



INLAND NORTHWEST OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUPS

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Summer 2021

Welcome Inland Northwest Ostomates!



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WHAZZ UP

Phil Moyle, Editor

WELCOME TO SUMMER! But will it cool off? And where is our water? Greetings to all of you in the Ostomy Communities of the Inland Northwest! I should not complain, because we are fortunate that efforts such as vaccinations and other precautions to reduce the spread of the Covid virus have been largely successful...**Thankfully!** The lockdown, especially limited access to local hospitals, had a dramatic impact on many of our support groups. Only the Lewiston-Clarkston has met regularly in person, although not in the hospital, while others have met virtually using Zoom, via outdoor settings, or not at all. Perhaps it is time to reach out to our support group members to consider how to reestablish the continuity of care and support for our ostomate communities. We still have plenty to be thankful for, so please remember to continue to watch out for each other and just hold on a little longer. We'll be out of this soon!

Continued next page.

REGIONAL OSG MEETINGS *



Summer 2021 (COVID-19 Time)

The status of in-person OSG meetings remains uncertain and varies for each group. Check with your Ostomy Support Group leader and/or lead WOCN for updates on upcoming meetings.

Coeur d'Alene, ID: >> Regular ostomy support meetings cancelled until further notice.

Lewiston-Clarkston: Second Monday, January-December, 12:30-1:30 pm, now at Lewiston City Library, Lewiston, ID:

- July 12: Ostomy Support – Speaker unknown
- Aug. 9: Ostomy Support – Speaker unknown
- Sept. 13: Ostomy Support – Speaker unknown

Palouse: Zoom meetings will be held until further notice. Invitations will be sent out monthly:

- July 7: Zoom meet - Ostomy Support.
- Aug 4: Zoom meet - Ostomy Support.
- Sept 1: Zoom meet - Ostomy Support.

Spokane: First Tuesday each month, January – November, 6:30-8:00 pm. Due to Covid and until further notice, outdoor meetings will be held at Manito Park, in or by the North Picnic Shelter:

- July 6: Ice Cream (popsicle) Social @ Manito
- Aug 3: Meet & Greet - Outdoor Manito Park.
- Sept 7: Meet & Greet - Outdoor Manito Park.
- Oct. 5: Run for Resilience – Manito Park walk

Tri-Cities: Second Thursday five months each year. Zoom meetings until further notice:

- Sept 6: Zoom – Ostomy Support Belts.
- >> Meeting schedule subject to change.

Wenatchee: >> Regular ostomy support meetings cancelled until further notice.

Yakima: Temporarily meeting bimonthly on the second Friday, 10-11 am, at Cornerstone Medical Clinic, 4003 Creekside Loop in Yakima:

- July 9: Physical Therapy / Ostomy Support.
- Sept 9: Rich Judd, Byram Healthcare + Phil Moyle, Editor, "InSider" Newsletter.

NOTE: Details about each support group's leaders and normal meeting locations are listed on page 12. Due to Covid, temporary meeting info is listed above.



This issue of “InSider” Newsletter is rather crammed, so we’ll skip right to an overview of its content. Despite the many challenges, some groups have remained active with several changes occurring, as noted in the **Regional Reports**. The **Nurse’s Corner** revisits the importance of knowing your pouching system! This issue includes two articles, both important reads for you all. In “**Living with Laughter**,” author Susie Weller with the Spokane Ostomy Support Group highlights an entertaining Zoom meeting held on May 6 that included representatives from around our region. Featured speaker **Brenda Elsagher**, UOAA’s Director of Affiliated Support Group Affairs, amused us all with a professional comedy routine and also updated participants on UOAA happenings. In “**Travel with an Ostomy – Lessons from the ‘Other Side’ (of the World)**,” author Wayne Pelly from the Mid-Columbia Ostomy (Tri-Cities) Support Group shares many important tips he learned about ostomy care and handling administrative hurdles encountered while traveling and working in remote, third-world (underdeveloped) countries. Wayne’s experiences are on par with significant achievements we have read about in our “*I am an Ostomate, and a World Traveler*” series! Every ostomate that plans to travel in such areas, yes even remote parts of the U.S., should carefully review this informative article.

