



NOV / DEC  
2023

## Ostomy Advice for the New Ostomate

By Lauren Wolfe, RN, BSN MCISc-WH, NSWOC, CWOCN Macdonalds  
Prescriptions-Farimont: via Vancouver Ostomy HighLife

### What you need to know

Living with an ostomy can be daunting in the first few weeks post-surgery. In this article, I hope to provide you with recommendations that you may find helpful. Let's start with the stoma, skin around your stoma, and your ostomy appliance.

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#### Q. What is the best time to change your ostomy appliance?

The best time to change your ostomy appliance is usually in the morning before you eat your breakfast. Most individuals find their ostomy to be less active at this time. However, this is not the case for some, and determining when your stoma is less active may be required.

#### Q. Will you always need to cut your ostomy pouching system to the size of your stoma?

In the first few weeks, your stoma will change shape, but once the size has stabilized and your stoma is round, you may be able to go into a precut system. Depending on the ostomy appliance you are wearing, not all companies make every size a precut.

#### Q. Which ostomy company has the best products?

There is no best company, despite what others may imply. The best company is the one that you like and the one that works with your body contours to achieve the best seal or wear time.

Your ostomy nurse will do an assessment and provide a pouching system that will work with your stoma and contours of your abdomen following your surgery. As your body heals and your stoma is less swollen the ostomy nurse will do a follow-up assessment.

#### Q. What do you do if your ostomy system leaks and you're unsure how to put a pouch on?

A leaking ostomy appliance can be scary. The first step is to acknowledge that it is just poop or urine (depending on which kind of stoma you have) and have a good laugh. The second step is to gather your supplies and the hospital's instructions sheet that your ostomy nurse provided. Have a quick read through the instructions and have all your items laid out before you start. If you are not sure about them, don't worry.

### MEETINGS

Meetings and gatherings are held at the hall at Community of Christ Church on Arthur and 8th. For the next few months the schedule is a bit irregular but you can find updates on the website ([www.reginaostomy.ca](http://www.reginaostomy.ca)) and will be listed in the newsletter. They will be a combination of zoom or face-to-face or a hybrid combination of both. We look forward to meeting you.

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**November 25 (Saturday)** (at hall and Zoom)

1:30 Special meeting

**December 2 - Christmas** (at hall) 1:30 - 4:00

**March 12 - Zoom meeting**



Cont'd on page 4

**REGINA OSTOMY CHAPTER EXECUTIVE**

President	Patty Gianoli	535-8251
Past President	Murray Wolfe	550-7958
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Secretary	Vacant	
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Phoning	Gord Kosloski	789-1592
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Lunch	Brenda Frohlick	949-2352
Mailing	Brenda Frohlick	949-2352
Newsletter & website	Deb Carpentier	536-3319
	Louise Laverdiere	536-5442
Visiting Coordinator	Ruth Suderman	450-4690
Partner & Family Support	Bob Fearnside	924-5993

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Regina & District Ostomy Chapter is a non-profit mutual support society for the benefit of people who have had, or are about to have intestinal or urinary diversion surgery.

**Our purpose is:**

- To help people with intestinal and/or urinary diversions to lead full and productive lives and to provide information and emotional support to their families and caregivers.
- To educate the public about intestinal and urinary diversion surgery.
- To provide trained visitors to those who have undergone intestinal and/or urinary diversions, including preoperative and postoperative visits or phone calls, at the request of the physician or enterostomal therapist.



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## President's Message



Hello friends!

What a beautiful autumn we have had! But you can feel that little nip in the air that reminds us that winter will be coming soon. The coldest temperature ever recorded in Canada was logged on February 3, 1947 in the Yukon village of Snag. The mercury hit -63 degrees Celsius, which is a similar temperature to the surface of Mars. Let's hope that record is never broken!

It has been a busy fall season for Regina Ostomy. We held our Step Up on September 23. We had a great crowd and the rain held off so we could do a walk around part of Wascana Park. Thank you so much for all those that attended and especially all the donors. Your donation makes a difference!

