Barbara Carlson will be back and will talk to our group about skin issues and how to handle the heat and other issues that come with wearing a barrier full time.

In June, we will have Julie Bishop from Convatec talk to our group. She will bring products and share new product information and answer questions. It will be a great time to see what options Convatec has for us.

Everyone, have a great month, and we'll see you on Sunday, May 17th at 2 PM at the Sutter Memorial Hospital. (the third Sunday this month, as the second Sunday is Mother’s Day)

Take care, Dave

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Know your Drugs….Taken from the article Prescription Precision in for your health, in The Costco Connection April 2015. By Barbara Bronson Gray

**Interactions and side effects**  Almost every medication or supplement you take may have side effects. How do you know if a symptom is related to a health issue, a drug you’ve been prescribed, a supplement or even an interaction between medications?

“Usually you would know after taking a second dose. If the symptom repeats and becomes worse, it’s probably related to the medication,” said Sophia De Monte, a Costco Pharmacy manager in Nesconset, New York. “With each repeated dose the symptoms appear or become more severe.” She suggests calling your pharmacist or physician right away. De Monte says there are some red flags you should know about: “If you notice swelling in your feet, a headache that doesn’t go away, the room is spinning or you have blurred vision, rashes or an allergic reaction call your physician or pharmacist right away.”

**Know your Drugs**  De Monte urges people to learn about their medications. “Bring in a complete list of your drugs and dosages, and ask the pharmacist to review them for potential interactions or other issues and offer tips,” she says. “Always ask questions. The pharmacist is the most accessible health professional out there. It’s not a bother; It’s what we’re there for.”

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Visitation Class Saturday April 18, 2015

Kelly and Patty did a fantastic Visitor Training Class. Many helpful and useful guidelines were discussed when visiting patients, including the responsibilities of a visitor. Interactive role playing was an integral part of the class. We were introduced to Ostomy 101 (Anatomy and Physiology.) Lots of Brainstorming took place among all ten of the participants. 100% consensus was that this was a GREAT class!

Many thanks, Kelly, for your guidance and expertise in leading the class. Barbara
Sweet Warrior

Energetic. Sweet. Funny. Mighty. Feminine. Truly independent. This is my mother, Carol Sterrett.

Mom was busy caregiving for others when she was blind-sided by her own diagnosis: cancer. Looking at how she got there would come later; faith and footwork would come first. Mom’s immediate feistiness and clear minded acceptance was a rock to our overwhelm and anxiety. We often don’t think we can handle such a journey, yet somehow we find the courage when we have no other choice.

Surgeons cut and we’re grateful for their skills, but hopeful they were not; hospice was the immediate prognosis. Luckily the oncologist walked into the ICU and saw “a glint in those smiling blue eyes.” Mom affirmed her willingness and chemo began. Each cancer story includes lives being rearranged, new jobs amended, and connection with support that works for the family, ours is no different. It was an immediate game changer but thankfully, not a deal breaker. Managing the ostomy was a gradual mastering, one of frustration and patience. Then came the experimental ablation. More willingness, more footwork. Then another unexpected diagnosis-diabetes. Mom walked through this diagnosis on her own, completely relearning what worked for her now.

What I didn’t see was bitterness, anger, isolation, looking backwards, or dealing with such diagnosis via chemical help. Just a simplistic but powerful attitude of willingness and faith. Each doctor has commented on her shining strength and willing compliance. The truth is she is a sweet warrior. Mom chooses her attitude because it makes her feel good. As we all know, the journey is not easy—days of pain, fear, isolation, fatigue, and feelings, yet she believes that what she thinks and values directly affect her health. Mom is not willing to compromise her sanity and has become adept at protecting her space. What can she control? Her response, her perspective. She deeply values herself, expressing it though her dress, her rituals, her faith. Mom’s colorful hats started off as protective but are now a feel good accessory to her outfit. Rituals include daily walking and nourishing with real food, and of course God. Whatever that means to each of us.

