



The Advocate

Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group

Spring / Summer Schedule Upcoming Meetings

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Date	Time	Topic/Speaker	Room
3/4/20		Meeting Cancelled due to Coronavirus outbreak	
4/1/20		Meeting Cancelled due to Coronavirus outbreak	
5/6/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	There has not been a determination as of this time regarding the May meeting. A notification will be sent out to inform you of the meeting status.	101
6/3/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	GEOSG Anniversary! Speaker/Topic : TBD	101
7/1/20		No Meeting	
8/1/20	Saturday 4:00-6:00 pm	Annual Summer Social	

Happy Spring



GEOSG Registration

While formal membership is not required to attend the Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group, we encourage and are very grateful to everyone who registers each year and donates funds to the group. These funds go towards the group's expenses for the Ostomy Supply Closet (see page 4), invited speakers, UOAA Affiliated Support Group membership, brochures and website fees.

Thank you!

We would like to thank all of the members who have generously donated to our group this year. The funds will be put to very good use. We wouldn't be able to maintain the Ostomy Supply Closet without your assistance.

There's still time to donate!

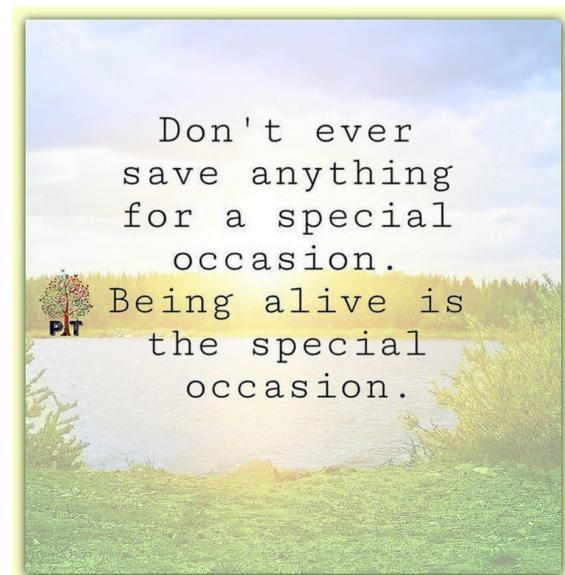
For those who would still like to donate funds for this year (Registrations are valid from September – August), there is a form at the back of this newsletter. Please fill out the form and bring to the next meeting that you attend or mail your form to the address provided on the form. Registration forms for the 2019/2020 September – August year will continue to be available at the remaining meetings. Forms are also available on the website at www.geosg.org.

Should I tell someone about my stoma?

Only you can decide who you should tell. Some people prefer only their close friends to know. Others are happy telling everyone. The decision is up to you.

Remember, having a stoma has not changed who you are. You are still the same person you were before surgery. It may take some time to come to terms with your altered body image.

On the Lighter Side



Simple Ways to Reduce Anxiety and Help Your Immune System

By Elaine O'Rourke



With the increased and heightened attention on the coronavirus, it is naturally creating a lot of fear and anxiety. This fear not only affects the mind but also the body. Right now, you want to keep your immune system strong and focus on calming your mind and nervous system and of course use necessary precautions.

Proper Breathing, as well as other techniques, will help reduce cortisol levels (one of the stress hormones that can wreak havoc in your body) and helps promote the relaxation response in the body.

Deep focused breathing has so many benefits and there is a lot more science behind what the ancient yogi's already knew. As a long time yoga teacher, I know firsthand how amazing proper breathing is. I credit it for helping me recover from surgeries much faster and for regaining strength. Wim Hof (the Iceman) has been instrumental in recent years for promoting the benefits through his method. Many scientific studies have been done on him proving that you can control the autonomic nervous system and immune response.

Make sure to grab your FREE GUIDE: '3 simple ways to eliminate fears about your ostomy' by visiting Elaine's website www.ElaineOrouke.com

