“Carrying an Anxious Mood & An Ostomy Bag”

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WHAT IS AN OSTOMY?

AN OSTOMY occurs when a change in the way waste exits the body as a result of a surgical procedure. Bodily waste is rerouted from its usual path because of malfunctioning parts of the urinary or digestive system. They can be temporary or permanent.

A STOMA is the opening created by ostomy surgery. It is located on the abdomen and is dark pink in color. For most ostomies, a pouch is worn over the stoma to collect stool or urine. For some people it is possible to have a continent diversion, which is a procedure that avoids having to wear a pouch, as an alternative to a conventional ostomy.

OSTOMIES ARE PROSTHE TICS

A colostomy diverts stool from the colon.

A ileostomy diverts stool from the small intestines.

A urostomy diverts urine when the bladder has been removed or bypassed.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES?

Persons living with an ostomy in the U.S.

DID YOU KNOW...?

You’d likely never know if you met a person with an ostomy.

Babies, kids and adults have ostomies.

Approximately 100,000 ostomy surgeries are performed annually in the United States.

People with ostomies live full & meaningful lives that include swimming, working, playing sports & having relationships.

OSTOMIES SAVE LIVES.

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COMMON REASONS FOR A COLOSTOMY:

Diverticulitis causing rupture
Inflammatory Bowel Disease
Birth Defects
Cancers
Bowel obstruction
Injury

COMMON REASONS FOR AN ILEOSTOMY:

Inflammatory Bowel Disease
Familial adenomatous Birth Defects polyposis
Cancers

COMMON REASONS FOR A UROSTOMY:

Cancer (particularly of the bladder)
Birth defects
Bladder diseases or injuries

OSTOMY.ORG

Advocates for a Positive Change
Body Image Issues

Study March 2016 Journal of Disability and Rehabilitation

- Patients who had an ostomy at 3, 9, 15 months after the surgery were interviewed.
- They often experience a negative change in their body image.
- It tends to diminish over time.

- Researchers found that by gaining familiarity & perceived control over their stoma, patients regain a sense of being fully connected to their bodies.
- Less fearful.

Mindfulness & Patients with Stomas

• Fear, anxiety, sadness, anger = normal feelings
• Sense of loss of control, stress of stoma care
• Changes in body image & self-concept
• Mindfulness can enable those patients to make the necessary adjustments.
• Mindfulness has been demonstrated to be effective in dealing with clinical & psychologic problems.
• Living with an ostomy by learning to face discomfort, pain, and obstacles = 1 opportunity to enrich & enhance life.

How psychological interventions help?

- **CBT and mindfulness reduce arousal** of the autonomic nervous system.

- **Decrease** the stress-response.

- **Reduces inflammation.**

- This physiologic effect is due to the “**brain-gut axis**”: **TNF-alpha**, a pro-inflammatory cytokine.

Brain-Gut Connection

1. PERIPHERAL SEROTONIN:
   Cells in the gut produce large quantities of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which may have an effect on signalling in the brain.

2. IMMUNE SYSTEM:
   The intestinal microbiome can prompt immune cells to produce cytokines that can influence neurophysiology.

3. BACTERIAL MOLECULES:
   Microbes produce metabolites such as butyrate, which can alter the activity of cells in the blood-brain barrier.

THE GUT–BRAIN AXIS

The mechanisms by which gut microbes and the brain might communicate are unclear, but there are several tantalizing leads for researchers to follow.

Gut microbes, including bacteria and viruses
Mindfulness Therapy

• “Mindfulness means paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and nonjudgmentally, moment to moment”.

• John Kabat-Zinn (JKZ), creator of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) & founder of the Stress Reduction Clinic & the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Benefits of Practicing Mindfulness

• Greater energy
• Joy
• Tranquility
• Concentration
• Equanimity = bringing calm
• Wisdom
• Seeing clearly what’s happening in the present moment

Example

- A new ostomate... time needed for stomal care = opportunity to practice being mindful.
- While removing, emptying, irrigating, cleaning, or reattaching the pouch =
- The person can focus on the skills of mindfulness.
Mindfulness Training

- It is an effective intervention in relieving chronic pain, reducing anxiety.
- 33% and 50% after a 10 week period of intervention in 65% of a group of patients who had not had improvement with traditional medical care.
- 45 min period of meditation 6 days a week for an 8 week period.