What once was too crippling to imagine—happened, and Mom embraced the opportunity to live life on life’s terms, doing things that were once unfathomable. Freedom seems to be the payoff for walking through such a spiritual awakening, calling on our courage and faith to focus only on that which we can control.

As I write this, John Denver is wafting in whilst Mom joyously sings along, absorbing his simple message. Music is huge for changing perspective, says Mom. To walk this path with another is a blessing, it must be shared-isolation is not an option. I’ve learned that each time we suit up and show up, we directly inspire, however subtle, another. Choice is powerful. Mom continues to love: the color yellow, traveling to see family, the occasional casino trip, and being grateful to enjoy life’s spontaneity. She is truly a blessing!—Joy Sterrett

These are pictures of Shirley Alexander's great granddaughter, Rebel. She is three years old and the bright light of Shirley's life. If Rebel was able to write she would say. "My Nana is wonderful, and she loves me so much! We go to the library every week, and we have so much fun together! Fridays are our special day for just the two of us. I love you, Nana, the very nicest Nana in the whole world!"
World Ostomy Day

World Ostomy Day is recognized every three years on WORLD OSTOMY DAY- SATURDAY OCTOBER 3, 2015 - the first Saturday in October.

Carmichael Ostomy Association is having a Fall Fashion Show...our fun way to Celebrate World Ostomy Day on October 3rd. We would love to have members from all three groups take part in this Special Celebration of Ostomy Day! Please join us and participate in our fashion show, if you would like, or just come watch our positive models as they walk the runway!

The top ten Benefits of Exercise for adults!
From the American Council on Exercise. #1. Increase bone density and prevents osteoporosis. #2. Improves self-efficiency and maintains independence. #3. Increases metabolism.


Fit tip: Even the best exercise workout will be diminished by unhealthy eating habits. Remember ostomates must stay hydrated!

What are you waiting for ...spring brings beautiful outdoor weather...let's get outside or on the ballroom floor and get fit! Having an Ostomy makes this even more important!

**Barbara Hoffman has had to change her barrier size** She has 14 brand new boxes of barriers to give away. They are Hollister, two piece, Flextend, pre-sized, 7/8", convexity, with floating flange. New Image, #14902. Her new sized barrier fits her pouches so there are no pouches to go with these. If anyone could use them please call Barbara at 916-941-6942, or email at barbarachoffman@yahoo.com.

“Begin today. Declare out loud to the universe that you are willing to let go of struggle and eager to learn through joy.”

Sarah Ban Breathnach
Happy Nurses Day! May, 2015

Our Angel’s

We would like to wish all of our Ostomy Nurses a wonderful Nurse’s Day and Week. You all are so very special! We appreciate the fact you have devoted your life to helping ostomates. I wish I had the names of all of our member's nurses so we could thank you all personally. I have a few pictures of some of you who have been at our meetings. Thank you to all our WOCN's, "our Angels!"

Thank you to Barbara Carlson, Barbara West, Zoe Mann, Ellen Leach, Candice miller Joyce Moss, Patty Calhoun, Linda Mimnaugh, Nidia Mortataya, Frances Rodriguez, Peggy Donat, Linda Marks, Gayle Moore, Liz baker, Helen LaVasseur, Pam Kirk, Carey Webster, Karen Dax, Sharon Goldsmith, Laura Davis, Lynn Crostic, Lois Anne Indorf, and of course our Kelly Sparks. And so many more we are not as familiar with. We will never forget your kindness and care!

Also must include a big thank you to the entire list of home health nurses. Their help and encouragement made our recoveries so much easier.

How to Stay Hydrated When you’re Sick  Information from WEB MD

There’s a reason why people say you should drink lots of fluids when you’re feeling under the weather. You need to make up for fluids you lose to symptoms like fever or vomiting, and also to ease congestion. But it’s not just about how many glasses of water you gulp down. Try these strategies to help quench your body’s thirst and relieve icky cold and flu symptoms.

Fix Dry Air with a Humidifier...A cool-mist humidifier or vaporizer will add moisture to the air, which can help a stopped-up nose. Just be sure to keep it clean to avoid spreading bacteria or mold.