We held our first meeting of the year with special guest urologist Dr. Rediger. What a treat! As we have never had a urologist speak at our meeting and we certainly had our eyes

opened to this type of ostomy surgery. I learned that this type of surgery is the longest surgery to do (8 to 10 hours) as well as the most expensive.

We have been very busy throughout the summer with outreach. We sent information about our group to every pharmacist in the province. 420 pharmacies!! With the demise of the Saskatoon support group, we reached out to the members and met 8 of them in Saskatoon for coffee. Thanks for coming out; we enjoyed our visit! We also met with the NSWOCs in Saskatoon and left them with all kinds of information for future and present ostomates. We also stopped by vendors Nordon's and Carnegie's to introduce ourselves and leave pamphlets. Deb and I loved being out in the community meeting people and hearing their stories. The need for support is still there, even for people who have had their ostomies for years! We plan to make these visits out to communities an ongoing event.

There is an important meeting being called on **Saturday, November 25**. It is imperative that you make the effort to attend either in person or by zoom. See the announcement below.

Our next get together will be our Christmas Party on Saturday, December 2 at 1:30 at the church hall. Come enjoy some Christmas cheer. Wishing you Joy and Peace this holiday season!

Patty



## REGINA OSTOMY SPECIAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the lack of a volunteer in the Treasurer position, we are requesting that our society convert to an Ostomy Canada Society support group.

**What changes for our membership?** In a nutshell, nothing! We will turn over our assets to Ostomy Canada who will manage our financial and management responsibilities. The assets remain in our group name under the umbrella of Ostomy Canada. We will continue with our meetings and activities as in the past. After the transition all members will remain members of Ostomy Canada and any future donations and membership fees will be directed to Ostomy Canada and kept in our special account.

As our bylaws state, we need to have a meeting with the membership to vote on this change. Thus, **we will meet on Saturday, November 25 at 1:30** at the Community of Christ church hall. You will also have the opportunity to take part via zoom. A letter will be forthcoming to all members with details.

**Time:** Nov 25, 2023 01:30 PM Saskatchewan

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81769997967?pwd=afzC7NIgucZoa4ZtWRPnvHaAFpVOh1.1>

**Meeting ID:** 817 6999 7967

**Passcode:** 787549



*Cont'd from front page*

Thirdly, the most critical step is to try to get a pouch on after cleaning your skin. It doesn't matter if it's not perfect or you forget a step. The last step is to call the clinic nurses to say you need help. They most likely will not be able to come immediately but should be able to help you soon. If not, you can always try your stoma nurse. Remember, you can do this even if it's not pretty.

**Q. When should you see an ostomy nurse?**

- I would recommend seeing your stoma nurse within the first 2 weeks of discharge from the hospital.
- After that, it will depend on your stoma, skin, and how you are managing.
- 1 - 2 times a year once you have stabilized and if you develop skin issues or have questions.

**Q. What should you do if you are experiencing itchiness or pain at the site of your ostomy pouch?**

- Itchiness or pain usually indicates that your pouching system is leaking. It may not be visible or coming out the side of your flange, but the poop or urine is sitting on your skin, causing damage. You need to remove your pouch, clean your skin, and do a quick check of your skin. If it is red, raw, and painful, seek attention from your ostomy nurse as soon as possible. Often cleaning the skin gently around the site and putting a new pouching system on will alleviate a lot of the problems until you can get to see your nurse.

**Q. You are feeling weak and tired after the • surgery, what should you do?**

- Depending on the type of surgery you have, it could be residual effects after your surgery.
- If you have an ileostomy, you may be dehydrated and low on certain electrolytes.
- I would suggest you drink electrolyte replacement like Nuun or hydralyte. Chicken soup is also good as a homemade replacement. It is best to sip on fluids and eat some salty crackers as well. Gulping fluids will not help your body absorb the liquids.
- If you do not feel better over the next few days, consult your medical team.