DIVERSION INSPIRATION & HUMOR

(Submissions & ideas welcome)



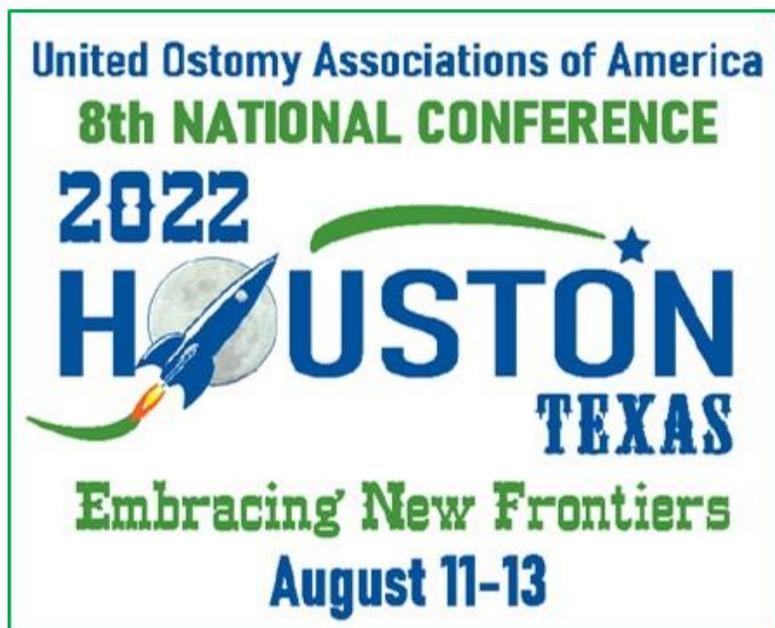
Caregiver’s Blessing

*May your hands be ever stable
and your stomach always strong,
May your legs not grow weary
when the day has been too long,
May you retain all the knowledge
to do the greatest good,
May your heart be kind and tender,
so you treat others as you should.*

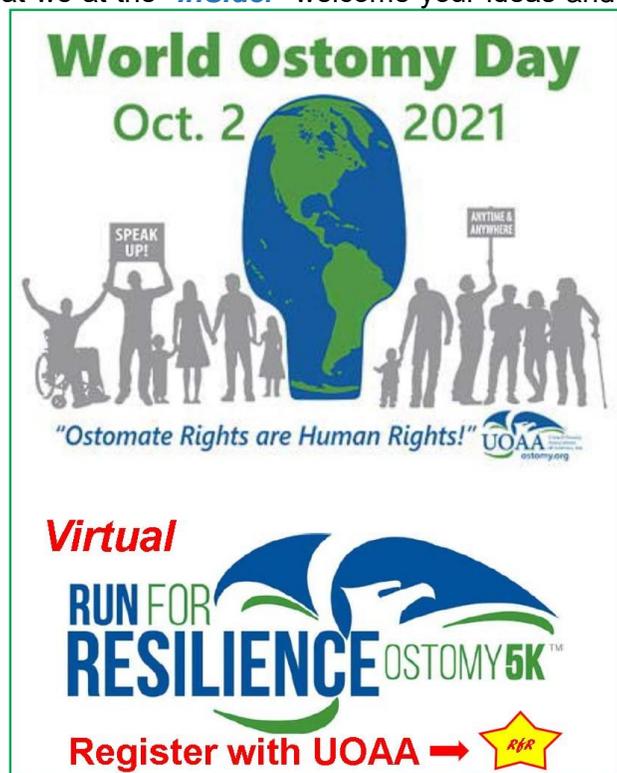
Copyright: Personal Wordsmith2016

All of you should be aware that the UOAA will again sponsor a virtual **Run for Resilience** on October 2, **World Ostomy Day**. Basic registration is only \$7.50, so let’s all register and walk your neighborhoods or local parks (check out the ad below)! (<https://runsignup.com/virtualostomy5k>) The Spokane OSG will hold a Run for Resilience at their October 5 meeting. The UOAA also released a new tool, “**Ostomy Academy**” that consists of quarterly educational webinars featuring expert professionals in all areas of the ostomy world. Check out the announcement on page 3, and try the hyperlinks to register and/or view a recent webinar on YouTube.

Check out our updated regional website - inlandnwostomy.org. Visit the website to discover additional local, regional and national resources. Finally, **Please Remember** that we at the “InSider” welcome your ideas and input! All ostomates, family & caregivers, and medical staff in our communities are welcome to submit articles, letters, and ideas! **THANK YOU!** ■



United Ostomy Associations of America
8th NATIONAL CONFERENCE
2022
HOUSTON TEXAS
Embracing New Frontiers
August 11-13



World Ostomy Day
Oct. 2 2021

SPEAK UP!
ANYTIME & ANYWHERE

“Ostomate Rights are Human Rights!” UOAA

Virtual
RUN FOR RESILIENCE OSTOMY 5K™

Register with UOAA → 

REGIONAL-LOCAL OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUPS

Activities & Announcements

Following are brief reports from each of the seven ostomy support groups in our Inland Northwest Region. Feedback from some groups may be limited depending on their individual circumstance with respect to COVID-19. *Remember, please contact your support group coordinator/leader for up-to-date information!*

