

# The By-Pass

Triangle Area Ostomy Association



May 2026

*OUR MISSION: TAOA strives to provide emotional and educational support for those with an intestinal or urinary diversion or who anticipate the surgery. We support The Friends of Ostomates Worldwide (FOW) by contributing ostomy supplies to be shipped to underprivileged ostomates in foreign countries.*

## President's Message

One of the largest issues facing the ostomy community is the expansion of ostomy supplies to Medicare's Competitive Bidding Program. The UOAA is collecting information about access to ostomy and urological supplies to fight this. Please go to <https://www.ostomy.org/take-a-survey/> to complete the survey. It only takes a few minutes, and the information will be used to advocate to our legislators to prevent this expansion.

I apologize for missing last month's meeting but I look forward to seeing you all on May 5th !

Regards,  
Dan Richards  
President

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## NEWS AND UPDATES

- The program for our May meeting will be with Julian Markov of [meetanostomate.org](http://meetanostomate.org): Connection, Community, and Understanding for People Living with an Ostomy.
- The TAOA Board needs member support! We are currently looking for a Membership Coordinator.
- If you know of an event where you think TAOA would benefit from setting up an information table, please let Dan Richards know.
- If you think of a program that would be suitable for a Zoom meeting, please let Dan Richards or Lilo Wilson know.



## What is National Nurses Day?

**National Nurses Day, celebrated on May 6th, is the official start of Nurses Week each year. Initially proposed in 1953 by Dorothy Sunderland to President Eisenhower, it wasn't until over 20 years later that the day was officially proclaimed National Nurses Day.**

From <https://nurse.org/articles/national-nurses-day/>

## TRIANGLE AREA OSTOMY ASSOCIATION (TAOA)

TAOA is a non profit organization dedicated to advancing ostomy health through advocacy, education, and professional interaction. We are an affiliated support group of the The United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. Membership is open to ostomates, nurses and friends who support our mission. New members are always welcome. Please refer to the membership form on the last page.



# WOC NURSE OUTPATIENT SUPPORT

## UOAA Ostomy Services support

Enter your zip code into the UOAA web site to locate the nearest clinic in your area:  
<https://www.ostomy.org/outpatient-ostomy-services-locator/>

## WakeMed Raleigh, WakeMedCary, WakeMed North

<https://www.wakemed.org/care-and-services/gastroenterology/treatments-and-procedures/colorectal-surgery/ostomy-support>

Please call **919-350-7331** to schedule your appointment. Appointments are available Wednesdays between 12 pm and 4 pm.

## UNC Hospital and Rex Hospital

Outpatient Ostomy phone line is **984-974-0154**. It goes to voicemail but is managed Monday through Friday by our WOCN team.

## Duke Health

<https://www.dukehealth.org/locations/duke-cancer-center-wound-ostomy-clinic>  
Call for an appointment **919-668-6688**

## Duke Raleigh Outpatient Ostomy Clinic

<https://www.dukehealth.org/locations/duke-raleigh-outpatient-ostomy-clinic>  
Call for an Appointment **919-954-3446**

## Durham VA Medical Center

Reba Giles 919-286-0411 X 6177

## Maria Parham Hospital

Kathy Thomas 252-436-1700

## Duke Regional

Felicia Street 919-470-6145  
Lisa Ellerbe  
Grace Abellon

## Group Officers and Contact Info

President: Dan Richards	919-624-3075
Vice President: Mary Brown	919-782-3957
Treasurer: Ruth Rhodes	919-782-3460
Secretary: Ruth Rhodes	
Newsletter: Alison Cleary	919-924-3325
Webmaster: Alison Cleary	clearyan@earthlink.net
FOW Coordinator: Jamal Sarsour	252-258-4431
Membership Coordinator: Vacant	
Program Coordinator: Lilo Wilson	Lidis89@hotmail.com
Prof. Advisor: Stephanie Yates	stephaniesyates@gmail.com
Social Media Coordinator: Allie Lake	allisonlake27@gmail.com

The Triangle Area Ostomy Association provides support for ostomy patients, caregivers, survivors and families. If you or someone you know needs assistance or support, please see the list of officers on page 2 to reach out and we will help you find the appropriate contact.

