

From North Central Oklahoma *Ostomy Outlook* July-August 2011:

Summertime...and the Living is Easy

by Bobbie Brewer, Greater Atlanta Ostomy Association, July 2011

Summertime fun may include many outdoor activities and travel, but may also lead to some concerns about ostomy management. Let's review:

Swimming is an excellent exercise and activity you can enjoy with family and friends. So, why are so many of us afraid to get back into the water? Check out these tips:

- ✓ Don't go swimming immediately after you have put on a new pouching system.
- ✓ Make sure your pouch is empty and has a secure seal.
- ✓ Picture framing your wafer with water-proof tape isn't necessary, but may give you the extra confidence you need.
- ✓ Take precautions against sunburn. Besides being bad for your skin; a bad sunburn can result in diarrhea and sometimes vomiting, thus depleting electrolytes.
- ✓ When sitting and soaking up the sun, protect/shade your pouching system by placing some covering across the outside area (e.g., hat, towel, magazine).
- ✓ Monilia is a common summer problem. This raised, itchy, red rash on the peristomal skin is uncomfortable and keeps the pouches from holding well. If you suspect a monilia rash, consult an ostomy nurse.

Fluids and More Fluids are needed during the hot summer months. Review the following:

- ✓ Water is an essential nutrient needed by each and every body cell. Up to 75% of the body's mass is made up of water. Water controls body temperature, serves as building material and solvent, and transports nutrients. Thirst is a signal that the body needs fluids. Daily losses must be replaced. Encourage fluid intake of eight to ten (8 oz) glasses of liquids each day.
- ✓ Any liquid containing water (soda, milk, juice, etc.) helps to meet your daily requirement. You can also get water from the food you eat (e.g., tomatoes have a total of 94% water content). *[North Central OK Ed. note: And don't worry if liquids contain some caffeine. It's a [myth that caffeinated drinks are dehydrating.](#)]*
- ✓ Water is an excellent natural beverage; however, over-consumption of water can wash away electrolytes in the body. Drink a combination of water and electrolyte beverages. The glucose ingredient in electrolyte drinks aids in the absorption of electrolytes. *[North Central OK Ed. note: To emphasize this point, runners in marathon races have collapsed, and sometimes even died, due to [hyponatremia—low blood sodium caused by drinking too much plain water.](#)]*

Summer Diets

- ✓ Remember the fiber content of those fresh fruits and vegetables—enjoy but chew, chew [*ileostomates, especially*].
- ✓ Add only one new food at a time to determine the effect (if any) on your output.

Tips for Traveling with Medications and/or Ostomy Supplies

- ✓ Keep your medicines (and emergency pouches) with you—not in the checked luggage.
- ✓ Bring more than enough medicine and/or ostomy supplies for your trip.
- ✓ Keep a list of all your medicines and/or ostomy supplies with you.
- ✓ Do not store ostomy supplies in your car, especially under the hot summer sun.

Back to [North Central Oklahoma Ostomy Newsletter Index](#)

This page last revised 2011-07-09

[OstomyOK Home](#) | [What is Ostomy?](#) | [Ostomy Care Guides](#) | [Ostomy Supplies](#) | [Newsletter](#)
[UOAA Discussion Board](#) | [UOAA Support Groups](#) | [Contact Webmaster](#) | [Search](#) | [Links](#)