- **Coeur D'Alene Ostomy Association - ID:** 6/15/2021 Update from Nancy Luckey– Sherron West resigned as President, and Shari Gabourie, longtime lead WOCN, retired. Due to the Covid pandemic and lockdown, the CDA support group has not held meetings. Nancy will reach out to local ostomates and families when any new information is offered by the hospital about availability to meet at this facility. Questions should be addressed to Nancy Luckey, CWON at 208- 625-6944.
- **Lewiston-Clarkston United Ostomy Support Group - ID / WA:** 6/18/2021 Updates from Tamara Youmans (RN, CWON), and Adrian Wilson, President – In April, Adrian Wilson was invited to speak to doctors at the University of Idaho in Moscow about the effects of celiac sprue disease on ostomies; a little over 30 people present. In May, Michele representing Safe and Simple products did a presentation on hernias. There were plenty of samples to go around, and she did an extensive question and answer period as well. Attendance is between 20-25 people. We still meet the second Monday of the month from 12:30-1:30 pm and have begun to meet in the Lewiston City Library that has a nice large meeting room set up for us.

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Ostomy Academy

Education for Every Ostomate

Go To: <https://www.ostomy.org/ostomy-academy/>



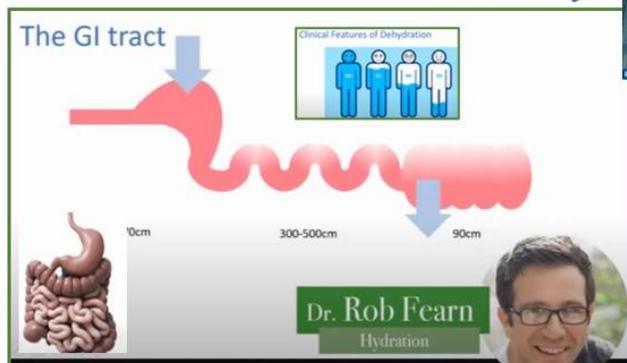
UOAA Presents Ostomy Academy! A quarterly online educational seminar, powered by 11 Health, to bring trusted and comprehensive ostomy information to all members of the ostomy community. Top experts, medical professionals, and experienced ostomates will focus on a new series of quality-of-life topics in each presentation with special attention given to emotional well-being strategies. The first installment of this special free webinar series was live streamed June 9, 2021:

"Total Body Ostomy Health"

Hosted by



Brenda Elsagher



The GI tract

Clinical Features of Dehydration

Dr. Rob Fearn
Hydration

Speakers
are top
experts
in their
fields!

Foods That Thicken Stool

- Creamy Peanut Butter
- Bananas
- Cheese
- Boiled Milk
- Marshmallows
- Pasta
- Bread/Toast (not whole grain)
- Rice
- Tapioca
- Applesauce (unsweetened)
- Potatoes (no skin)



To view the first installment, Go To: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niBfy2DkoM0>



We are actively pursuing outreach. Ellen Dekan started slowly sending out letters to the Head nurses of Hospitals, nursing facilities, and home health care services, so we don't get overwhelmed with responses. We have already had a successful meeting with St. Joseph's hospital. They are in complete accord with the goal of reaching new ostomates and their care givers. We will have a physical therapist specializing in the pelvic floor coming to one of our future meetings. We covered the topic of odor control in our last meeting. Devko works very well we've found. Another tip we want to pass on is drinking a quarter cup of buttermilk daily to balance your good and bad bacteria in the digestive tract. If you can't stand buttermilk, lactose tablets can be found at the health food stores.

- **Palouse Ostomy Support Group - Moscow, ID:** 06/22/2021 Update from Frances Newcombe BSN RN CWON – We continue hold monthly meetings via Zoom. At our last meeting we had a new ostomate attend, and it was good to see everyone making her feel comfortable and welcome. Karen Barron has had the opportunity to put our new ostomy visitor program into action several times. In addition, Frances will attend the WOCN conference (virtual) online June 24-26.

- **Spokane Ostomy Support Group - Spokane, WA:** 06/15/2021 – Report from Susie Weller, Facilitator - Our Spokane support group has held several Zoom meetings in recent months, including hosting an entertaining regional Zoom presentation by comedian and UOAA Director **Brenda Elsagher** (see article on page 5). And on June 1, we held an in-person meeting in Manito Park including a stroll through the beautiful gardens (see photo). SOSG plans to continue holding in-person outdoor meetings through October.



Photo: Spokane Ostomy Support Group meeting and stroll in Manito Park.