Get Icy Relief...Is your throat scratchy or sore? Try sucking on ice chips or even Popsicles, which offer numbing relief along with extra hydration.

Sip a Hot Drink...Although steamy drinks like hot tea may not cause any real improvement in congestion, research shows they can make you feel better. One study found that after drinking a hot beverage, people felt immediate and lasting relief from symptoms including runny nose, cough, sneezing, and sore throat. For even greater benefits, try stirring in a spoonful of honey, which can ease a cough and help you sleep better. Never give honey to children under 1 year old because it can cause an infection called infant botulism.

Skip the caffeine, since it will make you more dehydrated.

Soak Up Some Steam...Inhaling the steam from a hot shower, or breathing in air from a bowl of freshly boiled water, can loosen mucus and help ease sinus pain and pressure. You may also get some of the same effects from pressing a warm, wet compress against your face.

Go Gargle...Gargling with salt water a few times a day can help soothe a sore throat, at least temporarily. Curl up with a Bowl of Chicken Soup...It's more than a bowl of comfort. Research shows that Grandma's favorite cold remedy may help ease your cold symptoms. It's not a cure, but it's a tasty way to feel better.
One of a Kind

We celebrate Mom
For her care-giving way,
Cooking and Caring
Day after day.

Born in the Depression
Nineteen-twenty-five,
She came from the tough times
And learned to survive.

One of her talents
Is cooking from scratch.
Just mention cookies,
She'll whip up a batch!
Snicker Doodles,
Fresh Persimmon,
Gingersnaps....

Mom's rich Chicken Soup
For sure, never fails to
Warm body and spirit
While curing what ails you.

"Laughter's the best Medicine",
That's what they say.
Well, Mom has a joke
Right on cue, every day!

When it comes to the challenge
Of specialized care....
When it comes to my Dad,
My mom's always there.

Through all the rough times
When our hearts are all aching
Mom is our anchor
Steadfast and unshaken.

Soon to be ninety,
Well-seasoned by time,
Still Cooking and Caring,
Mom's One of a Kind!

Once again our April meeting surpassed our expectations.

Will Vereyken, our first speaker for the day provided us with valuable information regarding his desire to help support and educate others. He is leading a team in Sacramento’s Crohn’s and Colitis, “Take Steps,” walk on May 2nd. He did an amazing presentation telling of his own battle with Cohn's for the very first time.

Our main speaker for the day, Dr. Anne Haemel, from UCSF gave an incredible, informative power point presentation. We had a wonderful audience for this meeting. We recorded the program and have copies of her presentation for those who missed the meeting.

We are so grateful to Dr. Anne Haemel for traveling such a distance to provide us with this information. I was truly impressed by the entire meeting. Again, thank you to Dr. Anne Haemel and Will and Sharon Vereyken for making this meeting so special for all of us. This was one of the most educational meetings I have ever attended.

Please join us on May 2nd for a program put on by our own member. It will be an ostomy workshop with members demonstrating their own pouching procedures. With Love, Your President, Linda

Happiness is not the absence of problems; it’s the ability to deal with them. Steve Maraboll

Remind yourself that it’s okay not to be perfect!
Remember this special meeting in July

An agency funded by the government that can help with Medicare and Medicare supplements. It is Health Insurance Counseling Advocacy Program (HICAP).

We will have a representative from HICAP at our July meeting. She will share this information and help guide us through the process which can be confusing. Members have said they are having difficulty getting some of their supplies...have actually been denied coverage for some that they need for different stoma problems. HICAP will be a great help and resource for you.

Please put this on your July calendar. Bring your questions and concerns to the meeting.

A Loving Tribute to Barbara Hoffman

I would like to pay tribute to a truly remarkable woman... My mom, Barbara Hoffman, is an inspiration in my life and those whose lives she touches on a daily basis, each one presenting its own uniqueness and challenges. Despite the many physical obstacles she has been forced to overcome since the onset of Ulcerative Colitis in her teenage years, she has persevered and conquered. Living many decades with this debilitating illness, she finally made the decision to have a portion of her intestines removed in order to live a "normal" life. She will tell you that it was the single best decision that she ever made.  Her only regret was not having made that decision sooner! She has not only adapted well to the ileostomy... She has been able to lead a better life.  Because this has made such a difference in her own life, she counsels and inspires others to make that same decision... Helping them to alleviate any concerns or fears.