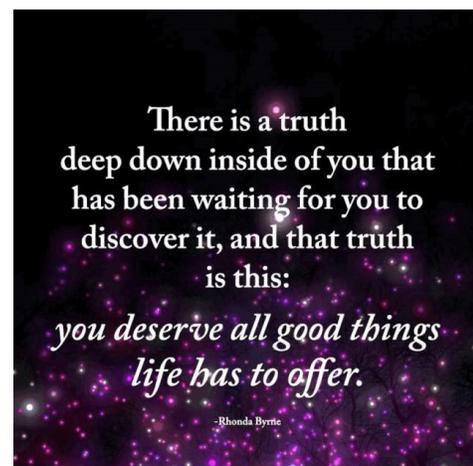
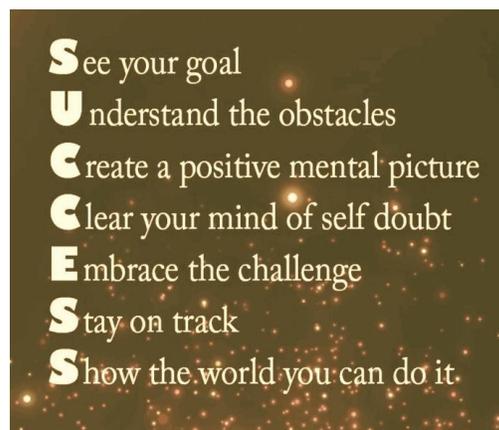
Elaine O'Rourke is the creator of the program "Surviving To Thriving: Overcoming Ostomy Challenges So You Can Live a Fulfilling Life". She is a certified Yoga Therapist & Teacher since 2003, Sound Healer, EFT & Reiki Practitioner, Recording Artist and International Retreat Leader. Her lighthearted and fun personality shines through her teachings/programs as she loves to inspire others. She is a contributing writer to the national Phoenix Magazine and UOAA, presenter at the UOAA National Conference and speaker at Girls with Guts retreat.

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#ostomysupplyclosetcares

The Ostomy Supply Closet

Maintained by local ostomy support groups associated with



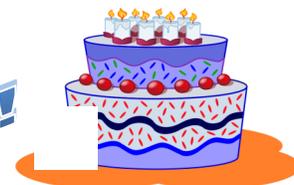
The Ostomy Supply Closet provides supplies free of charge to anyone with an ostomy that has a need due to lack of insurance coverage, financial hardship or is in need of emergency supplies. The program is totally dependent on donations for the supplies and the cost of the storage. If you have extra, unneeded supplies, please consider donating them to the Ostomy Supply Closet. Those who benefit from this program greatly appreciate the much needed help.

The supply closet is located at a Public Storage in Kirkland. If you would like to donate, have a need, or know someone who is in need, please email Laura Vadman to arrange a time to meet and pick up needed supplies. (lovadman@hotmail.com)

Tax deductible cash donations to GEOSG for the support of the supply closet are accepted and are greatly appreciated.
501(c)(3)



Happy Stoma Birthday!



GEOSG MEMBER STOMA BIRTHDATES

March	Ostomy	Years	April	Ostomy	Years
<i>Tanya Dunbar</i>	<i>Ileostomy</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>John Leaden</i>	<i>Urostomy</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Vince Responte</i>	<i>Colostomy</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Ken Moriyama</i>	<i>Urostomy</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Tom Sherrard</i>	<i>Urostomy</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Bob Neale</i>	<i>Colostomy/ Urostomy</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>BJ Shrestha</i>	<i>Ileostomy</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Christina Sowell</i>	<i>Ileostomy</i>	<i>17</i>
April	Ostomy	Years	<i>Nancy Suchy</i>	<i>Colostomy</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Terri Alexander</i>	<i>Urostomy</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Lillian Thogersen</i>	<i>Colostomy</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Larry Fain</i>	<i>Colostomy</i>	<i>15</i>			

If you're not seeing your stoma birthday recognized, be sure that you have completed a registration form and included your type of ostomy and surgery date.

What I thought was my biggest flaw became my greatest strength

Let me love myself as I am.

[Dana Marie Arnold](#)

I've been living with an ileostomy for over three years now, and I'll never forget the feeling of not wanting to look at my own stomach. After surgery, it took me three days to even look down at the bag. I was on my knees asking God to somehow make sense of all this pain. I was so disgusted with myself and didn't know how I could possibly live an entire lifetime in a body I despised. It was paralyzing.



But what I thought was my greatest weakness/ flaw became my greatest source of strength. I am most thankful to my family and friends for not letting me give up during those dark days. What was heavy then is now ✨light✨. Peace.

But that doesn't mean I'm in a place where there is no noise. Some days are hard. I used to think people wouldn't want to be around me when they found out about my bag. Turns out, I'm more connected with others than I was before the surgery.

NEVER GIVE UP. I hope you never let anything stand in your way. I pray that you are brave. I pray that you have the courage to love and embrace yourself. Because when you do, when you *really* do, you'll find that fear is just an illusion. Rumi said, "The wound is the place where the Light enters you." Coming from that place, you can begin to heal. I know now that the most painful parts of my life are not in vain. **I love my body just the way it is** (ostomy bag and all). There simply aren't enough ways to say thank you for being alive.

