

SHORT CIRCUIT

Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group #171, Inc. — an affiliate of UOAA, Inc.

www.iowaostomy.org

Serving Ostomates of Eastern Iowa since 1972

JUNE 2010

Welcome!

The Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group is dedicated to providing information, advocacy and service to our members, their caregivers, and to the intestinal and urinary diversion community at large.

Our local chapter

We meet regularly to share experiences, provide mutual support and learn about the latest products and information for ostomy, urostomy and intestinal diversions.

Meetings are held at area hospitals, and involve informal round-table discussions on topics of interest, new product demonstrations, occasional guest speakers, and a question and answer session with one of the local WOC nurses. Families and friends of ostomy and intestinal diversion patients are always welcome to attend.

For more information about the local chapter, contact us at 319-530-6749, at www.iowaostomy.org, or look for us on **Facebook!**

The U.O.A.A.

The United Ostomy Associations of America is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization incorporated in New Jersey. The UOAA serves to unify and strengthen ostomy support groups in America.

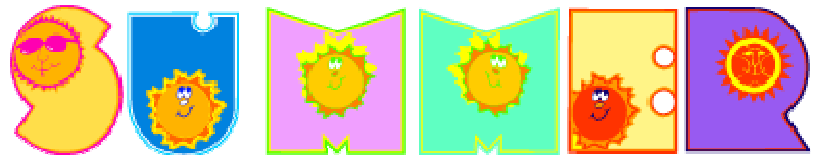
UOAA services include: Advocacy • Non-profit Status • Conferences • The Phoenix magazine • Toll-free Help and Referral Line • Special Interest Groups • Ostomy Community Liaison

For more information the national organization, contact the UOAA at 800-826-0826, or at www.uoaa.org.

“Seize the Opportunity”

A Message from the Coordinator....

Welcome to



in Iowa!

Summer has finally arrived! The hot Iowa weather means spending more time outdoors, family picnics and outings, ball games and barbecues, swimming pools and water skiing, fireworks and musical concerts.

Warm weather can also mean sunburn, skin rashes under your wafer, worries about odor control, and perhaps the most serious situation, dehydration.

Quite a few of our support group members are very experienced ostomates who have been through many hot Iowa summers. They know what foods to avoid at the summer picnics. They know how often to change their pouch in warm weather. They know what style of swimming suit to choose. They know what to wear to absorb sweat near their pouch. They know that avoiding dehydration does not mean drinking more beer!

Best of all, our experienced support group members are always willing to share ostomy tips, and what they have found that works best for them during hot weather.

At our June 24th meeting at Mercy Medical Plaza in Iowa City, we'll share some of those summertime tips that we have learned. Please be sure to join us!

Thanks to all who attended the April meeting at St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids. Danette Brooks, our representative from Coloplast, joined us for the meeting. She brought product samples to show us and gave us some great ostomy care tips.

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Message from our Coordinator continued

The adhesives that are being used on ostomy products today are truly remarkable. They provide maximum protection and adhesion to give longer wear times, but are also easy to remove and leave minimal residue. It was interesting to see the Coloplast products, and Danette's presentation is always upbeat and entertaining.

Thanks also to Tammy Dietrich, WOC nurse at St. Luke's, for bringing us some great sample products from the Ostomy Education Day program, which was on April 10th.

This wonderful program is sponsored by the Iowa affiliate of the WOC nurses. It is held at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines. It is a half-day workshop that is free of charge, and features speakers, ostomy information, and question-and-answer sessions. Several of our members were able to attend the Ostomy Education Day and reported back to us at our April support group meeting.

Also at the April meeting we heard from folks who attended the IBD Patient Education Day, which was held the following Saturday, April 17th, also at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines. This program was a half-day format that provided information, speakers and question-and-answer sessions on topics that are of interest to ostomates.

Both of these events featured vendors and manufacturers of Ostomy products. These

events are well worth the drive to Des Moines, and I encourage you to attend one or both next year. I'll let you know the dates as soon as I have them.

Speaking of ostomy related events, It's not too early to start planning your trip to Reno, NV for the Third National UOAA Conference. The event will be held at the Nugget Hotel in Reno on August 7-11, 2011.

The conference is an amazing experience: five days of workshops, speakers, ostomy products, a fashion event, question-and-answer sessions with surgeons, nurses and more, funny, educational and inspirational presentations, plus discussions and fellowship with ostomates from around the country.

