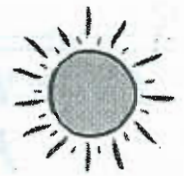




# SHORT CIRCUIT



SHORT CIRCUIT

JUNE 2004 ISSUE

## Inside this Issue

- ✓ 2004 Meetings and scheduled events
- ✓ Phone numbers and websites of interest (p.2)
- ✓ Direct Dues Billing Program Information (p.2)
- ✓ Membership Information (p.2)
- ✓ Upcoming Meeting Thursday, June 24, 2004 at 6pm (p.3)
- ✓ Ostomy Product Donation Information (p.4)
- ✓ Fungal Rashes (p.4-5)
- ✓ Swimming Under Cover (p.5)
- ✓ Insurance and Medicare Issues and Rights (p.6)
- ✓ Officer openings (p.7)
- ✓ Medicare Ostomy Product Allowables (p.7)

If you have specific topics that you would like to see in the "Short Circuit" newsletter, please contact Jen at Fifth Avenue Medical. (319)298-0953 or toll free at (877)787-6790. Thanks!

## Officers

President  
Marilyn Cermak  
912 Brown Street  
Iowa City, IA 52245  
(319)337-2466

Secretary  
Jane Pasterski  
1017 Raney Street  
Hiawatha, IA 52233  
(319)395-0595

Vice President  
This position is open if anyone is interested in volunteering for it.

Treasurer  
This position is open if anyone is interested in volunteering for it.

## FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS:

\*\*\*Please note that you can tune into the following stations if a meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather: Radio KXIC 800 AM or KCJJ 1630 AM in Iowa City and WMT 600 AM or KCRG 1600 AM in Cedar Rapids. KCRG-TV or KGAN-TV.

### JUNE

Meeting Date: Thursday, June 24, 2004  
Time: 6:00pm  
Place: Mercy Medical Center, Cedar Rapids  
Look inside for more details!

### JULY

Ostomy Lunch  
Date: Thursday, July 22, 2004  
Time & place to be announced at a later time.

### SEPTEMBER

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 23, 2004  
Time: 6:30pm  
Place: St. Luke's Hospital, Cedar Rapids

### OCTOBER

Meeting Date: Thursday, October 28, 2004  
Time: 6:30pm  
Place: Mercy Hospital, Iowa City

### DECEMBER

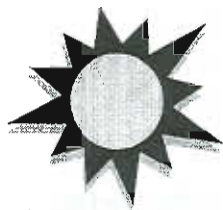
Christmas Brunch  
Date: Sunday, December 5, 2004  
Time & place to be announced at a later time.

Please note that there are currently no scheduled events in August or November. We will update you either by newsletter or postcard if there are changes.

*A Special Thanks to  
Fifth Avenue Medical  
for providing this newsletter.*

## Direct Dues Billing Program

In January 2003, the UOA began billing and immediately accepting all payments for new memberships and renewals. Actually, the change is transparent to our members. You are still getting a bill and a pre-printed return envelope, but rather than having your payment directed to the local treasurer, your renewal is being sent directly to the UOA. The benefit is that the UOA will bill two additional times for renewals!



### MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of the  
United Ostomy Association:

\$25.00 UOA membership fee  
includes

the Ostomy Quarterly:  
FALL, WINTER, SPRING,  
SUMMER

(October, January, April, July)

For more information on  
becoming a member, contact:  
Marilyn Cermak in Iowa City  
(319)337-2466

or

Jen McEnany at Fifth Avenue  
Medical in Cedar Rapids  
(319)298-0953

## HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY 1-800-227-2345  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

CROHN'S & COLITIS FOUNDATION 1-800-343-3637  
[www.ccfa.org](http://www.ccfa.org)

CONVATEC 1-800-422-8811  
[www.convatec.com](http://www.convatec.com)

CYMED 1-800-582-0707  
[www.cymed-ostomy.com](http://www.cymed-ostomy.com)

FRIENDS OF OSTOMATES WORLDWIDE (FOW-USA)  
[www.fowusa.org](http://www.fowusa.org)

HOLLISTER 1-800-323-4060  
[www.hollister.com](http://www.hollister.com)

UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATION 1-800-826-0826  
[www.uoa.org](http://www.uoa.org)

UOA E-MAIL [uoa@deltanet.com](mailto:uoa@deltanet.com)

WOUND OSTOMY AND CONTINENCE NURSES  
SOCIETY 1-800-224-WOCN (9626)  
[www.wocn.org](http://www.wocn.org)





**Upcoming Iowa City Area  
Ostomates' Meeting**

**Where: Mercy Medical Center  
701 10th St. SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403**

**When: Thursday,  
June 24, 2004**

**Time: 6:00pm (Please note  
time change)**

**What: We're going to give you  
a tour of the new "state of the  
art" endoscopy unit at Mercy.  
This expanded and updated  
unit just opened in April 2004.**

**We're having a staff nurse stay  
after hours to give the tour, so  
the usual time of the meeting  
has been moved up to  
6:00pm.**