**Managing your ostomy supplies**

- Where should you store your ostomy supplies?
- Ostomy supplies should be stored in a cool, dry place. Your bathroom is not the best place due to the humidity, which will affect your pouching system. Extreme temperatures, too cold or too hot, will affect the barrier adhesion.
- How many supplies should you have on hand at any given time? This will depend on your wear time, frequency of change once you know which supplies work for you. I suggest you always have an extra box (10 per box) for each item you are using (flange, pouch, and rings).

*Source: North Central OK - Nov. 2021 via Vancouver Ostomy HighLife via North Central Oklahoma; Winnipeg Inside-Out with edits Nov 2021*



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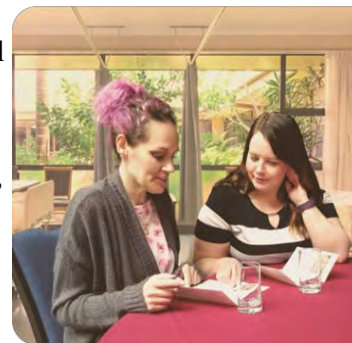
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## Get The Support You Need!

### OSTOMY VISITOR PROGRAM

Speak to a Certified Ostomy Visitor for personal support with your ileostomy, colostomy, urostomy or j-pouch. Visits are available at the hospital, in-person, phone & virtually. It could be either pre-operative or post-operative or both. At times you may just have a few questions or at other times you may be 'working' your way through something and it's good to talk to someone who can relate to your situation personally. All you have to do is ask.



A visit may be arranged by calling the Visiting Coordinator, Ruth Suderman at 306-450-4690 or Emailing: sudermanruth@gmail.com

## The Science of Soap (Paul Thordarson, The Guardian)

Viruses can be active outside the body for hours, even days. Disinfectants, liquids, wipes, gels and creams containing alcohol are all useful at getting rid of them, but they are not quite as good as normal soap. When I shared the information above using Twitter, it went viral. I think I have worked out why. Health authorities have been giving us two messages: once you have the virus there are no drugs that can kill it or help you get rid of it. But also, wash your hands to stop the virus spreading. This seems odd. You can't, even for a million dollars, get a drug for the coronavirus – but your grandmother's bar of soap kills the virus.



Image by Freepik

So why does soap work so well on the Sars-CoV-2, the coronavirus and indeed most viruses? The short story: because the virus is a self-assembled nanoparticle in which the weakest link is the lipid (fatty) bilayer. Soap dissolves the fat membrane and the virus falls apart like a house of cards and dies – or rather, we should say it becomes inactive as viruses aren't really alive. Putting it another way, Soap works so effectively because its chemistry pries open the coronavirus's exterior envelope and cause it to degrade. These soap molecules then trap tiny fragments of the virus, which are washed away in water. Hand sanitizers work similarly by busting apart the proteins contained in a virus. The slightly longer story is that most viruses consist of three key building blocks: ribonucleic acid (RNA), proteins and lipids. A virus-infected cell makes lots of these building blocks, which then spontaneously self-assemble to form the virus. Critically, there are no strong covalent bonds holding these units together, which means you do not necessarily need harsh chemicals to split those units apart. When an infected cell dies, all these new viruses escape and go on to infect other cells. Some end up also in the airways of lungs.

You can't, for any price, get a drug for the coronavirus – but your grandmother's bar of soap kills it. When you cough, or especially when you sneeze, tiny droplets from the airways can fly up to 10 meters. The larger ones are thought to be the main coronavirus carriers and they can go at least two meters.

These tiny droplets end on surfaces and often dry out quickly. But the viruses remain active. Human skin is an ideal surface for a virus. It is "organic" and the proteins and fatty acids in the dead cells on the surface interact with the virus. When you touch, say, a steel surface with a virus particle on it, it will stick to your skin and hence get transferred on to your hands. If you then touch your

face, especially your eyes, nostrils or mouth, you can get infected. And it turns out that most people touch their face once every two to five minutes.

