



SHORT CIRCUIT

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

www.iowaostomy.org

Serving ostomates of Eastern Iowa since 1972

OCTOBER 2007

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 319-337-6749, or at www.iowaostomy.org.

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.

“Reborn from the ashes of disease”

Message from our Coordinator...

Welcome to a new look for the SHORT CIRCUIT! I hope you enjoy the revised layout and design. “Guidelines for Ostomy Support Newsletters” was just one of the many wonderful sessions I attended while at the first annual U.O.A.A. National Conference in August. Vicki Kee and I joined over 500 other ostomates and care-givers at the Chicago Lincolnwood Marriott for three days of information, exhibits, seminars and fun! A complete report on the convention follows inside this newsletter.

The August 2007 meeting was held at Mercy Hospital in Cedar Rapids. Thank you to Jane Korver-Yergler and Vanessa Brehm for hostessing. We had a great question-and-answer session with the nurses, with both the ostomates and the nurses learning something new! We also gave a complete report on the convention, and brought back lots of goodies and information that we picked up from the exhibits.

At our June 2007 meeting, we discussed inviting Brenda Elsagher, a nationally known comedienne and inspirational speaker, to come and do a presentation for us this fall. We launched a 200 piece letter campaign, mailing to every hospital, pharmacy, surgeon and gastroenterologist in the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City metro area. While we have received some donations, at this point it is not enough to sponsor Brenda, and we have made the decision to postpone the event, possibly into the spring or later in 2008.

You may remember that Brenda Elsagher is the author of If the Battle is Over, Why am I Still in Uniform? a book about her diagnosis of colorectal cancer and subsequent ostomy surgery, and also I'd Like to Buy a Vowel, Please! Ostomy Stories from A to Z. Both of her books are available in our Lending Library. I had the opportunity to contribute to the latter book (I wrote the letter “S” story about scuba diving with an ostomy), and I also met Brenda and her husband at the UOAA

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Next Meeting Monday, OCTOBER 22, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

Our October meeting will be held at St. Luke's Hospital, Cedar Rapids.

We'll gather in Room 163, which is in the main hallway, across from the Gift Shop. Jeff Johnson, Sales Manager at Fifth Avenue Medical, will be joining us, to answer our questions about insurance and Medicare reimbursements for ostomy supplies. We'll also have a WOC nurse in attendance to answer ostomy questions. Family and friends are always welcome ~ Please join us!

Message from our Coordinator continued....

(Continued from page 1)

conference in August. She is a very, very funny lady, and very motivating. I'm convinced it would be well worth the effort to bring her to Eastern Iowa.

As part of the mass mailing we did to encourage donations to sponsor Brenda, in each letter I included one of our group's brochures, which we had reprinted this summer. We've been trying this year to get the brochures into the hands of new ostomates, by sending them to doctors, surgeons, pharmacies and hospitals. The brochures are printed on heavyweight paper in dark blue ink, which works well with the UOAA logo. I've included a copy of the brochure in this month's newsletter. It'll be in black & white, but you can see what it would look like. If you would like to have some brochures to distribute to area nursing homes, doctors office's, etc. please let me know and I'll get some to you.

At the August meeting, the group talked about our finances, and specifically the amount we charge for membership in our local chapter. To give you some background, our new national organization, the U.O.A.A., charged us only \$2 per member, per year for 2007, which is the first year the new organization charged dues. They have announced the amount will stay the same for 2008.

The U.O.A.A. encourages the chapters to charge more than \$2, and to keep the difference as local group dues. During our meeting, the group agreed that an amount of \$10 per member, per year, would be an appropriate amount. Two dollars of that would be sent to the national group, and eight dollars would go into our own treasury, to support local programs like printing brochures. Therefore, for the year beginning January 2008, the dues for the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City Ostomy Support Group #171 will be \$10 per member.

Again this year, dues will be paid on the honor system. We simply ask that you mail a check—or bring it to a meeting—sometime between now and January, 2008. Best of all, because we are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, your dues are completely tax deductible! All income received goes directly to offset expenses for our chapter. Our officers

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**Christmas Party Monday,
DECEMBER 10, 2007,
6:30 p.m.**

The December meeting will again be held at Bonanza Family Restaurant, 3505 16th Avenue SW in Cedar Rapids. The phone number at Bonanza is 319-396-1876.