Having raised three girls, she has always been a strong role model in our lives. She is always the one I turn to when I need help or just a listening ear.  No matter what she is experiencing in her own life, she is always available. Thank you, mom, for not only being the greatest mother; but, thank you for the motivation to inspire others to improve their lives.  We are so blessed!!!!

Your grateful and loving daughter, Lori

June COA MEETING NEWS: Dr. Burt Butler, M.D., will be speaking.

Burt has practiced medicine for forty- four years before he had to stop due to his inability to see.

In that time he was an Osteopath, practicing for five years as a Family Doctor.  He went back to medical school for another five years and earned his M.D.

He practiced as a General Pathologist in a small hospital in North Sacramento. The hospital has been bulldozed down some years ago. He also taught at the University of Davis, and the Sacramento County Hospital before it became the extension of the Davis Campus.

As a hobby he raised Appaloosa Horses, and grew a good sized vegetable garden that eventually grew into an orchard, (nuts and fruits.)

He taught Volunteer Fireman, on road 97, in Davis.  They responded to many accidents and a number of fires.  By Bettie Butler

Dr. Butler will be followed with some informative information from a GI Doctor and a Pharmacist, shared by Barbara and Linda. After this brief discussion we will break up into three separate groups, consisting of ileostomies, colostomies and urostomies. The members that have had their reversal surgery will be included in the colostomy group.

YOU ARE ALL INVITED ...

To the Annual Placerville Ostomy Support Group Barbecue and Pot Luck. Please look at their page in the newsletter for the details!
Life After Surgery

Hi, my name is Deanna Costello. My Mother is Mary Francis and she has an Ileostomy. On April 8th, 2013 she was diagnosed with colon cancer. My Mother had her surgery April 17th, 2013. Everything seemed to go well after her surgery, but after a couple of days, she started having complications. On April 28th, Mary had to have emergency surgery. The surgery was for a bowel resection because of a leak that caused sepsis. Mary had to have an Ileostomy, she was in ICU for 5 days. My mother is truly amazing. It has been 2 years since the last surgery and Mary is doing well dealing with all the different situations she has had to deal with since the surgery. She tries to understand and resolve anything that gets in the way of her daily life. My mother is very active in her Red Hat group. As of 2015, she is the Queen of her group and loves to plan activities with her ladies in the group. She is the most amazing Green Thumb gardener I have ever seen. She has been involved in the Roseville garden club for years. I love going to visit her at her house and look at her beautiful roses. Mary’s roses are the best roses you will ever see! She also participates in Bunko night with the girls every Sunday and enjoys her time with her friends. She will never miss out on a good shopping day, with her other daughter Cheryl. Cheryl comes down every other weekend to help out my mom and dad. My Dad, Earl, is amazing. He is there for Mary and they work together on all the challenges they come across. I am very fortunate to have such amazing parents. I think the biggest challenge for my mother is nutrition. Not being able to eat all the foods she once enjoyed, is very difficult for her. Mary would never pass up an opportunity to get a cupcake at Panera Bakery though. My family and I are very fortunate to have found the Ostomy support group at Mercy two years ago. It was very difficult for my mom to adjust to her new lifestyle. Thank you everyone for being so supportive and helpful to make it easier for her to adjust to her new lifestyle. She hardly ever misses a meeting and one family member always goes with her for support. Again, thank you all for being there for us. My mom does her very best to stay positive and keep herself busy every day. She loves the outdoors and loves her rose garden. As a family, we give her a lot of encouragement. Mary is a great mother, and for what she has been through demonstrates a lot of integrity. We love you Mom, we have your back. Always your daughter, Deanna. I love you.
A GREAT way to donate your unneeded or extra supplies is:
FOW-USA a nonprofit volunteer organization to provide ostomy supplies and educational materials to help ostomates in need around the world. You can box your supplies and mail them to and use as a tax deduction.
E mail info@fowusa.org
1-502-909-6669. Or web page www.fowusa.org. Address 4018 Bishop Lane, Louisville,KY 40218