Spouses/partners/care givers also attend, and there is plenty to do for the whole family in the Reno area. I guarantee it is an experience that will change your life.

See you June 24th at 6:30! *Carol Haack*



The **SHORT CIRCUIT** is the official newsletter of the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group #171, and is published 6 times per year. It is edited by Carol Haack. Copies are emailed to members, and are also available on our website at www.iowaostomy.org. We will gladly mail copies to anyone without internet access.

If you have a newsletter suggestion or article, please email it to info@iowaostomy.org, or send it to:

CR / IC Ostomy Support Group
c/o Vicki Kee
P.O. Box 133
Oakdale, IA 52319

Our WEBSITE is www.iowaostomy.org. It contains helpful information, meeting schedules, archived editions of the SHORT CIRCUIT, ostomy-related books that we recommend, and a link to **Amazon.com**, which pays our group commission each time a purchase is made through our website.

Officers of the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group #171 are:

Carol Haack, Group Coordinator
319-530-6749 (anytime)
info@iowaostomy.org (email)

Vicki Kee, Treasurer
P.O. Box 133
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Kimberly Cay, Visitor Coordinator
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info@iowaostomy.org (email)



Treasurer's Report

The balance in our Treasury is \$623.06
 We are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and
 your donations are fully tax deductible.

2010 Membership dues

The 2010 dues for the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City
 Area Ostomy Support Group #171, Inc.
 are \$10.00. Two dollars will be sent to our
 national affiliate, the United Ostomy
 Associations of America.

Eight dollars remains in our local treasury, and is used to maintain our website, to print and mail our newsletter, and for various other projects. In 2009, we were able to help sponsor one of our members to attend the national UOAA Conference in New Orleans.

Dues are collected using the honor system. Please either pay your dues at a meeting, or mail your tax-deductible check to:

CR / IC Ostomy Support Group #171, Inc.
 c/o Vicki Kee, Treasurer
 P.O. Box 133, Oakdale, IA 52319

Don't Miss An Issue!

The Leading Ostomy Publication. *The Phoenix* is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Each issue contains 72 pages of inspiration, education and information including new products, medical advice, management techniques, personal stories – it's all here and more.

Money Back Guarantee!



More Than A Magazine. Half of each subscription funds the nonprofit United Ostomy Associations of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.



Annual subscriptions: \$25. Send check or money order to: The Phoenix, P.O. Box 3605, Mission Viejo, CA 92690. Phone/Fax: 949-600-7296. Published quarterly: March, June, September and December.

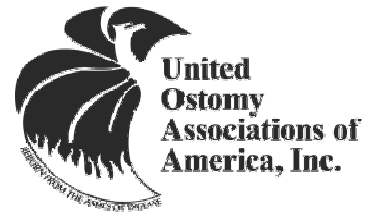
VISA **Credit card orders accepted online at**
www.uoaa.org

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Medicare and the New Health Law – What it Means for You

Note: This information was posted on the UOAA Discussion Board by Linda Aukett, UOAA Advocacy Chair.

In the last few weeks, Medicare beneficiaries across the country have begun receiving copies of a brochure “Medicare and the New Health Law – What it Means for You” in their mailboxes. The mailing from CMS outlines key provisions of the Affordable Care Act for people with Medicare as well as members of their families. The mailing is being sent in both English and Spanish.

Because Medicare is a trusted resource for beneficiaries and their family members, the mailing encourages them to log on to www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE to get their questions about Medicare or the Affordable Care Act answered and reminds them to be on the alert for possible scams.

The first benefit that many people with Medicare will receive as a result of the passage of the new law is a one-time check for \$250, if they enter the Part D donut hole and are not eligible for Medicare Extra Help.

Beginning next year, the Affordable Care Act ensures that Medicare beneficiaries will get free preventive care services like colorectal cancer screening and mammograms, in addition to a free annual wellness visit.

The law also includes new tools to help fight fraud by helping Medicare crack down on criminals who are seeking to scam seniors and steal taxpayer dollars.

The brochures can also be found at: <http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11467.pdf> (English) and http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11467_S.pdf (Spanish).

(note from Carol: I will have copies of the brochures for members who attend the June meeting at Mercy Medical Building in Iowa City.)

ADVOCACY UPDATE

From Linda Aukett, UOAA Advocacy Chair

Advocacy is a critical part of UOAA's mission. We focus daily on a number of general issues such as reimbursement of our prosthetic ostomy supplies, and fair treatment of individual persons who live with an ostomy.