GEOSG News

February



Hollister Representative, Amanda Bowden, was our speaker for February. She brought with her samples of Hollister ostomy supplies. Amanda noted that Hollister is coming out with a new line of ostomy bags with a new type of adhesive made for sensitive skin. Contact Hollister to request a sample. See Page 10 for the Hollister contact information.

March



Unfortunately, our March meeting was cancelled due to the presence of the COVID-19 virus at Evergreen Hospital. We appreciate everyone understanding the need to cancel the meeting.

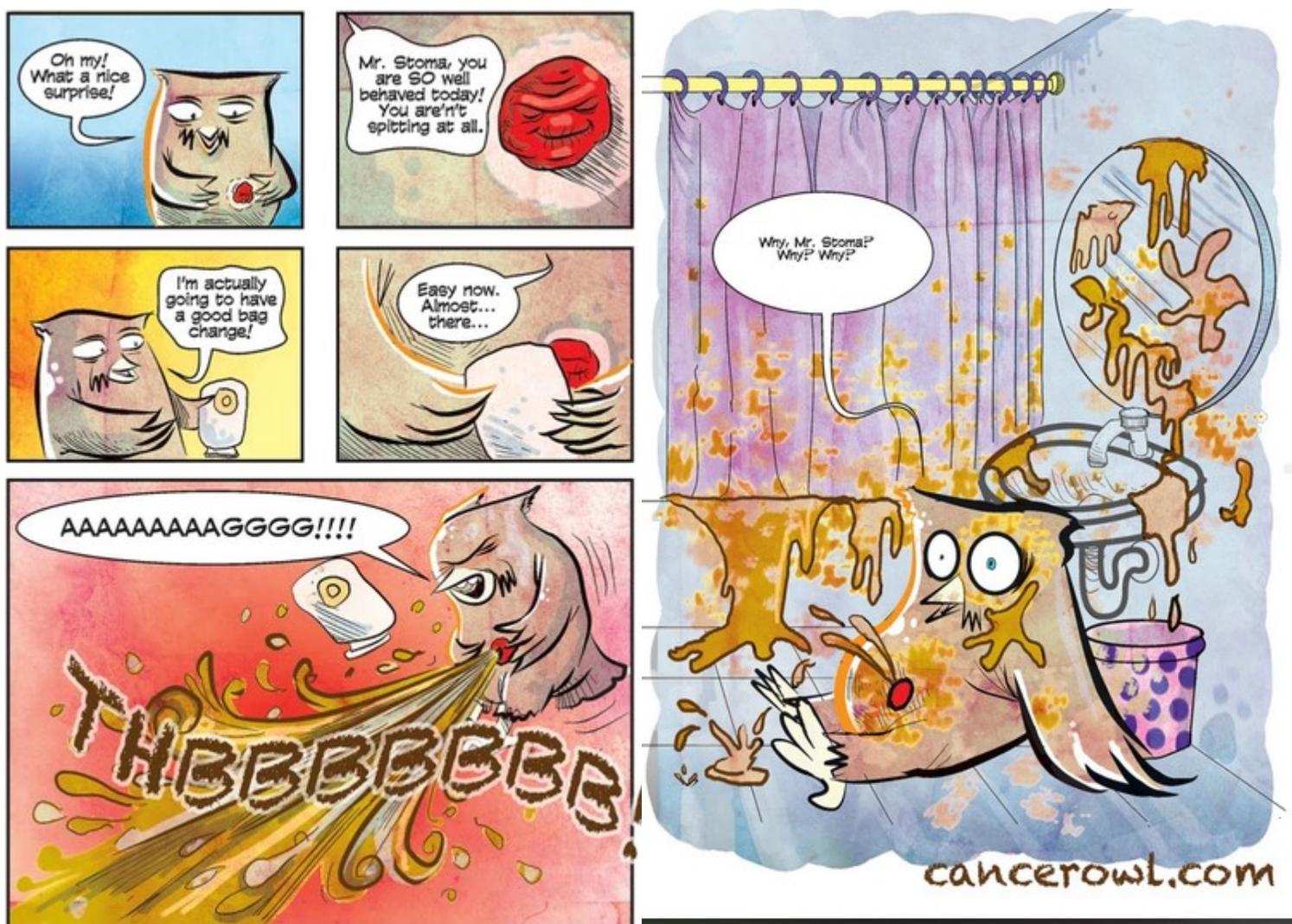
Important Notice:

Due to the current status of the Coronavirus outbreak and the need for social distancing, the ostomy support group will not be meeting in April

Having an ostomy is a love/hate relationship Mr. Stoma has a mind of its own.