Other Possible Option for Supplies
If you have extra unopened supplies you can call and talk to John Richards, owner of Professional Village Pharmacy. If nicely packaged with listed contents of what is boxed they may be able to take your unneeded unopened, clean supplies. They do reach out to those in need. But they must be package nicely and again unopened. Thank you! BUT PLEASE CALL HIM FIRST!
Professional Village Pharmacy 916-483-7451
John Richards owner, 701 Professional Drive Sacramento Ca 95825

More information on possible places to take your extra supplies: THANK YOU to Lenore Jensen and David Bories for researching this information!

Eskaton in Fair Oaks likes to take one-piece pouches.
www.eskaton.org/care-center-fair-oaks.html

- Eskaton Care Center Fair Oaks. Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation. 916-965-4663
1300 Fair Oaks Boulevard Fair Oaks, CA 95628. License #030000190.

- Eskaton Care Center Manzanita. Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation. 916-331-8513
5318 Manzanita Avenue Carmichael, CA 95608. License #030000153.

The place that took the most supplies was Oak Ridge Healthcare Center.
Contact is Michael Demes, 916-782-3188.
310 Oak Ridge Drive, Roseville CA 95661
OakRidgeAdmissions@gmail.com
Or Mr. Demes other care facility:
1139 Cirby Way, Roseville, CA 95661
(916) 782-7007

7 Practical Ways to Improve Your Day

“Wellness focuses on an individual in the full context of his or her life – not just physical health, but work, mental attitudes, creative outlets, and especially relationships – of all kinds,” says Dr. Poon.

1. Be grateful for something or someone. (A different one each day.)
   Time required: 1-2 minutes.
   The act of writing down your gratitude can help establish this pattern. And once you start looking for things to appreciate, it becomes easier to recognize the good things around you. See our article on cultivating gratitude.

2. Forgive yourself or someone for something that cannot be changed
   Time required: Varies.
   Forgiveness is not condoning the former action, but relinquishing its hold on your mind and body. It can provide a huge sense of relief.

3. Do one really nice thing for yourself, or another person. If somebody does a really nice thing for you, pass it along to two other people.
   Time required: Depends...A smile or compliment = less than a minute
   Be creative here. Caution: you may find this habit-forming.

4. Slowly savor one food item that’s healthy for you.
   Time required: A minute or two.
   This just requires a shift in perspective. Take that bite of food as if for the first time. Slow down enough to really taste it. Ah...

5. Give at least 3 minutes of undivided attention to nature, or to a live person. Start with someone close - and then move on to someone very different from you.
   Time required: 3 minutes.
   You might be surprised at how difficult this is the first time, if you are a busy multi-tasker. The secret is “undivided attention.” Just be still, look, focus. It might help to breathe deeply during this practice.

6. Take at least 5 minutes to be alone, quiet and still, doing and thinking nothing. (This is harder than you might think but is the most powerful one on the list.)
   Time required: 5 minutes.
   OK, we’re upping the ante here - a few more minutes, and nothing in particular to focus on. See how it works. Again, breathing slowly might help.

7. Take a walk or do exercise for at least 22 minutes. (This is based on medical research.)
   Time required: 22 minutes (or more, if you’re having fun.)
   Just put on solid shoes, open the door, and start walking. Go. We can almost guarantee you will feel better when you return. And exercise is one of the most consistently proven healthful activities possible.

Taken together, these practices might consume an hour of your day, at the most. Don’t you deserve at least that much time out of your own busy life? Besides, if you do these things, you will serve the other 23 hours of the day much better.