We keep a watchful eye on what is happening in Medicare and state-managed Medicaid programs. We also advocate for individual members for a variety of personal situations.

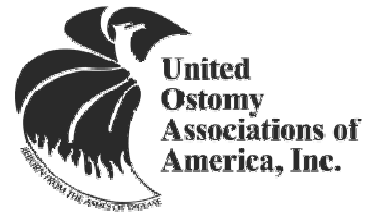
Although insurers look to Medicare a role model to treat various items and services, the trend in the industry is to cut back in areas which are not mandated by the states. As our states face budget crises, they look for ways to trim Medicaid expenditures.

We continue to make progress in educating both of these groups about the need to cover Ostomy supplies, working with them to understand that the actual cost is small, comparatively.

Some states have reinstated coverage. Current projects include Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Carefirst BlueCross BlueShield of Maryland/DC, and the state of California. I recently traveled to Sacramento to educate legislators so they would not make the mistake of cutting funds for ostomy supplies.

Our members who travel are concerned about the increased use of full-body scanning equipment in US airports. UOAA is preparing a traveler's card for members to carry which will explain our needs to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the airlines. We are also gathering some willing members to work with the TSA, to help them understand our concerns and to develop educational materials for their employee training.

Coming to what is more traditionally thought of as 'government affairs', UOAA was well represented on Capital Hill this Spring.



Continued from previous page

Six UOAA members joined physicians, nurses and constituents to call on House and Senate offices as part of the Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC).

We received an orientation and updates from the National Institutes of Health and the CDC. Then, we fanned out in groups of three to seven to educate Senators and Representatives, and to encourage action on a variety of issues. Our main focus was to see that sufficient money is budgeted for digestive disease research, and to lobby for IBD and colon cancer legislation.

Just prior to the DDNC event, as part of the Great Comebacks program, we had the opportunity to speak to our legislators about recognizing that funding of ostomy prosthetic supplies is critical to the well-being of some of their constituents.

As your advocacy team, we remain focused on the basic needs of our membership and are working to represent each individual. Please be generous in your support of this part of UOAA's mission. Join us in helping each of the 730,000 people living with an ostomy in the United States.

UOAA Northwest Regional Conference

The UOAA is sponsoring a Regional Conference on August 13-15, 2010 in Tacoma, WA. Friday evening will feature a social mixer. Programs will start on Saturday morning at 9:00 am and a total of 8 sessions will be held throughout the day. A banquet will be held Saturday evening for conference attendees.

The Sunday morning leadership meeting will give group leaders a chance to discuss common issues with each other, facilitated by UOAA national leaders.

Registration is \$45 per person, and the Saturday evening banquet is \$30. Special hotel rates are available.

Confirmed registrations should be made before July 19, 2010. Contact Janet McNiven at aloha.jmac@verizon.net for more information.

OSTOMY WEBSITES

Here are a couple of the most popular and resourceful ostomy-related websites. Both have unique features and content, but are united in their common goal of providing support and useful information to people with ostomies.

UOAA

United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA) is an association of Affiliated Support Groups. The Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Support Group is an affiliate of the UOAA.

UOAA serves people with ostomies and other intestinal & urinary diversions through its support groups, by providing information and by coordinating Advocacy efforts. They hold bi-annual conferences, with the next one scheduled for August 7-11, 2011 in Reno, NV.

The UOAA Discussion Board has a thriving user community, and a variety of tools to help affiliated groups be as effective as possible. Individuals can join UOAA by joining one of its Affiliated Groups.

UOAA is a member of IOA, the International Ostomy Association.

The website address is www.uoaa.org.

Ostomates.org

The aim of this site is to try and give you as much information as possible regarding ileostomy, j pouch, colostomy, urostomy or any type of stoma surgery.

You may have already had surgery or are contemplating it because you have Ulcerative Colitis or Crohns Disease or some other cause for surgery.

Ostomates.org is also known as "Shaz's" Ostomy page, as it is produced entirely by a woman who lives in Western Australia and has had her Ostomy since she was ten years old. It is a site that is for ostomates, by ostomates (no "medical speak") and is a source of information that can be trusted.

The website address is www.ostomates.org.

This and That... news and notes from our local chapter and around Eastern Iowa

Look for us on Facebook!

Social Networking is the broad term used to describe all of the on-line ways you can stay in touch and connect with others. My Space, Twitter and Facebook are three examples. Vicki Kee has created a Facebook page for the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Area Ostomy Group. She would love to have photos of ostomates participating in their daily activities

to post on our Facebook page. Please email your photos to info@iowaostomy.org.

