

MORRIS COUNTY OSTOMY ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

AN AFFILIATE OF UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATIONS OF AMERICA, INC.

KEEPING HYDRATED WITH AN OSTOMY

Anyone without a colon has likely been told that maintaining adequate hydration is crucial. While fluid loss can be caused by many things, including sweating and even breathing, ileostomates are at a greater risk of dehydration because their colon, which has a function of absorbing fluids and electrolytes, is either missing or bypassed. Urostomates who are not properly hydrated can be prone to kidney and urinary tract infections.

HYDRATION STRATEGIES

Have a large pitcher of fluids available at all times, and set a goal to consume one or two pitchers per day depending on the amount of fluids you've been asked to consume by your doctor. Carry a water bottle everywhere you go. Don't assume that you'll be near a water source when you go out, so it's best to always keep fluids with you when going out.

GETTING THE RIGHT FLUIDS

Water isn't the best option to use exclusively for ostomates because it contains no electrolytes. Sport drinks, electrolyte drinks and electrolyte tablets tend to be the most popular options. But they are the most expensive and some people do not like the sweet taste. Vegetable juices are one alternative. Not only do they contain sodium and potassium, but they also come with additional nutrients and don't cause the same sugar spike you get with sports drinks. While most low-sodium vegetable drinks are higher in potassium than regular vegetable drinks, they still contain a relevant amount of sodium for ostomates.

Water-rich foods are an important source of fluids and electrolytes and can be very important in maintaining hydration. Some water-rich foods are fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, oranges, watermelon, celery, cucumber, mangoes, large salads, etc. One benefit to getting your fluids via food is that it slows down output vs. straight liquids, which can be very helpful for those who have a high-output ostomy.

TIPS

- Don't rely on a single source of hydration, since they all have strengths and weaknesses.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty before you start drinking; thirst is a sign that you are already becoming dehydrated.
- Fatigue and headaches may be signs of dehydration.
- Be aware that many fruit juices can cause diarrhea (especially prune juice), as may artificial sweeteners.
- Your urine frequency, amount, color and smell will give you a good idea as to how hydrated you are: aim to get your urine to be clear and as odourless as possible; dark and smelly urine is often a sign of dehydration.

Source: www.veganostomy.ca

FALL 2016 NEWSLETTER

www.ostomymorris.org

MCOA OFFICERS

President: Johann Norris
973-377-2597

Vice President: Kris
Kirkpatrick
973-822-3440

Secretary-Treasurer: George
Salamy 908-879-1229

Newsletter: Walter Cummins
973-822-1146

Fund Raising: Ed Nunn

WOUND, OSTOMY, CONTINENCE CLINICIANS

Toni McTigue,
MSN, APN, CWOCN
973-971-5522

Janet Doyle-Munoz,
MSN, RN, CWON
973-971-4191

Laura Doyle,
BSN, RN, CWON
973-971-5940

PHYSICIAN ADVISORS

Dr. John Dalena
(Gastroenterologist)
973-401-0500

Dr. Rolando Rolandelli
(Colorectal Surgeon)
973-971-7200

Dr. Ian Atlas
(Urologist)
973-539-0333

OSTOMIES AND ELEPHANTS: ART ON A COLOSTOMY BAG

by Heather Lang

“What did you think when you first found out about my colostomy bag?”

This is something my significant other has asked me on several separate occasions. I used to worry that my responses were inadequate. My exact words varied each time, but the sentiment was always the same: I didn’t think much about it at all.