Similar to last year, each person should order and pay for their food, and we'll eat together in the party room. We'll have a short business meeting after dinner, and then it's time for fun!! If you would like to participate in a gift exchange, bring a wrapped "white elephant" gift. The gift can be ostomy related or not — whatever you think your fellow ostomates would "love" to receive (the funnier, the better—but please, don't spend a lot of money!) Ho! Ho! Ho!



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. Many thanks to Valerie DuCharme, our editor, and to CarePro Home Medical (formerly Fifth Avenue Medical), which provides printing and postage.

If you have a newsletter suggestion or article, please send it to:

CR / IC Ostomy Support Group
CarePro Home Medical
Valerie DuCharme, editor
402 10th Street SE Suite 600
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

You may also reach her by telephone at 319-298-0953 (local) 1-877-787-6790 (toll free), or by email at vducharme@careprohs.com

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

Carol Haack, Group Coordinator
319-337-6749 (home) or 319-530-6749 (cell)
cahaack@earthlink.net (email)

Vicki Kee, Treasurer and Visitor Coordinator
P.O. Box 133
Oakdale, IA 52319
319-335-4820 (daytime) or info@iowaostomy.org (email)

Our WEBSITE is **www.iowaostomy.org**. It contains helpful ostomy 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 something is purchased from them through our website.

Message from our Coordinator continued....

(Continued from page 2)

serve strictly on a volunteer basis, so you can be sure that all of your dues go to support the various activities of our local chapter.

Speaking of membership, please let us know if you would like to continue receiving the SHORT CIRCUIT. We want to be sure our message is going to someone who will find the information useful, and not into the waste basket!

We're happy to keep you on the mailing list if you enjoy reading this newsletter and want to continue to receive it — but please let us know in one of the following ways:

Phone: Valerie DuCharme 319-298-0953 or 1-877-787-6790 (toll free)
Carol Haack 319-337-6749 (leave message)

Mail: Vicki Kee, P.O. Box 133, Oakdale, IA 52319 or

Email: info@iowaostomy.org (please indicate if you wish to receive the newsletter via email)

Finally, in chatting with other support group leaders at the U.O.A.A. conference I found that by far, most of the U.O.A.A. chapters sell advertising space in their newsletters as a way to finance their activities. We talked about this a little at the August meeting, and I'd like to have more discussion at the October meeting if there's time. I'll bring some samples of other chapter newsletters to show you. Because we are a part of the U.O.A.A. non-profit corporation, the ads must be for ostomy related products or suppliers. This means we can accept ads from national business like ConvaTec or Hollister, and from local businesses such as Fifth Avenue Medical, but not from un-related businesses like "Gotham Bus Company" (which many of you will remember was the fictional employer of Ralph Kramden, aka Jackie Gleason of The Honeymooners.) I think this is a very worthwhile project to pursue, but I will need some help with it if we decide to move forward.

If you haven't been to a meeting in a while, I encourage you to attend — a lot is happening! See you soon!

Carol Haack



Medicare Monthly Allowable Amounts for Ostomy Supplies

Type of supply	1 mth	3 mths
Wafer with Flange	20	60
Pouches - Drainable	20	60
Pouches Closed End	60	180
Pouches Urinary	20	60
Paste	4oz	12oz
Barrier Wipes	25	-
Skin Barrier Wafer & Rings	20	60
Skin Barrier Spray	2oz	6oz
Adhesive Remover Wipes	1 box	2 box
Tape 1" x 10 yd	2	6
Tape 2" x 10 yd	1	3
Pouch liquid deodorant	8oz	24oz
Pouch tablet deodorant	30	90
Ostomy Belt	1	3
Convex inserts	10	30
Irrigation Sleeves	4	12
Irrigation cone	1	3
Irrigation catheter	1	3
lubricant	4oz	12oz

The Phoenix Subscription Form

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With payment to: Mission Viejo, CA 92690

Visa and MasterCard are
accepted at www.uoaa.org
or by calling 949-600-7296

Don't Miss An Issue!