Future meeting dates (all meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.):

- Regular support group meeting: Thursday, June 24th, 2010, Mercy Medical Plaza, 540 East Jefferson Street in Iowa City. We will be in the Scanlon Room on the lower level. The Mercy Medical Plaza is right across the street from Mercy Hospital in Iowa City, is connected to the parking ramp and parking lot. Easy to find!
- Regular support group meeting: Monday, Aug. 23rd, 2010, Mercy Medical Center, Cedar Rapids
- Regular support group meeting: Monday, Oct. 25th, 2010, St. Luke's Hospital, Cedar Rapids Room 163
- Holiday party and support group meeting: early December, 2010. Date and place to be announced.

Directions to Mercy Medical Plaza in Iowa City:

From the north and Cedar Rapids: take I-380 south to the I-80 interchange. Take I-80 East to the Dubuque Street exit in Iowa City. Travel south on Dubuque Street to Jefferson Street, and turn left (east.) You'll soon see the Mercy parking ramp on your left, along with the flat parking lot for Mercy Medical Plaza. Turn left on Johnson Street to park in the flat lot. There are plenty of parking places right next to the door of the Mercy Medical Plaza building. Take the elevator to the lower level.

From the south: travel north on Highway 218 to the I-80 interchange. Take I-80 East to the Dubuque Street exit in Iowa City. Travel south on Dubuque Street to Jefferson Street, and turn left (east.) You'll soon see the Mercy parking ramp on your left, along with the flat parking lot for Mercy Medical Plaza. Turn left on Johnson Street to park in the flat lot. There are plenty of parking places right next to the door of the Mercy Medical Plaza building. Take the elevator to the lower level.

Please remember — the ostomy care tips, information and health notes that we print from time to time are intended to supplement the information given to you by your WOCN (wound, ostomy, continence nurse) and surgeon. Not every tip works for every ostomy. Use your common sense — and be sure to check with your health care professional if needed.

Contact information... looking for information on ostomy products or ostomy – related organizations?

Manufacturers - most have an ostomy nurse on staff to answer your questions about products. They'll even send you free samples to try!

Coloplast	888-726-7872	www.us.coloplast.com
ConvaTec	800-422-8811	www.convatec.com
CyMed	800-582-0707	www.cymed-ostomy.com
Hollister	800-323-4060	www.hollister.com
Marlen	800-321-0591	www.marlenmfg.com
Nu Hope	800-899-5017	www.nu-hope.com

Suppliers - will send a free catalog featuring many brands of ostomy supplies. A great way to compare products!

AOS Medical Supply	800-858-5858	www.mmsmedical.com/aos
Byram Healthcare	877-902-9726	www.byramhealthcare.com
Duke Medical Supply	888-678-6692	www.dukemedicalsupply.com
Edgepark Medical	800-321-0591	www.edgepark.com
Liberty Medical	888-844-2651	www.libertymedical.com
SGV Medical	800-395-6099	www.sgvmedical.com

Organizations

American Cancer Society
800-227-2345 www.cancer.org

Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
800-343-3637 www.cdfa.org

Friends of Ostomates Worldwide
www.fowusa.org

United Ostomy Associations of America
800-826-0826 www.uoaa.org

Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society
800-224-9626 www.wocn.org

Articles of Interest... Newsletter articles obtained from various sources. If necessary, please check with your health care provider before using these tips.

Understanding Your Insurance - Know The Basics

By Diane Miterko

Reprinted from the UOAA 30+ Network. The 30+ Network is an affiliated support group (ASG) of the UOAA

Having a good understanding of your health insurance is imperative to everyone, not just those of us who have chronic conditions. Knowing and understanding your insurance coverage and being aware of your rights and responsibilities can not only save you money, time and stress, it can also give you power and peace of mind. I know that this may seem a daunting task, but you can relax. You actually don't need to know every rule, every definition or every law, you simply need to know the basics.

For starters, every time your insurance changes, or renews, your insurance carrier will mail you a summery face sheet, a handbook, and in most cases, a provider directory. These books can act as lifelines to your coverage, so if you don't have a copy, ask your employers' human resources department, or call your insurance company and request another copy.

The summary sheet is meant to act as a quick reference for your coverage, and it will give you a wealth of helpful information at a simple glance.