How mindful are you?

Count how many F’s are present in the following sentence:

“FINAL FOLIOS SEEM TO RESULT FROM YEARS OF DUTIFUL STUDY OF TEXTS ALONG WITH YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC EXPERIENCE.”

• Much information is lost if you are not “fully present.”

“Foundation Pillars” or 7 Attitudes

1. Non-judging
2. Patience
3. Beginner’s Mind
4. Trust
5. Non-Striving
6. Acceptance
7. Letting Go
Breathe In & Out
Phrases to use during mindfulness meditation

1. Breathing in, I am aware of my stoma. Breathing out, I am calm.
2. Breathing in, I hear gurgling sounds. Breathing out, I smile to my stoma.
4. Breathing in, I know that my stoma is functioning well. Breathing out, I vow to take good care of my stoma.
5. Breathing in, I am aware of my stoma. Breathing out, I vow to properly provide the best nutrients.

Focusing on what is right (rather than concentrating on the negatives).

Practicing these phrases helps change the patient’s perception to one of appreciation for what is good and what is working.
Foundations of Mindfulness

• **I. Body:** What sensations am I experiencing? Light, color, sound, noise, movement, trembling, itching, pressure, heaviness, and movement. Hearing a noise during meditation and labeling the sensation as noise.

• **II. Feelings:** What feelings am I experiencing? I am feeling joy, sad, fearful, or angry. Feelings that are painful we want to avoid, and feelings of pleasure be get stuck on.

• **III. Thoughts and consciousness:** What mental states or thoughts am I experiencing? I am concentrated, worrying, judging, or comparing. Thoughts are very often fueled by emotions.

• **IV. Awareness of truths of experience:** What truths have I become aware of? Nothing lasts and attachment causes suffering. By witnessing or watching, people become aware of the underlying themes of thoughts, feelings, and sensations.

Mindfulness Is...

- **Not** a set of techniques to be learned to escape unpleasant feelings.
- An **approach** to life that can help you respond more skillfully.
- Process of becoming more aware & accepting towards all your experiences (including unpleasant ones).
- Takes ongoing practice & commitment.
- If you notice your attention has wandered, try to accept that this is how things are right now.
- Have patience with yourself.
1. **Breathing**: Practice slow controlled breathing when feeling anxious, angry.

2. **Exercise**: Physical activity stimulates the production of endorphins (40 minutes daily).

3. **Avoid asking “what if”**: Try to accept that some questions simply won’t have an answer.

4. **Focus on positives**: Keep a list of positives, so you can immediately shift your attention towards them when your thoughts are negative.

5. **Reject negative self-talk**: Identifying and acknowledging any negative thoughts about yourself as merely thoughts and not facts, will help release you into a state of calm.
Resources

• 10 Minute Mindful Breathing Meditation
  www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/counseling/10Minute_Mindful_Breathing_Meditation.m4a

• Short Calm Abiding Meditation With Guided Body Relaxation
  www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/counseling/Meditation2VeryShortAmplify.mp3

• Insight Timer App

• Oak Meditation and Breathing App

• Koru Mindfulness

• Mindfulness App

• Simple Habits App


• The Mindful Way Through Anxiety, by Susan M. Orsillo and Lizabeth Roemer (Guilford Press, 2009).
References


• Gutman N. *Colostomy Guide.* United Ostomy Associations of America; 2011.


• Trunnell, EP. *Mindfulness and people with stomas.* Department of Health Education 1996; 23: 38-45.
Recommendations

• Be patient
• Communicate
• Educate yourself
• Keep busy
• Journal of positive affirmations
• Practice mindfulness exercises daily
• Breathing exercises
• By gaining familiarity & control over the stoma, you can regain a sense of being fully connected to your body.
“I am not what happened to me. I am what I choose to become.”

Carl Jung