

Ostomy Awareness Day is October 3, 2020

“Ostomies are Life-Savers”

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](#)
- [Mythbusters](#) in English and Spanish
- Ostomy [Diet and Nutrition](#) which includes a [food chart](#)
- Ostomate [Bill of Rights](#)
- Ostomy [Resources](#)
- UOAA [Blog](#)



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.
- [Outpatient Resources for the Person Living with an Ostomy](#)
- Stoma Assessment www.shieldhealthcare.com/community/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/StomaAssessmentHandout.pdf

Ostomy Tips & Tricks

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

- [OstomyLife](#)
- [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 their type of ostomy. 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.

Hashtags: #OstomyDay2020 #OstomiesAreLifesavers

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What People Living with Ostomies Want Nurses to Know

- ✦ Be familiar with 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 help coordinate 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 Ostomates on patient panels and ostomy support groups.

Support for People Living with an Ostomy

Ostomies are truly lifesavers, 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.

Additional Note: The Pandemic has made existing challenges with outpatient ostomy care even more challenging. See *6 Ways to Get Support for You and Your Ostomy* [here](#).

Additional Resources

- American College of Surgeons Ostomy Skills www.facs.org/education/patient-education/skills-programs/ostomy-program
- American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons <https://fascrs.org/>
- Coloplast www.coloplast.us/Ostomy/
- Convatec www.convatec.com/ostomy/
- Gastrointestinal Society <https://badgut.org/information-centre/ostomies/>
- Hollister www.hollister.com/en/ostomycare
- Ostomy 211 www.ostomy211.org/
- Overview of the GI Tract Before and After Ostomy Surgery www.shieldhealthcare.com/community/ostomylife/2017/04/01/overview-of-the-gi-tract/