It usually covers your basic financial responsibilities, what your responsibilities are as far as choosing a doctor or facility, and it also gives you a good idea of what is considered "covered" and "not covered" under your policy. It will list your limits to certain services, and pre-certification and referral information, if they are required.

The handbook will give you a little more information, such as definitions and more descriptive regulations about your coverage.

The provider directory will give you a listing of "participating providers", a definition which is better described below.

Many people know what type of plan or policy they have, and in very basic terms, there are three types:

The **first** type of policy, such as a traditional HMO (Healthcare Management Organization), requires you to treat exclusively with providers that are contracted to be in your "insurance network". For a

provider to be considered "in network", the provider has signed a contract with your insurance company and in turn, the provider agrees to follow certain rules and regulations.

In a case such as this, treating out of your network most likely will mean that the services performed will not be paid by your insurance, and will be your financial responsibility.

The **second** type of policy gives you a choice of providers. You may treat either in or out of network, but choosing a provider out of network normally will incur a financial penalty.

Some examples of these include PPO (Participating Provider Organization) or POS (Point of Service) plans. With these plans, you are usually given the option to treat with a provider that is in the network, (which will limit your out of pocket expenses), or you can choose to treat with a "non-network" provider and your out of pocket expenses will most likely be higher.

Basically, if you have either of these policies, and you want to keep your financial responsibility as low as possible, you would choose a participating provider.

The **third** type of policy is an open policy, such as a major medical policy. These policies allow you to go to any provider and still receive the same benefits, without financial penalty.

With certain tests or procedures, your provider may ask you to sign an ABN, which is otherwise known as an Advanced Beneficiary Notice.

An ABN is a waiver, and is an agreement and acknowledgement between you and the provider. It states that the provider has informed you that the procedure that is about to be done will be billed, but not necessarily be paid for, by your insurance company. Some insurances, like Medicare, still allow ABN's, and signing one WILL allow your provider to bill you personally for that procedure, regardless of their agreement with your insurance company.

Finding a participating provider can be as easy as calling the insurance company, or calling the providers' office. This is a necessity if you want to go to someone that your insurance is going to pay, and this leave you with the least financial responsibility possible.

Articles of Interest... *Newsletter articles provided by various sources. If necessary, please check with your health care provider before using these tips.*

You can also look online or through your provider directory, but remember that these directories are only updated periodically, and may be outdated. I would therefore recommend making a call to either the insurance company or the provider, or both, to confirm the providers participation status.

This also works with supply companies or DME (Durable Medical Equipment) providers. You may have coverage for certain supplies, like ostomy bags, skin barriers or catheters, but you may have to go through a specific vendor in order to access these benefits.

Again, if you choose to go through a non-participating company, you may be financially penalized, and your insurance may only pay a portion of your order, require you to pay up front and be reimbursed what "their allowances" are, or your insurance may not pay at all.

If you are an ostomate and your insurance company states that you are not covered for supplies, ask them why, and fight them. Keep in mind that your insurance company may classify some ostomy supplies as actual "supplies", some may be classified as DME's, and some as prosthesis.

In cases when there is a certain type of coverage not allowed, sometimes your insurance company will offer you or your employer the option to purchase a rider, which will amend your policy to include such services. Not all companies offer the option of a rider, but some will. You can always ask.

Also, some policies may require a referral, which is basically an insurance company permission slip from your primary care physician (PCP) to go to another provider, or to go for a test or procedure. If you do not obtain a referral, and your policy requires one, you may be held financially responsible for a higher payment or possibly for payment in full for whatever you had performed. Obtaining a referral is usually the patient's responsibility.

Your policy may require a pre-certification, which basically is an insurance permission slip to get a medication or have a procedure or test done. A pre-certification is usually obtained by the provider and is normally necessary for the more expensive tests and certain medications. It usually takes at least a few days to several weeks to be reviewed.

Taking this into consideration, it is a helpful hint to remind you that most insurance companies do allow what they call "dispensation", or special allowances in certain circumstances.

This may include an allowance to see an out of network provider due to several reasons, including, but not limited to, requesting a certain specialists' opinion, excessive mileage from your home to the nearest participating provider, or because there is not a contracted specialist available in your area.

It may also grant you permission to include allowances for certain tests, procedures or medications that are recommended by your provider, but not normally paid for. Mind you, this is normally a time consuming process, generally requires a medical director review and sometimes a prior written agreement between the provider and the insurance company.

Also depending on your policy you may be given the option of a mail-order prescription program. These will normally provide you with a 3 month supply of most of the medications that you take on a long-term basis, priced at a discount. This is a great option for a people with a prescription copayment, and saves you both time and money.