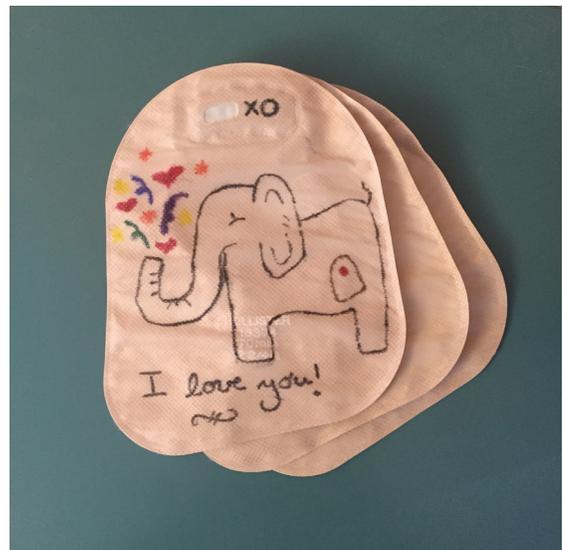
I met Michael through a mutual friend who told me that Michael worked as the Head of Lighting/Special Effects at a Cirque du Soleil show. She also told me that he had a permanent colostomy and wore a colostomy bag. When she first offered to put us in touch, I read her entire text message but all I “heard” was the bit about Michael’s vocation. My imagination went into high-drive: I was daydreaming about gravity-defying acrobats, a half-ton ōdaiko drum, and inflatable snail puppets. I thought he might be the most extraordinary person I could meet.

Before knowing Michael, I had seen a handful of Cirque du Soleil shows. I loved each Cirque show for its dark-yet-colorful qualities; I was fascinated by their juxtapositions of otherworldly visual displays. Cirque’s industrial theatre productions are, for me, like animated versions of magnificent surrealist paintings. (My favorites include the *Elephant Celebes* (1921) by Max Ernst and *Swans Reflecting Elephants* (1937) by Salvador Dali. You’ll notice a theme here!) Certainly, the performers’ displays of physical prowess alone are breathtaking; however, dramatic mood lighting, violently blooming confetti cannons, and other world-class stage effects take us out of ourselves, are the bridges to our imaginations. Special effects like theirs—those that Michael designs and builds—facilitate our suspension of disbelief. They’re magical.



I’d been pretty unlucky in love before I moved to Las Vegas. However, I now have a partner – a handsome, creative, intelligent, patient, and funny best friend – with whom I share my life. He makes me at-home theatrical fog machines, explains math and physics in ways that are fun, and brews me coffee every morning despite his hating the stuff. He taught me how to build a pinhole camera out of an animal cracker box. He’s taught me a lot. He also happens to wear a colostomy bag.

Michael wears this equipment because he had colon cancer, an immensely challenging, painful, and terrifying experience for him and his loved ones. And he’s worn ostomy bags for over five years now – because he has *survived* his cancer. Michael once told me, while shaking his head, that before the doctors decided whether he’d need a permanent colostomy, he thought that it might be the worst thing that could happen to him. These days, he couldn’t disagree with himself more. In fact, during his treatment, he wrote a hilarious and poignant blog titled “The Ornamental Ass.” Also, because I asked him soon after we met, he lets me decorate his colostomy bags. I call this one:



“The Ostomy Elephant,” 2016
Permanent marker on Hollister closed mini-pouch with filter 2 ¾” (70mm)

I’m not much of an illustrator, but—we have fun.

Michael, his love, and his many accomplishments have inspired me in many ways, but perhaps most noticeably in my poetry, a craft that’s more in my wheelhouse than confetti bombs and spectacular lighting effects. This Las Vegas haiku, for example, was recently published in HOOT:

Although circus clowns
startle me, here even sand
blooms like confetti.

Michael also taught me that though an ostomy is considered a “hidden disability,” he does “not want to be defined by cancer or by an ostomy.” And, I can tell you with enormous sincerity, he most certainly isn’t.

Heather Lang, a resident of Las Vegas, is a poet, literary critic, and adjunct professor.

GUIDELINES FOR COUNSELING NEW OSTOMATES

As ostomates we may be asked to give advice to others about to undergo ostomy surgery or recovering from a recent operation. The request may come as a formal invitation from a WOCN or a physician, or it may arise because a friend or relative of the new ostomate knows about your experience. We remember our own anxieties about what will happen in the hospital and what our futures will be like. Now you serve as an example of a successfully rehabilitated person who has learned to live well with an ostomy.