Washing the virus off with water alone might work. But water is not good at competing with the strong, glue-like interactions between the skin and the virus. Water isn't enough. Soapy water is totally different. Soap contains fat-like substances known as amphiphiles, some of which are structurally very similar to the lipids in the virus membrane. The soap molecules "compete" with the lipids in the virus membrane. This is more or less how soap also removes normal dirt from the skin. The soap not only loosens the "glue" between the virus and the skin but also the Velcro-like interactions that hold the proteins, lipids and RNA in the virus together. Alcohol-based products, which pretty much includes all "disinfectant" products, contain a high-percentage alcohol solution (typically 60-80% ethanol) and kill viruses in a similar fashion. But soap is better because you only need a fairly small amount of soapy water, which, with rubbing, covers your entire hand easily. Whereas you need to literally soak the virus in ethanol for a brief moment, and wipes or rubbing gel on the hands does not guarantee that you soak every corner of the skin on your hands effectively enough. So, soap is the best, but do please use alcohol-based sanitizer when soap is not handy or practical.

*Pall Thordarson is a professor of chemistry at the University of New South Wales, Syd Vancouver Ostomy HighLife - May / June 20 / Ottawa Ostomy January 2021*







A father took his son Billy to the Penney's mall to see Santa. They stood in line awhile, and finally the boy was able to meet Santa and sit on his lap.

“What would you like for Christmas, Billy?” asked Santa.

“An X-Box and a Hobbit game,” Billy said.

“Okay, we’ll see what we can do about that,” said Santa with a big smile.

Later on that day they also went to see Santa at the Sears mall. When Santa asked Billy what he wanted for Christmas, Billy said, “An X-Box and a Hobbit game.”

“Will you be a good boy and do what your daddy tells you?” Santa asked.

Billy turned to his dad and said, “Let’s go back to the other Santa, Dad.”

“Why Billy?” asked his father.

“Because I didn’t have to make any deals with that one.”

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## CHAIR'S AWARD:



Awards are given to individuals of Ostomy Canada for their incredible contributions towards the success of the organization – locally, regionally and nationally. The Chair's Award states that "the Award can be bestowed upon any member at any level within the organization or an associate with whom the Chair of the Board deems to have demonstrated outstanding voluntary services on behalf of the organization."

This year we are proud to announce the 2023 Chair's Award recipient is our very own Deb Carpentier! Deb has been an advocate for people living with ostomies as an Ostomy Canada Society member for over 40 years and on the Ostomy Canada Board of Directors for 7 years. She has been instrumental in updating the Visitor Program and in the past year and a half has been involved in rewriting many of the sections of this program as well as our new website design and on-line training.

Deb has an extensive history with ostomy chapters in Calgary and Regina where she volunteered in several positions and events. Presently she is editor of the Regina Newsletter, is the vice-president, works with the website and is an active visitor.

Deb, we are so grateful for your involvement not only nationally but especially locally in our own Chapter! Congratulations!



## Membership Reminder

Memberships are now being collected for the 2024 year. A cheque for \$30 can be made out to Regina & District Ostomy Society, 7631 Discovery Road, Regina, Sask. S4Y 1E3 or you can e-transfer your membership to [gpowers@myaccess.ca](mailto:gpowers@myaccess.ca). If you have not paid your membership, Patty will be in contact with you as a reminder.



# STEP UP



The 2023 Step Up campaign was once again a success. The morning on September 23<sup>rd</sup> started out a bit gloomy weather wise, but the rain held off and we got our walk in at Wascana Park without anyone getting wet. About a dozen people stayed back and had a fun half hour of chair yoga with Alice Samkoe. The crew who stayed behind then they did their magic to ensure there was a great lunch for us when we returned from the walk. We had about 35 people out for the morning and we all really enjoyed seeing everyone and having a good catch up after the summer. It was great to have our sponsors, Jolly's Medical & Athletic Supplies and Medical 1 Physician & Health care join us. And a thank you to our NSWOCs who once again joined us and got everyone registered. An event like this wouldn't be the same without them as they're such an integral part of our group.

