



Welcome to the TEAM



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news

It's been a busy few months at Colostomy UK, with several new people joining the team.



Jackie Campbell

Jackie is our Volunteer & Support Administrator, and a naturally cheerful person and an empathetic listener. She also brings a wealth of experience to the role.



Catherine Hunt Trustee with HR Experience

Catherine has worked as a Senior HR Lead in the City of London for over 30 years. In 2019, her career was interrupted when she was diagnosed with cancer which led to a colostomy. In 2020, a reversal operation resulted in Catherine having an ileostomy. Successful reconstructive surgery and stoma closure has now taken place.



Seth Russell Trustee with HR Experience

Seth has over forty years of experience in Human Resources, spanning both the private and public sectors. Seth sits on the board of the charity, Connect Reading, and has previously served as a non-executive/trustee for the organisations, Daisy's Dream, and Amnesty International.

Colostomy Irrigation and you DVD

Colostomy Irrigation and You is an educational DVD aimed at patients. It has been produced by Colostomy UK to raise awareness about Colostomy Irrigation as a method of bowel management.

Note: Not all colostomates can irrigate. It is therefore essential in the first instance to consult your surgeon/stoma care nurse as they will advise as to your suitability.

To obtain your single copy of Colostomy Irrigation and You at the special price of £1.99 (incl postage and packing) simply fill in your details below and return it with your cheque made payable to Colostomy UK, to:

Colostomy UK, 100 Berkshire Place, Winnersh, RG41 5RD

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Also available to purchase online at: www.ColostomyUK.bigcartel.com

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FREEPHONE STOMA HELPLINE: 0800 328 4257



The vast majority of people with a colostomy opt for life with a stoma bag, but for some, there is another option. Yet despite irrigation being perfectly suited to so many ostomates, comparatively few explore this option for themselves.

This is all quite bewildering to Colostomy UK's volunteer, Sally Light, who started irrigating over eight years ago and has never looked back.

Demystifying Irrigation

For one thing, Sally is keen for people to understand that irrigating is not a medical procedure, which a lot of people mistakenly think it is.

It's simply a way to flush out the bowel using little more than warm tap water, which can be done by yourself, in the comfort of your own bathroom.

The process takes roughly an hour to complete (depending on the individual), but following this, a person can go hours, or in Sally's case days (she has 'trained' her bowel to empty every 48 hours), before needing to irrigate again.

In between irrigating, Sally goes about life as normal, without any need for a stoma bag. Instead, a cap is fitted over the stoma to prevent discharge.

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Extolling the Virtues of Irrigation

Why Consider Irrigation

In Sally's case, she lived with a stoma bag for two years before taking up irrigation, as the option wasn't advisable while undergoing chemotherapy, which she was having to manage cancer at the time. During these two years, Sally constantly worried about leaks and 'explosions', and resented "...walking around with a bag of poo on my tummy" as she put it.

Of course, every ostomates' experience of stoma bags varies, based on countless factors. Diet, underlying medical condition, and even personal character all inform how easily a person accepts their stoma bag. For Sally, it was a struggle, so when irrigation became feasible, she jumped at the chance.

The Benefits of Irrigation

Sally credits irrigating with gaining her confidence back, and with it, many aspects of her life too. Before taking up irrigating, she was fearful of activities like swimming and reluctant to take long journeys as she was concerned that she wouldn't find anywhere to dispose of her bag when needed. She is also now able to wear more flattering clothing and enjoys the fact that she doesn't have to carry a cumbersome 'emergency kit' on her person anymore. As she put it:

"With the best will in the world, somebody who has a stoma bag is likely to get leaks, or pancaking [...] I don't have to worry about those problems anymore. It's given me back an element of control."

When Might Irrigation Not Be Suitable?

A certain amount of colon is required for irrigation, so if the majority has been removed, the process may not be feasible. It's also not usually recommended for people with an ileostomy if the stoma is formed on the transverse section of the small intestine, as gravity is needed to help with the flushing process.

Ultimately, your colorectal surgeon should advise on whether the process is suitable for you.

Contact Sally

You can request to speak to Sally via Colostomy UK's helpline, (0800 328 4257)

You can also order an irrigation DVD via the advert on the opposite page'

As Sally enthusiastically told me:

"There's nothing that would stop me extolling the virtues of irrigating!"



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