If you have never counseled before, that situation may become a source of a different set of anxieties. What should I say? How should I interact? The information you pass on can serve as an important source of preparation and reassurance. But you want to avoid behaving in a manner or making a statement that will upset the other person.

Fortunately, the UOAA offers counseling guidelines. If the request to counsel comes from a WOCN or a physician, it's very likely that you will be prepared for your role in the visit to someone's home or hospital room. Even if the invitation comes from a personal association, you should still follow this set of guidelines.

Crucial is letting the new ostomate take the lead and concentrating on putting that person at ease and providing the information he or she really wants to know. Keep the visit brief and focus on your own experiences, without offering medical advice that might undermine that of the doctors and nurses on the case. If other people—friends or family members are present when you arrive—assure that the ostomate is willing to let them hear what you have to say.

The purpose of the visit is to:

- Offer reassurance, understanding, and practical information
- Help the patient renew his/her self-confidence
- Support patients and their families in the emotional and social rehabilitation process
- Provide connect to community resources, such as a support group.

Your demeanor should be informal but professional, conscious of the need for confidentiality and of any legal considerations. If the person asks for medical advice, refer him or her to the attending physician or ostomy nurse. Stoma care is not permitted.

Overall, be cheerful, honest, and well-groomed. Be considerate of the person and respectful of his or her privacy. Be a good listener and be ready to accept emotional responses.

A visit from an ostomate who has adjusted effectively to an ostomy can serve as a significant model to someone uncertain and even afraid about what lies ahead. Following these guidelines will go a long way in assuring that your visit is productive.

DONATING SUPPLIES

Group members may send unused ostomy supplies to Friends of Ostomates Worldwide, an organization that provides ostomy materials to needy ostomates throughout the world. For more information about Friends of Ostomates, click "Donating Ostomy Supplies" on the list of links on www.ostomymorris.org. Their address is 4018 Bishop Lane, Louisville, KY 40218.

DUES

If you haven't already sent a check or cash, 2016 dues are due.

Dues are still \$20.00, and you can send to:
George Salamy, Treasurer
30 Wyckoff Way, Chester, NJ 07930

MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. and end at 9 p.m.

OCTOBER 19, 2016

OPEN DISCUSSION

NOVEMBER 19, 2016

B. BRAUN MEDICAL REPRESENTATIVE

J.R. BULLARD, MHA, CWCMS

REGIONAL CHRONIC CARE SPECIALIST

[NOTE: OSTOMY COMPANY LAUNCHING

IN THE US]

DECEMBER 21, 2016

HOLIDAY PARTY

SCHERING PLOUGH CONFERENCE ROOM IN GAGNON C

[ENTER THE GAGNON BUILDING AND WALK STRAIGHT PAST

THE DESKS TO THE EVALATORS, THEN TURN RIGHT AND WALK

TO THE END OF THE CORRIDOR]

NOTE: 6:30 P.M. STARTING TIME

MORRIS COUNTY OSTOMY ASSOCIATION

The Morris County Ostomy Association is a community-based, local organization made up of volunteers whose purpose it is to reach out to ostomates and their families, providing them with a network from which they can share experiences, obtain information, and gain emotional support.

The association's voluntary visitation program offers support on a one-to-one basis to patients and their families. The ostomy volunteer visitor is carefully chosen and trained. The visitor is well adjusted to his/her ostomy and is able to offer additional support and information on ostomy care and management at home.

The Morris County Ostomy Association holds regular monthly meetings. The meetings normally consist of an informal gathering of ostomates and individuals who may be contemplating ostomy related procedures. Families and friends as well as significant others are always welcome.

The evening usually involves an informal talk by a physician, a nurse specialist, a distributor of ostomy supplies, or social worker. Presentations are always on a topic of interest to the entire group. Most importantly, the meeting offers the opportunity for individuals to share information and discuss mutual interest and concerns.

MCOA

Morristown Medical Center
Atlantic Health Group
100 Madison Avenue
Morristown, NJ 07962