- **Mid-Columbia Ostomy Support Group - Tri-Cities, WA:** 06/17/2021 Update from Lisa Bartholomew (CWOCN) – Our next meeting will be held via Zoom on September 9, 4:30-6:00 PM. *Stealth Belt and Safe n' Simple* representatives will talk about ostomy support belts.
- **Confluence Health Ostomy Support Group - Wenatchee, WA:** 06/22/2021 – Tyree Fender, CWOCN – We had no meetings during the last months due to COVID restrictions, and at this time, we do not plan on having any meetings our supervisors determine if/when we can restart. As soon as we do, we will send out notices to our ostomy patients on our mailing list.
- **Yakima Ostomy Support Group - Yakima, WA:** 06/18/2021 – Kanista Masovero, CWOCN – I am happy to report that Cornerstone Medical Clinic in Yakima let us use a room to host our OSG meeting in May with Amanda Boden from Hollister. We had a large turnout for us - 10 people! Cornerstone will let us meet there until the hospital allows groups again. Our next meeting is July 9 from 10-11 am at [Cornerstone Medical Clinic 4003 Creekside Loop in Yakima](#). One of our Physical Therapists will be there to speak about hernia prevention and even give us some exercise tips for people with ostomies. Sept. 10 we will have Katie St. John one of our dieticians talk about nutrition. It will also be at Cornerstone from 10-11. Once the hospital allows groups, we will resume our regular slot, the second Wednesday every 2 months. Thanks, Kanista. ■

My Grandparents are funny. When they bend over, you hear gas leaks, and they blame their dog.



NURSE'S CORNER



Editor’s Note: Ostomates in our Inland NW community are invited to submit suggestions and/or recommendations to ostomy nurses on how to better deal with ostomates during examinations. Please send your ideas to SOSG.Input@gmail.com.

Know Your Pouching System - Ostomy Supply Checklist

Modified from UOAA New Articles to Share – May 20, 2021

There are many reasons to keep a record of the specifications of your appliance-pouching system.

1. Placing a Supply Order accurately requires you to have all of the information ready about your pouching application system – supplier/manufacturer and order number for each of your primary items and accessories you use (pouching system product, size, and product number). If you are ordering for the first time or switching suppliers, be sure to know the type of ostomy appliance and accessories.
 2. Consultation with an Ostomy Nurse (WOCN) for a periodic checkup or appliance difficulties can be faster and more effective by having all of the information available.
 3. Traveling, Especially Overseas, may require checklist info to acquire supplies in an emergency!
- Download the UOAA [Know Your Pouching System \(Appliance\) Checklist](#) tool to have it handy. Carry it with you if you travel!

| Know Your Pouching System (Appliance) Checklist® | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Patient Name/Address: _____ | | Supplier Contact Information: _____ | | |
| Patient Date of Birth: _____ | | Supplier Order #: _____ | | |
| Allergy Alert: _____ | | | | |
| Pouching System: | Brand Manufacturer: | Pouch: | Wafer/Barrier/Flange: | Accessory Products: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One-Piece <input type="checkbox"/> Two-Piece | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloplast <input type="checkbox"/> Convatec <input type="checkbox"/> Cyned/ Microskin <input type="checkbox"/> Hollister <input type="checkbox"/> Marlen <input type="checkbox"/> Nu-Hope <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | Product #: _____ Size: _____ Quantity: _____ Pouch Features: <input type="checkbox"/> Transparent <input type="checkbox"/> Opaque Closure/Outlet: <input type="checkbox"/> Drainable (velcro or clip) <input type="checkbox"/> Closed-end <input type="checkbox"/> Tap Bottom Gas Management: <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Filter <input type="checkbox"/> No Filter | Product #: _____ Quantity: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-cut Size: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cut-to-fit Size: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Moldable Size: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Convex: Soft/Flexible Light Deep Two-Piece: <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive Coupling <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Coupling | <input type="checkbox"/> Skin Barrier Seals/Rings <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive Remover Wipes or Spray <input type="checkbox"/> Barrier Wipes or Spray <input type="checkbox"/> Barrier Strips <input type="checkbox"/> Deodorizer <input type="checkbox"/> Paste (Tube or Strip) <input type="checkbox"/> Tape <input type="checkbox"/> Powder <input type="checkbox"/> Support Belt <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Drainage Bag <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight High Output Pouch <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| Stoma Information: Size: _____ | | Ostomy Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Colostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Urostomy <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |
| <p>Advocates for a Positive Change www.ostomy.org 1 800 826 0826 </p> <p><small>Copyright © 2018 UOAA. All rights reserved.</small></p> | | | | |

QUARTERLY ARTICLES & TIPS

“Living with Laughter”

New UOAA Director, Brenda Elsagher, Entertains and Encourages Pacific Northwest Ostomates Via Zoom

By Susie Leonard Weller, Coordinator, Spokane Ostomy Support Group

Pacific Northwest Ostomates from Alaska to Oregon enjoyed hearing Brenda Elsagher’s reflections about living with laughter—no matter what happens. As the UOAA National Director of Affiliated Support Group Affairs, Brenda’s goal is to encourage ostomy support Groups in our region to network more effectively together. Many ostomates overcame their fear of using the Zoom Technology to see and hear Brenda speak.

