

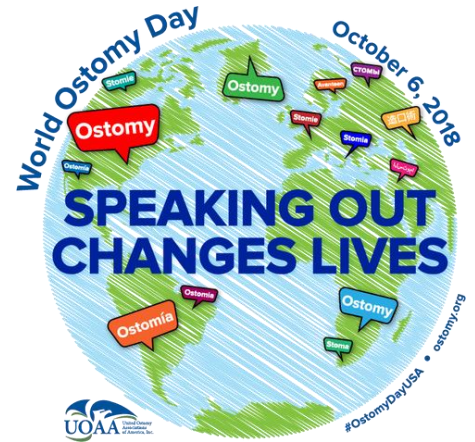
# World Ostomy Awareness Day is October 6, 2018

“Speaking Out Changes Lives”

## Ostomy Awareness

Approximately 725,000 to 1,000,000 Americans are living with an ostomy. For information about ostomies see the many great resources and educational materials from the [United Ostomy Association](#), the best resource for people living with an ostomy:

- [What is an Ostomy Infographic](#)
- [New Ostomy Patient Guide](#)
- [Ostomy Diet and Nutrition](#) which includes a [food chart](#)
- [Ostomate Bill of Rights](#)
- [Ostomy Resources](#)



## Clinical Tools and Resources

- The [Peristomal Skin Assessment Guide \(PSAG\)](#) is a great online tool to help you troubleshoot problems with the skin around the stoma.
- [ConvaTec's New Ostomy Solutions Algorithm™ App](#) was developed by WOC nurses to help bedside nurses deliver quality, safe, and consistent ostomy care.
- [Hollister Ostomy Care Course](#) is a free online course for nurses.
- [How to Change an Ostomy Bag for Nurses](#) is step by step instructions on Registered RN Nurse.com.
- [North Texas Wound and Ostomy Nurses](#) Clinical Resources page has the [Ostomy Problem Guide for Nurses](#) and other resources.

## Ostomy Tips & Tricks

These three resources have blogs, handouts, and videos with ostomy care tips and tricks.

- 🍌 [OstomyLife](#) (Shield Healthcare)
- 🍌 [Ostomy Guide](#)
- 🍌 [Vegan Ostomy](#)

## What's in a Name?

The name “ostomy” is a general term for a surgically created opening. The name of the ostomy reflects its location. It is important for you and your patient to know what kind of ostomy they have. While there are many common traits of ostomies in general, each type has specific characteristics and care needs. For example, people with an ileostomy are at higher risk for dehydration and should not be given laxatives or time released medications.

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### What People Living with Ostomies Want Nurses to Know

- ✦ Be familiar with the ostomy products and terms.
- ✦ Ask the provider for an ostomy nurse consult (if there is not one) before and after surgery and any time the patient needs additional teaching or has complex or unresolved problems.
- ✦ Be their cheerleader; be positive and authentic.
- ✦ Listen to them and validate their feelings.
- ✦ Allow them to be your teacher if they have experience with their ostomy.
- ✦ Help train them when the ostomy nurse isn't there and assist in coordinating times with their families to be present for teaching.
- ✦ Make sure they get sent home with discharge instructions. Most hospitals have either their own handouts or patient education system like Krames.
- ✦ Everyone is unique and not all ostomies are created equal; people with an ostomy are more than the sum of their parts.

Advice from people living with an ostomy, taken from patient panels at the WOCN conferences and local ostomy support groups.

### Support for People Living with an Ostomy

An ostomy can be a blessing and a lifesaver, but it might not feel like that to a person with a new ostomy. There is an emotional adjustment and a grieving period after a patient gets an ostomy. In addition to adjusting to the ostomy, the patient may also be dealing with a cancer or another life-changing diagnosis. Studies have shown that Quality of Life can be greatly affected by having an ostomy. Be aware of how you act and react around a patient with an ostomy. If a clinical professional has a reaction to the odor from emptying the ostomy pouch, this can be very devastating to a patient. Providing emotional support is just as important as all of the physical tasks. Remember, there is a person attached to that ostomy.

There are in person and online support groups and they are extremely helpful for people with living an ostomy. Get a list of local support groups on [North Texas Wound and Ostomy Nurses](#) website.

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10/4/18