Matthew Mewhorter, Jul 5, 2015

I never thought I'd get so acquainted with my own poo. I call these "oh shit" moments!
Note the sly smirk on Mr. Stoma's face. Totally intentional.



An open letter to my stoma, six months after colostomy surgery

August 5, 2012

Dear Stoma (clever nickname yet to be determined),

It's been six months since we've been together. Can you believe it? Oh, how the time flies. I wanted to take a moment to let you know what you mean to me, reflect on the past, and celebrate what lies ahead.

At first, I wasn't quite sure how to take you since you were kind of shy and didn't say much — as if you were a Kuato too lazy to fully appear. It was constant stress knowing how to treat you and making myself well again.

When you first arrived I had so many questions on how to deal with you and make sure you didn't embarrass me with your unpredictability. Looking back on where I was then, and how comfortable I am now, is like worlds away.

You pushed me mentally and physically to keep going. You forced me to publicly proclaim and take pride in my new normal. This was truly a starting line of the comeback trail. I've never been ashamed to have you by my side. As soon as the first day after surgery, I was walking down the hospital hallways doing a strut with my front butt, if you will.

I've heard horror stories of those so embarrassed with their stoma that they didn't leave home until they were able to get it reversed. I couldn't imagine *not* being able to revel in the fact that I have you. An ostomy doesn't make me any less of a person, in fact, it gives me quite satisfaction knowing you don't limit me AT ALL.

If I wasn't public about my digestive track enough, you've caused me to annoy the hell out of people by talking about it even more — I thought that was nearly impossible. I already joked about poop and farts but now I get to do so medically. Without a strong spirit and sense of humor, this relationship would be impossible.

To others, the scars on my body might be shocking but to me, they are barely noticeable. It's almost like in "The Man Without A Face" when the kid realizes he doesn't see Mel Gibson's imperfections anymore. I wouldn't want them to disappear because they tell a story in themselves and remind me of how hard I've fought through all of this.

You've brought a whole new community of people into my life. Folks from support groups, nurses, doctors, companies, and advocates. You brought loved ones even closer to me and have given me the opportunity to help others. I love being able to share my experiences with those who need answers or are just looking for someone to understand their situation.

Finally, the biggest thing I can admit is, frankly, you saved my life. Without you being placed, I know deep down that I wouldn't be here. When previously riddled with inflammatory bowel disease, all I felt was sick and worried. You've allowed me to get back into a full, abundantly joyful life.

Thanks for everything, Jason



I've never been ashamed to
have you by my side.

Jason McIntosh

Aug 5, 2012

9 Things You Should Know Before Placing An Order For Ostomy Supplies By Jason Mihalopoulos, MPH

Article by



Ordering medical supplies is an ongoing necessity if you have an ostomy. If you're brand new ostomate, placing your first order can feel a bit overwhelming.

There are over 20,000 brick-and-mortar durable medical equipment shops in the United States, and quite a few on-line medical supply stores to note. Once you find the right supplier, here are some helpful things you should know before placing an order for ostomy products.

1. Know which type of ostomy you have.

This is a very common mistake whether you're a brand new ostomate or your loved one just had ostomy surgery. There are three main types of ostomies; colostomy, ileostomy or urostomy. It's okay if you're unsure, you can simply call your doctor or ostomy nurse. Knowing which type you have will help us help you!

2. Know the brand of ostomy supplies you are using.

Lucky for you, there are many manufacturers of ostomy products to choose from these days. Some of the most popular brands include: Coloplast, ConvaTec, Hollister, and NuHope.

3. Create a list of ostomy product reference numbers.

Now that you know your ostomy type and brand, next you'll need to know which products you use to ensure you're getting the right supplies. All ostomy products and accessories have reference numbers. For ease when placing your next order, please save your invoice slip as it includes the product information from your previous order.

4. Know how many of each item you need.

Knowing how much to order depends a lot on your needs. If you're a brand new ostomate, you might need more supplies due to frequent appliance changes. As you begin to heal from surgery, your needs may change or you might try different products. We suggest you keep at least a one-month supply on hand at all times.

5. Be prepared to choose alternate products.

Sometimes manufacturers have a back order and you might not be able to get the product you want for a few weeks or months. Know what else you can use or at least be open to the idea of trying something different in case this happens.

6. Ask about free sample products.

This is a great way to try new

things! Many manufacturers provide samples of their newest products. All you'll need to do is call them directly or request free samples on their website.

7. How are you going to pay?

Most online suppliers and retail medical stores take credit cards or bank checks, but not all companies take insurance or Medicare. Talk to the billing department first, to ensure maximum benefits are received. If using insurance or Medicare, have your relevant information up to date and handy.