Brenda’s 40th Birthday wish was to become a comedian. After winning the Twin Cities Amateur Funniest Person Contest, she’s become internationally known as a Certified Humor Professional and author. Little did she know that much of her comedy material would focus on living well with her colostomy. Brenda began a new career giving inspirational talks to church groups and national cancer organizations to find the humor, even in challenging situations.

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One of Brenda’s many gifts is helping people talk about sensitive topics and body parts with greater ease. She supports ostomates to release any shame about their new system for eliminating solid and liquid waste. Everyone poops and pees—some in different ways.

Brenda credits having her rectum removed as “creating more room for creativity.” From being a nationally respected hairdresser and owner of multiple salons in Minneapolis, she’s now on the international stage. One of her goals is to educate people about getting a life-saving colonoscopy exam. She discovered that the pain in her butt was due to colorectal cancer. Thankfully, her colonoscopy revealed her tumor while it was still operable.



In her book, “*It’s in the Bag and Under the Covers*,” Brenda relays a story of a new ostomate telling someone she was seriously dating that she was an ostomate. The boyfriend asked: “Can you have sex?” “Yes,” she answered. “Can you have children?” “Yes” she replied. End of story; they got married. In a similar way, Brenda can’t think of anything she hasn’t been able to do due to her ostomy.

What you choose to do with each hour in your day can really change your life. Brenda ended her talk with these five reminders:

1. Laugh every day.
2. Find something humorous to enjoy.
3. Use music to uplift your mood.
4. Pray or meditate regularly.
5. Eat dark chocolate to boost your mood with increased serotonin.

You can learn more about Brenda, and the books she’s written, through her website at <https://livingandlaughing.com/>.

Author’s Note: After Brenda’s presentation, a newer ostomate wrote: “*Brenda’s experience and overall presentation were delightful and valuable. Please convey my appreciation to her.*” Lynn Brink, Spokane Ostomy Support Group. ■

Travel with an Ostomy – Lessons from the “Other Side” (of the World)

By Wayne Pelly, Mid-Columbia Ostomy Support Group – Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Richland, WA

My Background:

With the end of the Pandemic in sight, this would be a good time to consider some pointers regarding travel with an ostomy. The guidelines I’m going to share are based on what might be described as the “worst case scenario” – that is, travel to the Developing World, where potable (much less running) water and Western-style toilet facilities are not guaranteed.

My suggestions are based on seven mission trips with a Christian ministry to east and



[Continued next page.](#)



south-central Africa (e.g., Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Malawi), as well as one to Haiti, all since I had my colostomy in 2003. My assignments were often far removed from the comforts and conveniences of the Western World. Readers can adjust their travel strategies based on their own destinations.

A Note on Terminology:

- “*Developing World*”: Terms such as this – or its popular alternative, “Majority World,” are notoriously difficult. Both labels have their problems (often because of what is implied about the “other” part of the world – typically “ours” – i.e., the West). I chose “Developing World” since the issue at stake here is the amenities and resources that we take for granted are often not available in this part of the world we are traveling to.
- “*Equipment*” refers to items that are used repeatedly (such as scissors, razors, and ostomy powder [even though possibly discarded or used up after multiple uses]).
- “*Supplies*” refers to items that are utilized once and then discarded (such as pouches).

Basic Equipment:

- Note: Some of these items may be especially relevant for travel in the Developing World.
- Small spray bottle (available in the travel section of many stores). Handy for spraying around your stoma for cleaning, as well as spraying your disposable washcloths to dampen them.
- Small mirror (with stand).
- Small flashlight/penlight (lights in hotel/guest house rooms are often not adequate, plus you may be trying to change your pouch while working in your own shadow).
- Hand sanitizer and/or wipes (alcohol-based)
- Pocket tissue (doubles as toilet paper when necessary – always carry some with you in case of need when emptying your pouch).
- Styptic Pencil (for men who shave around their stoma).
- Barrier Wipes/spray & Ostomy Powder.
- Optional: Product such as “Safe n’ Simple Peri-Stoma Wipes” (although I have found that disposable washcloths, dampened at the time of use, work quite well).
- Consider: “Attends” Dry Wipes (originally called “Quickables”) (a disposal washcloth).