**Meeting cont'd**



**Please park in  
the parking ramp  
on the second  
level, and enter the hospital  
at the North entrance. Just  
inside you'll find a waiting  
area, and that's where we'll  
meet. Following the tour  
we'll hold a meeting and  
discuss any issues about  
ostomy management that  
you have.**



**Contact Susan Berns WOC/  
ET Nurse at 398-6615 if you  
have any questions.**

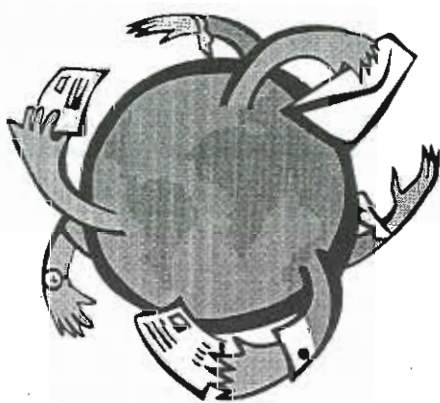
**Hope to see you there!**

## Looking for a Place to Donate Old Ostomy Products that you no longer have a use for?

Friends of Ostomates Worldwide (FOW) accepts donations of new, unused pouches, flanges (face plates), skin barriers, skin wipes, past, tapes, belts, pouch deodorant, pouch covers, scissors, wrapped soap (small hotel soaps are good), and pediatric supplies. FOW cannot ship flammables, liquids, aerosols, or used equipment. When donating, FOW asks that you include the donor's name on both the inside and outside of the carton. A letter of receipt that can be used for tax purposes is mailed to each donor.

Donations can be sent to:  
FOW-USA Project S.H.A.R.E.  
4304 Regency Drive  
Glenview, Illinois 60025-5200

For more information, you can contact FOW at [info@fowusa.org](mailto:info@fowusa.org)



## FUNGAL RASHES

Fungal rashes are more prevalent in late spring and summer. This rash is the same as the one you can get on your feet, groin, or in any dark moist skin fold. This is the perfect place for this natural body organism to flourish—it is called a yeast infection. People who have high blood sugars or eat higher quantities of sweets than normal, those with diabetes or people who take prednisone type medications, are more prone to the rash. Persons with an ostomy who wear a plastic pouch on their side are also more prone to this. The plastic ostomy pouch, plus the contents of the pouch increase the body heat and perspiration in this area during the warmer month. The old adage of "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" comes to mind. If you know you fit into the above mentioned groups with these indications, then take action before you get the rash. Some simple things that you can do are:

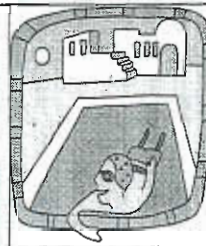
- Make sure the barrier that sticks to your body is kept dry after showers and baths. You may use a hair dryer set to cool or dry this area very well with a towel.

*Continued on page 5*

**Continued**

- Use a micro-granulated, anti-fungal powder around the intact barrier area as well as under the pouch area. The area under the pouch may be applied daily. There are many over-the-counter brands available. The main active ingredients to look for are miconazole nitrate 2% or zinc oxide. These are not prescription items and are less expensive than Mycostatin powder that is often prescribed by a doctor for treating fungus.
- Use a pouch cover between you and your pouch. Some newer style pouches have an extra layer of material on the back that is called a pouch cover, but it is still made of plastic. You need a cloth or a very good quality absorbent towel cut to fit under the pouch area. You need to change the cover when it becomes moist or it can also grow the fungus.
- If you do develop a rash, do not use a cream on your skin area that is under your barrier. The barrier will still to the cream and not your body, thereby falling off. You only need to use the miconazole nitrate powder on the infected area. If the manufacturer's instructions on your barrier allow it, you may seal the powder in with a skin seal, i.e. Skin Prep, AllKare, etc. You may need to change your pouch more frequently until the rash clears. It should clear in one or two changes.

From Evansville, Indiana Chapter Newsletter By: Lyn Kramer, RN,  
 WETN, Via: The Pouch & Southern Maryland Counties Chapter.

**SWIMMING UNDER COVER**

Are you a beach bum afraid to go in the water this summer? Never fear, here are some ways to cover-up so no one has to know you are wearing a pouch. First off, select disposable child size or closed end mini pouches. This eliminates the bulkiness and line of a pouch clip. A patterned suit hides lines much better than a solid color swimsuit. Swimsuits tend to run small, so choose a size 1-2 times bigger than you normally wear. It's easy for a man to select swim trunks. A woman's suit with more Lycra than nylon will be more slimming and keep a pouch in place. A two-piece is not out of the question. Women may benefit from a tankini style that fits loosely over the abdomen. Make sure the bottom has a high waist. Beware of suits with high cut legs that may not adequately cover a mini pouch. Boy leg short suits may hide more but it takes a slim figure to pull it off. Scars lighten months and years after surgery. It's up to you how comfortable you feel baring your abdomen. If a two-piece is not your style, try swimsuits with skirts or matching shorts. No one said you can't go swimming in shorts! Sarongs are great cover-ups while not in the water. Don't let a day at the beach or pool pass you by. Swimming is great for toning all muscles of the body.