For more information about the Triangle Area Ostomy Association go to [www.raleighuoa.org](http://www.raleighuoa.org) or look for Triangle Area Ostomy Association on Facebook.

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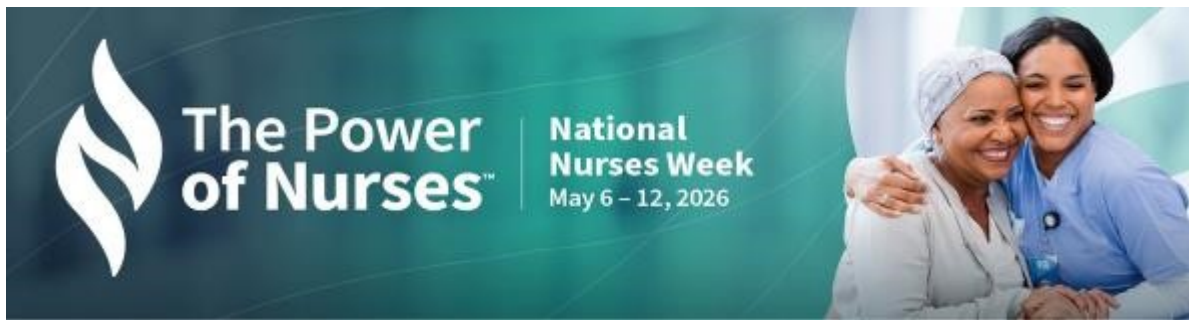
**CCFA SUPPORT GROUP**

Date: Third Monday of the Month  
Time: 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm  
Place: Rex Healthcare  
Contact: Reuben Gradsky  
gutcheckrdu@gmail.com

**TRIANGLE BLADDER CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**

Date: Second Tuesday of the Month  
Time: 7 pm – 8:30 pm  
Place: Ronald McDonald House Community Room (At the rear of the parking lot)  
101 Old Mason Farm Rd, Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
Contact: Ritchie Briggs 919-493-0551  
trianglebcs@gmail.com  
<https://sites.google.com/site/trianglebcs/>  
These meetings are hybrid and can be attended via Zoom

**DISCLAIMER:** Articles and information appearing in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Triangle Ostomy Association and may not be applicable to every individual. Always consult your physician or WOC Nurse for all medical advice.



**TAOA Minutes April 7th 2026**

Before the meeting: 7:00-7:30 – new members were introduced and Lilo helped with several questions from members attending before the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Mary Brown, Vice President.

Lilo Wilson WOCN introduced our guest speaker Jenn Moore, a health coach and ostomate. She shared much information of how to handle our life with an ostomy. She talked about myth busting and what is real as it concerns both nutrition and fitness for ostomates. The Powerpoint presentation outlining the meeting was provided by Jenn and is available on the Triangle Area Ostomy Association website on the [Program Information page](#).

Our May meeting will be on Tuesday May 5th at 7:00pm. This meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Mary Brown, Vice President  
 Alison Cleary, Newsletter Editor

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[MeetAnOstoMate.org](http://MeetAnOstoMate.org): Connection, Community, and Understanding for People Living with an Ostomy

Speaker: Julian Markov, Founder of [MeetAnOstoMate.org](http://MeetAnOstoMate.org)

Date and time: May 5, 2026, 7:30 p.m. Eastern, via Zoom

Website: <https://www.meetanostomate.org/>

Contact: [julian.markov@meetanostomate.org](mailto:julian.markov@meetanostomate.org)

Julian Markov is the founder of MeetAnOstoMate.org, an online community for people living with an ostomy. He started the site in 2006 after years of working with ostomy supply customers and hearing how often people struggled with loneliness, relationships, confidence, and the need to connect with someone who truly understood ostomy life. Julian's professional background is in digital marketing, website management, user experience, ecommerce, and practical AI applications. He has led web and online business teams and has managed complex digital projects across several industries. Much of that experience has shaped how he continues to build and improve MeetAnOstoMate as a safe, useful, and human-centered community. Although Julian does not have an ostomy himself, he has spent nearly two decades listening to ostomates, maintaining the community, and developing tools that help members connect, learn, and support one another.