The Phoenix is the official magazine of the United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA).

It is America's leading source for bowel/bladder diversion articles, news and product information. Each issue is 72 pages of education, information and inspiration.

Half of each subscription goes directly to fund the nonprofit U.O.A.A., who provides vital information, support and advocacy for ostomates.

*Canadian Subscriptions: \$35 one year, \$60 two years; all other foreign \$45 one year, \$70 two years. U.S. funds only. Published March, June, September and December. Money back guarantee applies to unused/remaining issues.

Medical Humor

UOAA UPDATE SEPT 07

A man comes into the ER and yells, “My wife’s going to have her baby in the cab!” I grab my stuff, rushed out to the cab, lifted the lady’s dress, and began to take off her underwear. Suddenly, I noticed that there were several cabs and I was in the wrong one.

Submitted by Dr Mark MacDonald, San Antonio, TX.

At the beginning of my shift I placed a stethoscope on an elderly and slightly deaf female patient’s anterior chest wall. “Big breaths”, I instructed. “Yes, they used to be”, replied the patient.

Submitted by Dr. Richard Byrnes, Seattle WA

One day I had to be the bearer of bad news when I told a wife that her husband had died of a massive myocardial infarct. Not more that five minutes later, I heard her reporting to the rest of the family that he had died of a “massive internal fart.”

Submitted by Dr. Susan Steinberg, Manitoba, Canada.

While acquainting myself with a new elderly patient, I asked, “How long have you been bedridden?” After a look of complete confusion she answered...”Why, not for about twenty years - when my husband was alive.”

Submitted by Steven Swanson, Corvallis OR

As a new, young MD doing my residency in OB, I was quite embarrassed when performing female pelvic exams. To cover my embarrassment I had unconsciously formed a habit of whistling softly. The middle-aged lady upon whom I was performing the exam suddenly burst out laughing and further embarrassed me. I looked up from my work and sheepishly said, “I’m sorry. Was I tickling you?” She replied, “No doctor, but the song that you were whistling was, “I Wish I was an Oscar Meyer Wiener”.

Doctor didn’t submit his name!

Push the Skin—Don’t Pull the Tape!!

UOAA UPDATE SEPT 07

Damaging the skin around a stoma (or anywhere else), is asking for infection. Don’t peel your pouch away from your body. Hold the edge of the adhesive sections or tape, and PUSH THE SKIN AWAY FROM THE TAPE.

Take a good look at what is happening when you pull tape. The tape is pulled upwards, dragging the skin with it until it is pulling hard enough to break loose. It even looks painful. (Sometimes the skin breaks before the tape comes loose.)

Now look at what happens when you push the skin away from the tape. It doesn’t hurt, the tape is separated from the skin gently and the outer layer of skin remains intact. People who think yanking it fast is best ought to take a good look at the skin afterwards. It is usually red and irritated.

If you have a leak, digestive enzymes in the discharge will excoriate your damaged skin quicker and deeper than if your skin is ok or protected with some sort of skin preparation. The farther away from the rectal area the stoma is in your intestines, the stronger the digestive enzymes in the discharge (leak), and the sooner your skin can become excoriated. Pulling the tape off the skin can do great damage. It is extremely difficult to keep a pouch on an oozing surface. Learn to treat skin gently.

In a nutshell, when removing tape, push the skin away from the tape, do not pull

A Gift of Time

UOAA UPDATE SEPT 2007

What does your ostomy mean to you? Does it mean a constant nuisance and care, problems, embarrassment, leakage and resentment: Or do you relegate it to a significant but minor part of your daily routine and now enjoy a new lease on life.

What would have happened to you if the surgery hadn't been done? Did you get to choose between a box six feet under or a pouch on/in your belly? That doesn't leave much room for negotiation, does it!

A surgical diversion to create an ostomy or an internal pouch is usually done as a life-saving procedure. Some are temporary solutions to an acute problem and some are permanent diversions. Some are done as cures for whatever ailed you in the first place and some alleviate a lot of worry, pain, misery and medical expense. All of them buy you a GIFT OF PRECIOUS, EXTRA TIME.