Photo: L to R: Colleagues Pastors Arnold and Frank, the Author (Wayne Pelly), and hosts Dr. Moses and Joyce Mlenga of the University of Livingstonia in Malawi in East Africa.

Basic Supplies:

- Pack (or make a list) while changing your pouch at home to make sure you’ve identified everything you’ll need.
- Pack your Supplies for each Pouch Change in a Quart-Size Ziploc-type bag (labeled “Ostomy-Medical Necessity” or “Ostomy-for Bio Waste”). I’ve listed some examples below:
 - Skin barriers and pouches
 - Lunch-size paper bag (for discrete disposal)
 - A few disposable washcloths
 - An index card (for use as a barrier by your stoma when shaving)
 - Anything else you might need: Barrier Ring, Protective Seal, etc.

Continued next page.



- Make any modifications needed for those items you carry with you on the plane. Although you may carry scissors with you on the flight as a “medical necessity,” I have always packed my scissors in my checked luggage (to avoid unnecessary hassle and delays to make explanations). I typically do any necessary trimming in advance on a couple of skin barriers and protective seals that I would have with me in my carry-on luggage for emergency use while in transit.

Basic Tips:

- Pack your equipment and supplies separately:
- **Equipment:** pack in a small bag or “packing cube” (similar to men’s toiletry bag or women’s makeup bag) (available in the travel department of many stores – ostomy companies often provide comparable bags in their kits for new ostomates). Following a pouch change, all equipment goes back in the bag. (I take two identical bags to pack in different places during transit (one in my carry-on) in case of delayed or missing luggage.
- **Supplies** (wafer, pouch, rings, seals, disposable washcloths, etc.): pack supplies needed for each pouch change in a separate quart-size Ziploc-style plastic bag, labeled as described above. Used pouches and other supplies will go in the bag for sanitary disposal following a pouch change. Those who use two-piece systems will want to pack some bags with just the pouch – no wafer – for those changes. I often pack extras of these for fairly rare situations where emptying a pouch is essential, but not practical, so it is easier to replace the pouch.
- Ostomy suppliers provide other helpful products, such as individually wrapped wipes. Ask for suggestions at your next support group meeting or call your ostomy company’s customer support representative.
- Divide and Conquer: Estimate your typical

SenSura[®] Mio
 The fit is the difference between asking for help and doing it yourself
 Also available in 1-piece and 2-piece Click
SenSura[®] Mio Convex Flip has a star shaped barrier to provide a secure fit over curved areas, even when bending and stretching.

- A curved star-shaped barrier has petals that hug the body with less creasing or folding.
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supply needs for the duration of your trip, multiply it by three, and split the supplies among different pieces of luggage (both carry-on and checked).

- Label everything “Medical Supplies.” If possible, find out how to write this in the language of the destination country.
- Upon arrival at your destination, obtain a couple of extra bottles of water for your hotel/guest room (typically, one per day is complementary, but you may be charged for extras).
- Identify location of emergency supplies before leaving home (such as a nearby hospital).
- You should stay in a hotel/guest room with a dedicated bathroom – not shared with another room (also recommended by our local Health Department’s Travel Nurse for all travelers).

Emptying a Pouch while in Transit – or “out and about” at your destination:

- Carry alcohol-based wipes or liquid sanitizer for clean-up.
- Have pocket tissue (in the event of the lack of toilet paper).
- In the event of a “squatty potty” –a rectangular hole (which may be in the middle of a dirt floor, particularly in an outhouse), it will be easier to work from a standing position but take care to not soil your clothes.

Changing a pouch without potable tap water

- Keep the tap water away from your stoma!
- Keep several extra bottles of bottled water (beyond what you might need to drink or brush teeth) available in your hotel/guest house room.
- Pour some bottled water into your mini-spray bottle (this will also minimize the amount of bottled water you will need to use for pouch changes).
- The used skin barrier, pouch, and soiled disposable washcloths all go into the Ziploc bag which, when sealed, goes into the brown paper lunch bag for discrete and safe disposal.
- A reviewer (world traveler) of an earlier draft of this article suggested that iodine-based water purification tablets can be added to local tap water IF potable water is not available (e.g. Potable Aqua Water Purification Tablets with PA Plus: <https://www.amazon.com/Potable-Aqua-Purification-Tablets-neutralizing/dp/B000913T3S>). A WOCN contacted by the Editor about this confirmed that exposure of such purified water to the stoma would NOT cause harm.