Believe you can and you are halfway there. ~ Theodore Roosevelt
For newer Ostomy Members…Managing your colostomy

Learning to take care of your colostomy may seem hard at first, but with practice and time it will become second nature, just like shaving or bathing. It’s not hard to do, but getting to the point where you feel comfortable takes learning, practice, the right supplies, and a positive attitude.

Think of your colostomy’s function as you did your natural bowel movements. You still have the same bowel, just a little less of it. The real change is having the stool come out of an opening made on your belly.

There’s no one way to take care of a colostomy. This guide offers you tips and ideas that you can discuss with your doctor or ostomy nurse and adapt to your needs. Give new things a fair trial, but don’t keep doing them if they don’t make you more comfortable. Use your recovery time to learn and try different things so that you can find what works best for you.

In our society, bathroom needs are kept private. Talking about stool and bowel movements can be awkward or uncomfortable. But while you learn how to deal with the changes that have been made, you may need help and advice. A good sense of humor and common sense are needed when changes in body function take place. Be confident. You can learn the new system. Before long you again will be in control. Last Medical Review: 12/02/2014 From American Cancer Society

Hidden Hazards of Cold Medicines based on an article by the same name in AARP Bulletin: January-February 2015 by Nassa Simon

Although over-the-counter cold medications can help with stuffy noses and scratchy throats, they sometimes can do more harm than good. Here are some of the hazards to look out for and how to avoid them. Tylenol (acetaminophen) must be taken with great care that you do not exceed the maximum safe daily dose of 3,000 to 4,000 milligrams per day. Each year approximately 78,000 people visit the ER for acetaminophen toxicity which can lead to severe liver damage, even death. A personal friend of mine died this last November in her mid-fifties from taking too much Tylenol. If you suspect an overdose seek help immediately. Initial symptoms include nausea, vomiting, stomach pain and loss of appetite. Later symptoms include dark urine and upper right side pain. Take the lowest dose that brings relief. Stay away from alcohol while taking this medicine. Stick to the recommended timing and read the labels carefully as many differing medications contain acetaminophen. You may be taking more than you realize. Advil and Motrin (Ibuprofen) may cause severe allergic reactions, especially in people who are 14 allergic to aspirin. Chronic use can cause peptic ulcers and kidney damage. It may also increase the risk for a heart attack or stroke. This is especially true if you already have heart disease or high blood pressure, you smoke, have diabetes or you use it long term. If you take it regularly avoid alcohol. Call your doctor immediately if you have bloody or black, tarry stools; changes in urination frequency or problems walking or with your vision or speech. Decongestants such as Triaminic and Dimetapp Cold Drops can cause blood pressure to spike and interfere with the effectiveness of blood pressure medications. Decongestant nasal sprays such as Afrin and Neo-Synephrine if taken for more than three days in a row can cause the tissues lining your nose and sinuses to become dependent. You may start to use them more and more in an effort to breathe easily again. If you experience shortness of breath, irregular or slow heartbeat or unusual nervousness, seek medical help immediately. “If you have a heart condition, high blood pressure, diabetes, glaucoma or an overactive thyroid, talk with your doctor before using a decongestant.” Short-acting antihistamines such as Benadryl and Chlor-Trimeton as they cause sleepiness increase the risk of falls. Longer acting antihistamines such as Claritin, Zyrtec and Allegra usually do not cause sleepiness. Before using a short-acting antihistamine talk to your doctor if you have glaucoma, an enlarged prostate, breathing problems, high blood pressure or heart disease. “If you take a longer-acting antihistamine and develop hives or a rash or have difficulty breathing or swallowing, call your doctor immediately.” New Zealand researchers recently found that over-the-counter cold remedies that combine acetaminophen with the decongestant phenylephrine (Contac Cold+Flu Non-Drowsy, Therafлю Daytime Severe Cold & Cough) can bring on serious side effects including an irregular heartbeat, dangerously high blood pressure and tremors. Consider treating only the symptoms that bother you by using a single-ingredient medication.” If in doubt always consult your local pharmacist. Some Ileostomy Don’ts Live

Negative people need drama...like it was oxygen
Stay positive...and take their breath away.