Julian will share the story of MeetAnOstoMate.org: how it began, why it was created, and how it grew into a community of more than 40,000 members. He will talk about the importance of connection after ostomy surgery, the role of peer understanding, and how members use the site for friendship, conversation, practical information, humor, and support. The presentation will also touch on newer features of the site, including private messaging, member profiles, photo sharing, ostomy guides, community discussions, and OstoAI, an AI tool built to help members find answers from community-based knowledge.



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## Finding Your Fit for Happy, Healthy Skin

Edgepark Ostomy Edge

Living with an ostomy means learning what keeps *you feeling comfortable and confident – especially when it comes to the skin around your stoma. Have you ever noticed the skin around your stoma becoming irritated or itchy? Keep an eye out for skin that looks or feels:*

- Discolored
- Sore
- Dry
- Wet
- Broken
- Itchy

These symptoms could be signs that something isn't quite right. One of the most common reasons for irritated peristomal skin is leaks around your stoma. When your skin becomes irritated, it can be harder for your pouching system to stay secure, which can lead to more leaks, and more irritation.

Leakage happens to almost every ostomate at some point in their journey. The good news is that there are solutions designed to help you protect your skin, stop leakage, and feel more confident.

### Say NO to leaks

One of the most effective tools for preventing leaks is an ostomy seal. A seal is a thin layer of protection applied under your baseplate. It molds gently to your stoma and the surrounding skin to help:

- Create a snug, secure fit around your stoma
- Fill in uneven areas such as skin dip or creases so you have a smoother pouching surface
- Absorb moisture and output
- Keep your peristomal skin dry, protected, and comfortable

With fewer gaps between your pouching system and skin, seals can help your baseplate stay put and make your day-to-day care a little easier - giving you comfort, confidence, and peace of mind.

### Choosing the Right Seal for You

Every body - and every stoma - is different. Here are some things to consider when selecting which seal to use:

#### • Your stoma shape and size

o Just like you, your stoma is unique. Look for a seal that can flex, stretch, and mold comfortably to its shape so you get a consistent, reliable fit.

#### • Your pouching system

o Think about whether you are using a flat or convex pouching system. For convex systems, a thinner seal may fit better under the pouch, especially if your stoma is flush or retracted.

#### • Your skin's condition

o Is your skin healthy and looking for extra protection – or do you need support for broken or irritated skin? Finding a seal that is designed for what you need is important

#### • Your output.

o The consistency of your output can influence your choice. More liquid output might require an absorbent thicker seal compared to firmer output.

If you'd like help choosing the right seal or want to explore options that work best for your body and lifestyle, contact the Convatec me+ team to be connected to a product specialist or certified ostomy nurse to help you find what you need.

### Product Spotlight

Introducing [eakin freeseal®](#), part of the ESENTA™ family of accessories.

There are two products in this line:

- eakin freeseal® air, that has a depth starting at 1.8mm, making it the thinnest seal on the market and is designed to be paired with convex pouches
- eakin freeseal® versa, slightly thicker and designed to absorb more output but also being more versatile to mold around larger stomas or into dips and creases in the skin around your stoma.

Both seals come with 18mm or 30mm starter holes so you can find your best fit.

Editor's note: This article is from UOAA digital sponsor, Convatec. Sponsor support along with donations from readers like you help to maintain our website and the free trusted resources of UOAA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



## Duke Raleigh Hospital Ostomy Clinic

The Duke Raleigh Hospital Ostomy Clinic offers information, help, and support for those living with a stoma.

Schedule an appointment with a certified ostomy nurse: 919-954-3446

Location:  
3404 Wake Forest Rd. Suite 303  
Raleigh, NC 27609



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### TAOA MEMBERSHIP FORM

**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Ostomy:  Colostomy  Ileostomy  Urostomy (Ileal conduit)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  Support/No Ostomy

Comments (cont. on reverse side) \_\_\_\_\_

Active Membership: Member for UOAA/TAOA. Annual Dues \$20.00.

Courtesy Membership: Cannot afford dues at this time. (Confidential)

Affiliate Membership. WOCN's & Prof. Associates. Dues exempted.

**IMPORTANT: ALL CHECKS MUST BE PAYABLE TO TAOA.**

**Enclosed:  \$20.00 Dues Pay to TAOA  Cash  Check  Money Order**

Donation (optional) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ For our support of FOW.



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