For those who have been given that GIFT OF TIME, what are you going to do with that PRECIOUS, EXTRA TIME? Are you going to waste it—now that you have it—or are you going to do something productive or memorable with it? Are you going to crawl into a psychological hole and remain there, feeling sorry for yourself until your time runs out, or are you going to make a difference in the world around you? Are you going to appreciate and give thanks for good health, family, friends, and live life to the fullest, making good use of the time you have left? THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

Exercise: The Final Ingredient in Ostomy Management

Adapted from the Coloplast Website, UOAA UPDATE SEPT 07

Exercise has become “fashionable”—and that has probably done more to put people off it than anything else. If the thought of strobe lights, rowing machines and leotards gives you the shivers, then take heart. There are no end of easy, enjoyable ways to make yourself a little stronger, a little fitter. Just find the ones that are right for you.

Most of all, don't overdo it. Even light exercise is good exercise—for your heart, your joints, your muscles, your lungs and for your general sense of well being. Gently does it.

To begin with, don't confuse exercise with sports. There's more to getting healthier than chasing a ball around on a football field. Walking is a great place to start. Post-operatively, just walking to the next door neighbors or to the end of the garden is fine. When you begin to regain your strength, try to walk more—both for pleasure and as an alternative means of transport. And when you do, walk briskly—so you get slightly out of breath.

Gardening is great too. Digging, weeding, hoeing and mowing can constitute a superb day's workout. And of course you'll have a showpiece garden to show for it. Wait for about 3 months after surgery before beginning gardening. You'll be surprised at how quickly you feel the benefits. After a few aches in the early days, you'll begin to feel more supple, and be able to do more without getting out of breath.

Doctor's orders—All doctors agree on the benefits of exercise—but it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program, especially if you're very out of practice or if you have other health considerations, like asthma or a heart condition. Your doctor will advise you to take it easy to begin with and to enjoy yourself. And you can't get better advice than that.

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

The 2008 dues for the Cedar Rapids / Iowa City area Ostomy Support Group #171 are \$10.00. Two dollars will be sent to our national affiliate, the U.O.A.A. Eight dollars will be kept in our local treasury and used to support various activities such as maintaining our website and printing our brochure. Dues are collected using the honor system. If you cannot pay your dues at a meeting, please mail your tax-deductible check to:

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

Need a ride to the next meeting? Door-to-door service at no charge to you!!

Call Carol Haack 319-337-6749 or 319-530-6749 or Vicki Kee 319-335-4820.

Do you enjoy reading the Short Circuit? Please let us know that you would like to continue to receive our newsletter by sending an email, dropping a line or giving us a call. Contact info is at the bottom of page two.

Have any old issues of The Phoenix? If you're ready to give up your old issues of The Phoenix, the award-winning magazine of the U.O.A.A., we'd love to include them in the visitor packs we give to new ostomy patients. Please bring them to the next meeting, or give Carol a call to have them picked up.

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.

We'll have officer elections at the December meeting! Our officers currently are Group Coordinator, Carol Haack, and Visitor Coordinator and Treasurer, Vicki Kee. If you or someone you know would like to serve as one of the officers, please submit the name at our December 10th meeting.

Unused ostomy supplies can be brought to one of our meetings, or call Carol for pick up. Unused supplies are donated to either Osto-Group, an organization in California that provides low or no-cost supplies to U.S. ostomates without insurance, or to Friends of Ostomates Worldwide (FOW), who ship ostomy supplies free of charge to ostomates in developing countries.

Want something for nothing? At most of our chapter meetings, we've got ostomy goodies to give away. You know, really fun stuff like odor drops, barrier wipes or even pouch samples! If someone from the group goes to a workshop or meeting that features ostomy supplies, you can be sure they'll come back loaded with brochures and information on the latest and greatest ostomy products. So, join us at a meeting sometime, and get "something for nothing"!

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.ccf.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

**Cedar Rapids/Iowa City
Area Ostomates
c/o CarePro Home Medical
402 10th St. SE, Suite 600
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403**



**Reminder: October meeting
Date: Monday, Oct. 22nd
Time: 6:30pm
Look inside for details!**