8. Know how long will it take to receive your order.

Since each medical supplier is different, it's important to ask how long the shipment will take, especially if you're running low. Also know that shipping might cost extra, however many companies have free shipping with a minimum purchase.

9. Ask about the return policy for ostomy supplies.

It's always a good idea to ask about the return policy because return shipping is sometimes the responsibility of the customer. Once you receive your items, always double check to make sure they are the items you ordered.

UOAA Emergency Supply Resources

UOAA recognizes that you may have a need for emergency supplies. Below are resources that may be of assistance to you on a temporary basis.

Manufacturers Assistance Programs

Please **call directly** to ask for information and to apply for these programs.

ConvaTec 800-422-8811

Hollister 800-323-4060

Coloplast – Coloplast Patient Assistance (C.P.A.): 877-781-2656

Alternative Local Resources

- GEOSG Supply Closet - See page 4

Contact the following types of agencies in your area, and ask if they maintain a “Donation Closet”.

- Local hospitals
- Local Visiting Nurse associations
- Local clinics
- Local Goodwill Industries
- Call your state’s 2-1-1 number. Just dial 211 as you would 911

Kindred Box is a Facebook Group for Ostomy Supplies

Supplies Available not including Shipping and Handling

Osto Group: 877-678-6690

Offers supplies for the cost of shipping and handling. They have a small all-volunteer staff, but if you call and leave a message, they will respond. Please be patient in awaiting a response.

Ostomy

211: ostomysupplies.ostomy211.org Emergency supply pantry. Donation requested to help cover expenses.

Lower Cost Supply Options

There are several distributors that do not accept insurance, therefore, their supplies may be available at a lower price.

Best Buy Ostomy Supplies: 866-940-4555

Mercy Surgical Dressing Group: 888-637-2912

Ostomy4less: 877-678-6694; contact Patti or Tom at patti@ostomymcp.com

Parthenon Ostomy Supplies: 800-453-8898

Stomabags: 855-828-1444

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix magazine provides answers to the many challenges of living with an ostomy. From skin care to nutrition to intimacy, in-depth articles are written by medical professionals, ostomy experts and experienced ostomates. Subscriptions directly fund the services of the United Ostomy Associations of America.

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Contacts

GEOSG Board Contacts	E-mail
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Quyen Stevenson, ARNP, CWOCN Board Vice-President	nursequyen@gmail.com
Laura Vadman, RN, CWON, Board Treasurer	lovadman@hotmail.com
Laurie Cameron, Ostomate, Board Secretary, Registrar, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster	lauriecmrn@aol.com



Manufacturers	Phone	Website
Coloplast	888-726-7872	www.us.coloplast.com
ConvaTec	800-422-8811	www.convatec.com
CyMed	800-582-0707	www.cymed-ostomy.com
B. Braun Medical	800-227-2862	www.bbraunusa.com
Hollister	800-323-4060	www.hollister.com
Marlen	800-321-0591	www.marlenmfg.com
Nu Hope	800-899-5017	www.nu-hope.com
Organizations	Phone	Website
United Ostomy Associations of America	800-826-0826	www.ostomy.org
American Cancer Society	800-227-2345	www.cancer.org
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation	800-343-3637	www.cffa.org
Friends of Ostomates Worldwide	N/A	www.fowusa.org



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We're on the web!
www.geosg.org

Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group
2019-2020 Registration/Donation Form

Ostomate Name: _____ Spouse/Support: _____

[] Returning Member (Please mark if there are no changes to your address/email/phone info)

[] New Member

Fill in this section if this is the first time you have registered

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email Address 1: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email Address 2: _____

Ostomy Information

Type of Ostomy: [] Ileostomy [] Colostomy [] Urostomy [] Other _____

Stoma Surgery Date: _____

There are no dues required for membership, however the group does have need of funds for expenses; i.e. UOAA ASG dues, Support for the Ostomy Supply Closet, speakers, brochures and website.

If able, GEOSG asks that you make a tax deductible (501(c)3) donation in lieu of membership dues.

(Suggested donation \$25.00)

Donation \$ _____

- Make checks payable to: GEOSG
• A tax receipt for donations will be issued upon request.
• Return completed form to the next meeting or send to:

Laurie Cameron
GEOSG Registrar
728 218th Pl. NE
Sammamish, WA 98074

For any questions or to receive a tax receipt, email:
lauriecmrn@aol.com

GEOSG members often participate in activities together, but that participation is the choice and responsibility of the individual.
GEOSG is neither responsible for, nor does it exercise any control over, these activities.

For treasurer's use only:

Paid Amount \$ _____ [] cash [] check ck # _____ Date: _____