From Evansville, Indiana Chapter Newsletter

Via: The Ostomy Promoter & GB News Review, Green Bay, WI

## *Insurance and Medicare Issues and Rights*

Health insurance for ostomates is an increasingly complex issue. With new types of health insurance providers such as HMOs, and in the context of efforts to cut costs, coverage of ostomy supplies is no longer assured. In this guide we cannot describe all the provisions of the numerous insurance plans, but we can outline some of the key items of which you need to be aware. You are encouraged to be an active consumer. Most people who work for a large employer and everyone using Medicare will have at least some choice of insurance plans. For all consumers, but especially to people with ostomies who will need supplies indefinitely, the selection of insurance is critical. Both the cost and coverage of ostomy supplies must be considered.

### *Five Key Ostomy Concerns In Selecting Insurance:*

**Does your insurance allow you to choose your own doctors?** You need to be concerned not only with your doctor or primary care physician (PCP), but also about any limitations on the specialists you can see. Ostomies are complex procedures that not all doctors fully understand. You will need access to specialists who treat ostomy patients regularly, and to a hospital equipped for and familiar with potential ostomy complications. A good but not perfect test for the facility is whether a WOC (ET) is available, and for the insurance, if the costs of a WOC (ET) are covered.

**What ostomy equipment is covered?** Sometimes everything; sometimes pouches but not tape, etc. One HMO will only pay for older style rubber pouches. You may have to inquire as to what ostomy items are included. Ostomy care or supply coverage is never one of the features promoted in insurance advertisements. The first service representative you talk to may not even know what an ostomy is. Sometimes the claims representative who decides what to pay for may also not know. Learn how to appeal their decision if you feel it is wrong. *It is your right.*

Helpful Hint: Whenever dealing with claims for equipment or supplies, call them supplies for an **ostomy prosthesis**. A prosthesis replaces a body

### *Continued*

part (which is accurate) and this term is much more recognizable to insurance companies for coverage.

**Can you choose where to buy supplies?** Does your plan limit where you can shop, and if it does, do they contract with full service suppliers?

**Will your coverage be limited or even denied if you have a pre-existing condition?** Many health insurance policies have certain restrictions on how they will reimburse charges for what they consider to be "pre-existing conditions" or "pre-existing illnesses." Every policy and insurer is different, so it is vitally important that when you are **changing health insurance policies**, that you **double-check** the details of the new policy's restrictions. For instance, some policies will put a limit on the total amount they will pay out for pre-existing conditions in the first 6 to 12 months of the policy. Having an ostomy (of any sort) by itself is not an illness, but it may fall under the definition of a "pre-existing condition." As was said above, most health insurance policies consider an ostomy the equivalent of a prosthesis, e.g., an artificial leg or arm. *Do not take this issue for granted!* Always check with your employer or insurance provider if you have any questions.

**How do changes in Medicare coverage affect you?** Even if you are not yet on Medicare, whatever cuts Medicare devises will likely be copied by many insurers. [See page 7 for a list of some of the Medicare coverage information for Ostomy supplies]

The following organizations or resources may also be of help, depending on each circumstance:

**Medicare Telephone Hotline:** (800) 638-6833

*From United Ostomy Association, Inc. webpage under Ostomy Supplies, then Insurance/Medicare/Reimbursement issues*





# Additional Information



## ☞ Medicare Coverage ☞ MONTHLY ALLOWABLES

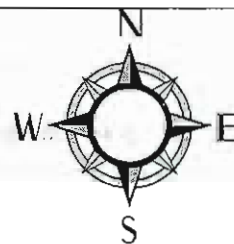
- Drainable Pouches: 20 per month
- Urinary Pouches: 20 per month
- Closed pouches: 60 per month
- Irrigation sleeves: 4 per month
- Solid skin barriers and skin barriers with flange: 20 per month
- Ostomy belts: 1 per month

You are entitled to obtain 1, 2, or 3 months supply at a time if you live at home and 1 months supply if you are in a nursing home.

It is necessary to have a doctor's order or prescription in order to submit supplies to insurance.

If you need more supplies other than those allowed, you will simply be required to obtain a letter from your doctor explaining the medical reason for needing more supplies than the usual maximum quantities as listed above. Your supplier does not need to routinely submit this letter with your claim, but must keep it on file in your records as a copy may be requested.

From United Ostomy Ostomy Association, "Medicare Policy for Ostomy Supplies Improved"



## Help Point our Organization in the Right Direction!

- Do you have ideas of topics for our meetings?
- Do you have thoughts about how to continue to get members involved?
- Would you like to see our organization find new ways to help touch lives and provide support for area ostomates?

If you answered **"YES"** to any of these questions, then volunteer to be an officer for the Iowa City Area Ostomates! The positions of Treasurer and Vice President are open.

Contact Marilyn Cermak in Iowa City at (319) 337-2466 or Jen McEnany in Cedar Rapids at (319) 298-0953 if you are interested.

Thanks in advance for your help!