Changing a pouch in a restroom (e.g., airport, airplane, or store):

- This should (hopefully!) be a rare and unusual occurrence.
- Take a “low-risk approach” to the frequency of appliance changes. I routinely get seven-day wear time at home, but I do not attempt that while on travel to reduce the possibility of denuded skin, which would reduce my wear time even more, as well as increase the time for a pouch change.
- The goal is to reach your changing location of choice (e.g., hotel bathroom).
- If possible, choose a handicapped stall as it is larger than the “standard” stall.
- Here you will see the advantage of having everything you need for a pouch change in two small containers: A Ziploc-type plastic bag with your supplies and a “Packing Cube” with all your equipment.

Avoiding Legal Trouble:

- Check the internet for whether your destination country bans plastic bags (and what kind).
- You may need to package and label your supplies accordingly.
- A letter from your doctor may be appropriate as well – I’ve included a sample below.

Sample Letter for Authorities Regarding Your Use of Plastic Bags:

(Coordinate with your doctor; modify appropriately for an ileostomy or urostomy)

Continued next page.



Doctor’s Letterhead

Date
To Whom It May Concern:

This is to inform you that my patient, [Name], has a surgically-created colostomy, meaning his/her bodily waste empties from his/her colon (large intestine) into a pouch that adheres to his/her abdomen. Of utmost importance, however, is the sanitary storage (such as during transport) and disposal (following the changing) of these pouches. The typical approach to this is the use of locking plastic bags (such as the “Ziploc” brand), which – due to their tight seal – protect the pouches from contamination during storage and transport prior to use and protect the public from the contents following use and disposal.

Although I understand that, in many countries, the use of such plastic bags is a significant concern to the environment, please understand that, in this case, they are a matter of medical necessity.

Thank you,
[Doctor’s Signature]

Author’s Note: I first developed this letter template for a trip to Kenya. I’d first contacted both the Kenyan embassy in the U.S. and the American embassy in Kenya for guidance, but neither were willing to offer advice. I received help from a friend who works at an NGO in Nairobi (IJM) that works with the government. On the other hand, I have never been asked for any justification for my plastic bags. ■

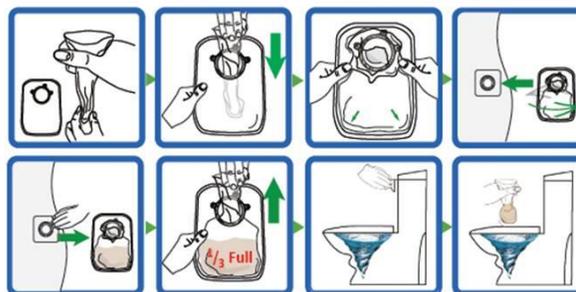
More Pandemic Humor



- **The dumbest thing I ever bought was a 2020 planner. Same goes for 2021!**
- **Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?**
- **I never thought the comment, “I wouldn’t touch him/her with a 6-foot pole” would become a national policy, but here we are, , , and still are!**
- **The spread of COVID-19 is based on 2 things:**
 1. How dense the population is.
 2. How dense the population is!



Flushable Biodegradable Pouch Liners



For FREE SAMPLES visit www.colomajic.com

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IMPORTANT OSTOMATE SUPPORT CONTACTS & LINKS

Providence Sacred Heart Outpatient Ostomy Clinic - M-F 8:00-2:30 (509-474-4950), leave a message if you don't reach someone live; appointments & MD referral required; No walk ins; Can be seen for follow up, checkup, questions, problems.

Deaconess Medical Center - Wound Center - M-F 9:00-3:00 (509- 473-7290); appointments & MD referral required.

Spokane Ostomy Visitor Program - Those who have an ostomy or face potential ostomy surgery should contact Carol Nelson (509-443-1242; carol@nelsonwheat.com) to arrange contact with or a visit from an experienced and trained Ostomate Visitor.

Inland Northwest Bladder Cancer Support Group - A support group for urostomates and bladder cancer patients. Members meet the first Tuesday of the month at 5:00 p.m., Perkins Restaurant, at 12 E. Olive, in downtown Spokane. (To verify the status of meeting schedules during the COVID-19 pandemic, first check with Keith Alloway, 509-847-5999, or email him at KL.alloway@comcast.net.)

Kootenai Health Medical Center – Outpatient Wound/Ostomy Care – (208-625-6944) - 2003 Kootenai Health Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID.

Gritman Medical Center – Ostomy Services - 700 S. Main Street in Moscow, Idaho (208-882-4325); appointment needed.

Kadlec Medical Center - Outpatient Ostomy Clinic- M-Th 8:00-4:00 (509-946-4611 ext: 1365562); appointments & MD/provider referral required.