After all was said and done we had raised a lot of money and hopefully raised awareness as well. We had very generous individuals and company donors. If you look online you'd see we had \$2000 online donations, \$640 that Rosalie Tuchscherer raised in her circle and \$3555 with cheques and cash that morning. Regina was the top fundraising group, with a whopping \$6195 total. A very big and heartfelt thank you to our volunteers, NSWOCs and donors, from Regina and other parts of Saskatchewan. It's amazing what we can accomplish as a community.





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- Ask questions, find support, or share information

*Connection, support, and living well at all stages of the journey.*

## Helpful TIPS

If you have diarrhea or your stools are looser or more watery:

- Drink extra fluids with electrolytes (sodium, potassium). Drinks such as Gatorade, PowerAde, or Pedialyte contain electrolytes. Drinking soda, milk, juice, or tea will help you get enough liquids.
- Try to eat foods that have potassium and sodium every day to keep your potassium and sodium levels from getting too low. Some examples of foods that contain potassium are bananas. Some high-sodium foods are salted snacks.
- Do not wait to get help. Diarrhea can be dangerous. Call your doctor or nurse if it does go away. Pretzels may help reduce water loss in stool. They also have extra sodium.

## CHRISTMAS WORD SCRAMBLE

iehlgS \_\_\_\_\_

tanas slcau \_\_\_\_\_

oscalr \_\_\_\_\_

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## ABDOMINAL NOISES

Abdominal noises happen! However, as ostomates, we are embarrassed and wonder if something is wrong. It is usually “sound and fury”, signifying nothing important. Any of the following may be the cause:

1. You are hungry. Peristalsis goes on whether there is anything to move through or not. Empty guts growl. Eat a snack between meals. Or consider four small meals a day.
2. You are nervous, so peristalsis is increased. Try to slow down. Try to eliminate some stress (especially at meal times).
3. Coffee and tea, cola and beer - all stimulate peristalsis. Beverages consumed on an empty stomach will produce gurgles as peristalsis redoubles its movements. Add a little bit of food with your beverages. Try some crackers and/or bread.
4. Eating a high-fibre diet produces gas, so rumbles increase. Mix with other foods. Reduce amount of insoluble fibre. Switch to more soluble fibre.
5. Intestines do not digest starches and sugars as easily as proteins and fats.

*Source: Vancouver Ostomy HighLife via “The Mailbag”, Jacksonville FL via Winnipeg Inside Out February 2021*



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## 6 Tips for Christmas With a Stoma

Christmas will soon be on everyone's radar, there's no better time than now to talk about preparing for the feasting. While others need worry only about basics such as getting to the celebration or fitting in hockey games, as ostomates, we have some additional considerations to keep in mind. Here are 6 tips to help make this Christmas a bit easier on yourself and perhaps, those around you.



### 1. DRESS FOR SILENCE

Imagine you're at a table of 12 - 16 guests, all heads are bowed to say grace, the room is silent - but your stoma isn't. To help minimize the risk of embarrassment, put your attire to work for you. After all, we live in Canada where sweaters, layers, undershirts, etc., can help dampen any sound. High waisted pants/shorts/leggings that so effectively cover the ostomy can also muffle noise and hide bulges.

### 2. EAT BEFORE EATING

Although fasting before the big meal would seem to make sense for minimizing gas noised, the opposite is true. Missing meals actually results in more gas when dinner is finally served. Instead, try to eat a small breakfast and snacks up until dinner so that your stomach is ready.

### 3. KNOW THY ENEMY

If you've had your ostomy for a while, you will probably be familiar with what foods your body has a harder time processing, and which cause more gas. But some of the more common ones that can cause problems because they don't break down easily include nuts, seeds, popcorn, dried fruit, mushrooms, and raw-crunchy vegetables.

### 4. TAKE SOME HOME

Eating large quantities can cause more output than usual or, worse, a stomach ache. To avoid this, consider making yourself a plate and only eating a portion of it. Then simply cover it to bring it home or, if you're hosting, put it in the fridge for later.

### 5. BE PREPARED

Large amounts of food can increase our output, so be sure to bring extra supplies if you're traveling elsewhere for the Christmas meal. If the weather allows (our sub-zero temps are tough on any adhesive) leave them in the car and get them if needed. The peace of mind will be invaluable.