With the increased cost of healthcare, some employers are now giving their employee's the option of a HRA (Healthcare Reimbursement Account), which is sometimes also known as a flexible spending account.

This is becoming a popular program in which your employer deducts a set dollar amount out of your paycheck each pay period, and it is then deposited into a separate account. This account is controlled by either your insurance company or by your employer, and is then used to either reimburse you or your provider for your out of pocket costs. The money for the HRA is normally deducted from your paycheck before taxes are deducted, which is a nice tax savings.

Some companies will even give you an HRA debit card that you can use at your providers office or at the pharmacy. If you use this option, just be prepared to provide receipts if they are requested. In some cases your employer may contribute to this account, which is an excellent benefit.

Articles of Interest... Newsletter articles provided by various sources. If necessary, please check with your health care provider before using these tips.

Here are a few helpful hints that I have picked up along the way:

I make it a policy to always remember to ask for everything in writing, whether it be a receipt, referral, pre-cert, or authorization, etc. It's good to keep these in an accessible place, so you have copies if there is a dispute later on.

Also, bring copies of prescriptions, referrals, pre-certifications or anything else you might need with you to your appointments, just in case. I have seen people fast for tests or take a bowel prep, only to find out that they had to reschedule the test because someone "forgot to do something". You obviously don't want this to happen, so follow the Boy Scout Motto and "Be Prepared".

I keep a running log, as a simple Word document, of where I went and why, and what I had done on those dates.

You also want to make sure that all of your providers' charts are up to date, so when signing a release of information, ask that provider to send copies of your office visit reports and any test results to your other providers. With new privacy laws in effect, you must sign off on who and who cannot receive either verbal or written reports on your condition or your treatment. Note that it is illegal in most cases for your provider to discuss any aspect of your case with anyone without your permission.

If you do get a bill, and you are unsure if it is correct, question it. All insurance companies are required, though some will wait for you to make a specific request, to send you an EOB, or explanation of benefits, which shows the amount you are responsible for, for any service.

If your responsibility is listed on the EOB incorrectly, call your provider and insurance company directly and contest the issue. It's always good to have notes when you call, and have a solid reason on why you believe the billing was incorrect.

If you are not happy with the answer, ask more questions or go to a different person, like a supervisor. Document who you talk to, about what, and at what time. Try to be as specific as possible, for example, get call reference numbers or employee numbers (most insurance company employees will not give out last names), and take

detailed notes. Again, and I stress this, get everything you can in writing.

If you do run into problems, remember that there are programs and people out there that can help you out. Your Human Resources Department is a great place to start. There are also advocacy groups, senior citizen groups, or you can even ask friend or someone who is in your support group.

In some cases your insurance company will even assign a nurse case manager to your case. With a NCM, you always have someone to go to directly when you have a problem.

It is important to remember that when asking for outside help, make sure that this group or the person helping you is reputable. Never give personal information to people that you don't know or trust.

Additionally, keep in mind that everyone's policy is different depending on how it is written, and how much is paid for it. Just because you have the same insurance company as your neighbor, or even you coworker, you must consider that their coverage will not always be the same as yours.

In conclusion, I hope that this provides you with some helpful information about how you can learn about your insurance coverage. Please don't wait until the last minute to review and learn this information.

Remember that the best way to get answers is to ask questions and the more questions you ask, the more knowledge you will have. With a little time and effort, you can learn the basics of your insurance.

Note: Diane Miterko is a 35 year old single female, with a permanent ileostomy due to Ulcerative Colitis. Her UC first appeared in 2002. She went through every available treatment and most complications over 7 years, before opting for a J-pouch. Her J-pouch failed due to surgical problems, so 14 months later she had it disconnected and a permanent ileostomy was created.

She is a medical billing specialist by trade, and has worked in patient advocacy for over 10 years, doing volunteer work with various groups including UC, Crohn's Disease, Colon Cancer and Breast Cancer.

She loves to hike, read, nature watch, camp, explore and loves photography and art. She is looking forward to becoming a UOAA visitor, and hopes to eventually move further into the patient advocacy field.

**Cedar Rapids / Iowa City
Area Ostomy Support Group #171, Inc.
P.O. Box 133
Oakdale, IA 52319**



**Next MEETING is Thursday, June 24th, 2010
at 6:30 pm.
Mercy Medical Plaza, Iowa City
*Family and Friends welcome!!***