Ostomy Support Facilities - Lewis-Clark Valley –

- Tri-State Wound Healing (Ostomy Clinic), Clarkston, WA – Call 509-758-1119 – referral not required.
- St. Joseph Wound Care/Ostomy Dept., Lewiston, WA - Seeing inpatient and outpatient ostomy patients M-F with appointment - Call 208-750-7379

United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA) - (800-826-0826); P.O. Box 525, Kennebunk, ME 04043-0525; Link: <http://www.ostomy.org/Home.html>.

Phoenix Magazine - (800-750-9311); The Phoenix Magazine, P.O. Box 3605, Mission Viejo, CA 92690; Link: <http://www.phoenixuoaa.org/> (get a free sample copy).

Primary Producers of Ostomy Products:

- [Hollister](http://www.hollister.com) 1-888-808-74556 [Coloplast](http://www.coloplast.com) 1-888-726-7872 [Convatec](http://www.convatec.com) 1-800-422-8811



INLAND NORTHWEST OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUPS Regular Support Group Meeting Schedules* and Contacts Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho

(* **Due to COVID-19** precautions, hospitals have been unable to host regular support group meetings.

Info shown below applies to regular meeting schedules. Current schedules are listed on page 1.

Call your support group contacts to verify meeting times, agendas, & locations)

(Also, check the “**Inland Northwest Ostomy Support Groups**” website: <http://inlandnwostomy.org>)

Coeur d'Alene Ostomy Association, ID (# 409):

- Meetings held from 6:30—8:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month (February-November);
- Kootenai Health Medical Center, 2003 Kootenai Health Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID. (Resource Center / Cedar Rm)
- Contact: Nancy Luckey RN, BSN, CWON at 208- 625-6944 - Kootenai Outpatient Wound Clinic.

Lewiston-Clarkston Ostomy Support Group, WA/ID (# 134):

- Meetings held monthly at 12:30-1:30 pm on the 2nd Monday each month (January-December);
- Tri-State Memorial Hospital, 1221 Highland Ave, Clarkston, WA; hospital conference room on main floor.
- Contact: Adrian Wilson, President at 509-254-3404.

Spokane Ostomy Support Group, WA (# 349):

- Meetings held from 6:30-8:00 pm on the first Tuesday each month (January-November);
- Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center, 101 W 8th Ave, Spokane, WA. We meet in the Avista A & B Room in the SHMC Women’s Center (west end of complex).
- Contacts: Susie Leonard Weller at 509-499-1423 or Carol Nelson (Visitation Program) at 509-443-1242.

Mid-Columbia (Richland) Ostomy Support Group, (TriCities), WA (# 278):

- Meetings currently held the second Thursday in January & March at 12:00-1:30 pm, May & September at 4:30-6:00 pm, and November at 12:00-1:30 pm (<https://education.kadlec.org/registration/11-wellness/94-support-group-ostomy>).
- Kadlec Healthplex, 1268 Lee Blvd, or main Kadlec Campus 888 Swift Blvd. Richland WA; room varies.
- Contacts: Lisa Bartholomew, RN, BSN, CWOCN at 509- 946-4611 Ext 1365562; or Wayne Pelly (Visitation Chairperson) at 509-943-3223.

Palouse (Moscow) Ostomy Support Group, ID (# 462):

- First Wednesday each month; February – December; 5:00-6:00 pm (scheduling in progress).
- Gritman Medical Center, 700 S. Main St, Moscow, ID.
- Contact: Judith (Judy) Reid, RN, MS, CWON at 509-330-1265; Frances Newcombe, BSN, RN, CWON at 208-301-4981 or 208-882-4325.

Confluence Health (Wenatchee) Ostomy Support Group, WA (# 398):

- Meetings held quarterly at 2:00 to 4:00 pm (see meeting announcements or contact Tyree Fender.)
- Confluence Health Central Washington Hospital, 1201 S. Miller St., Wenatchee, WA; Conference rooms J & K.
- Contact: Tyree Fender, RN, BSN, CWOCN at 509-433-3212.

Yakima Ostomy Support Group, WA:

- Meetings held bimonthly at 10:00 to 11:00 am, generally on the second Wednesday of January, March, May, September, & November (check with the inpatient Wound/Ostomy Care Department for details);
- Virginia Mason Memorial, 2811 Tieton Drive, Yakima, WA, usually in basement – Classroom C;
- Contact: Virginia Mason Memorial Ostomy/Wound Care Services – Kanista Masovero, RN, CWOCN; at 509-575-8266.

* Please let us know if errors need to be corrected or changes made to the ABOVE information:

(SOSG.Input@gmail.com).