## 6. NOBODY IS THE WISER

For those inevitable bathroom odours, using some odour-reducing ostomy drops in your bag can help. Also, items such as biological Odour Eliminator Spray reduce odours without leaving an obvious room spray scent behind. Small bottles designed to fit in your purse or jacket pocket, are available from Amazon.

Now go, enjoy that Christmas feast and give thanks for all the blessings we ostomates enjoy. ☐

*Source: Adapted from Ostomy Minneapolis Newsletter Sept/Oct 2022 via Calgary Ostomy Society Simply Ostomy Fall 2023; Adapted from Calgary Ostomy for Regina Ostomy News November 2023*

## Stomal Bleeding

*by Marlene Muchoney RN, CWCN*

Stomal bleeding in small amounts is not uncommon when pouching systems are changed. The visible mucous membrane that forms a stoma is very vascular. The stoma is red because of this rich blood supply. The tissue is also somewhat fragile. Although small amounts of bleeding are common, larger amounts can be indicative of other underlying medical problems and must be evaluated. Bleeding can be due to an incorrect stomal pattern or tight wafer opening, which can easily be adjusted by your ostomy nurse. Excessive bleeding can be from medications, liver problems or other medical conditions that need to be reported to your physician.

Look at your stoma to see if the bleeding edge is irritated. If you observe irritation, it may be necessary to enlarge the wafer opening. If the problem persists, have your ostomy nurse evaluate you or see your physician, especially if you are not certain whether the bleeding is coming from the stoma or internally. Gentle pressure over a small area usually is sufficient to stop external stomal bleeding. A cool cloth can also help. Excessive bleeding requires a trip to the emergency room and a follow-up with your doctor.

*via Oshawa and District Ostomy Association March/April 2016*



*Image by PV Productions on Freepik*



### REGINA AND DISTRICT OSTOMY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership is open to all persons interested in supporting people with ostomy surgery and their families. As a member you can enjoy the benefits of being part of a group in Regina and Saskatchewan through newsletters, meetings, websites and social media. Members receive the Society's 5 newsletters annually, become members of Ostomy Canada Society and receive the Ostomy Canada magazine. The following information is kept strictly confidential.

- Please enrol me as a new or renewal member of the Regina and District Ostomy Society.
- I am enclosing my annual membership dues of \$30.00.
- I wish to make an additional donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_, to support the program and activities of the Regina and District Ostomy Society and Ostomy Society Canada.
- Please update my contact information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Send my newsletter via: Canada Post Email \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Surgery: Colostomy Ileostomy Urostomy Other \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Information: Ostomate Supporter Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A charitable tax receipt will be issued for all additional donations of \$20.00 or more. Please make cheque payable to:  
**Regina and District Ostomy Society** and mail with this form to: 7631 Discovery Road Regina, Sk S4Y 1E3

### Bequests & Donations

We are a non-profit association and welcome bequests, donations and gifts. Acknowledgement cards are sent to next-of-kin when memorial donations are received. Donations should be made payable to Regina Chapter at address listed on this page and tax receipts will be issued.

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada is a support group for the estimated 22,000 Canadians annually diagnosed with colorectal cancer. Membership is free.

Info is available at their website: [www.colorectal-cancer.ca](http://www.colorectal-cancer.ca) with links to news reports, articles, and other cancer organizations in the field. Support cancer coaches are also available to talk with patients. **Or Phone 1-877-50COLON**

### Moving? Questions? Need Information?

Regina Ostomy Chapter

7631 Discovery Road

Regina, Sk S4Y 1E3

(306) 761-0221 or [reginaostomygroup@gmail.com](mailto:reginaostomygroup@gmail.com)

**PRODUCTS MENTIONED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY ENDORSED BY THE REGINA OSTOMY CHAPTER. SEE YOUR DOCTOR FIRST BEFORE TAKING ANY OF THEM!**

**Charitable Registration No.  
119114213RR0001**

### VISITING PROGRAM

**Colostomy - 1**

**Ileostomy - 1**

**Urostomy - 2**