



Amy battled back from major illness thanks in part to expressing her music in the hospital check the video (QR Code).



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Meet new LOA president Amy Fairchild

A rare infection hit Amy Fairchild at the worst possible time...amid COVID lockdowns in 2021. A rare condition, histoplasmosis, waged war on her intestinal tract. Six weeks at Bryan LGH was heartbreaking for the mother of a 5-month-old and 4-year-old daughter. Only her husband could visit.

“I only saw my daughters a hand-

ful of times,” she said. “It was more draining mentally and emotionally than physically,” she said.

However, like most with ostomies... Amy’s a fighter.

She tackled treatments, fought pain and discomfort, then endured ostomy surgery on April 8, 2021. “Removing my colon was life-saving,” she said.

During the long recovery, Amy shared her musical talents on a baby grand piano in the hospital lobby many afternoons. “I don’t know the science of music, but that was one of the more healing aspects of my recovery,” she said. A love for music

Amy started playing piano at age 9, and was the only kid out of four siblings

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We’re going techno! [SIGN UP FOR UPDATES](#)

Find this edition of Sparrow complete with links and color here:

<https://ostomynebraska.com/lincoln/> or use this fancy-schmancy QR Code

Convexity creates solutions & risks

Ostomy skin barriers formed with convexity provide great relief by securing the appliance a bit more “deeply” around a stoma surrounded by skin contours. Some even use belts to increase the effect.

Convexity can create issues as well, said Rhonda Soucek, RN BSN CWOCN of CHI Health during a February Lincoln Ostomy Association meeting.

“We’ve learned to recognize the appearance of skin irritation and adjust,” she said. “We see people fitted with too much convexity could get pressure ulcers. I always say a great fit takes some time and talking. It takes learning and adjusting.”

On the other hand, convexity can greatly improve problems with uneven skin and unusual stoma construction.

“I think convexity is a great tool for improving fit,” Soucek said. “Pressure ulcers are rare, but we know the causes and how to treat them.”

Soucek also discussed the importance of the skin barrier opening, especially regarding convexity. An incorrect size may cause cuts to the stoma.

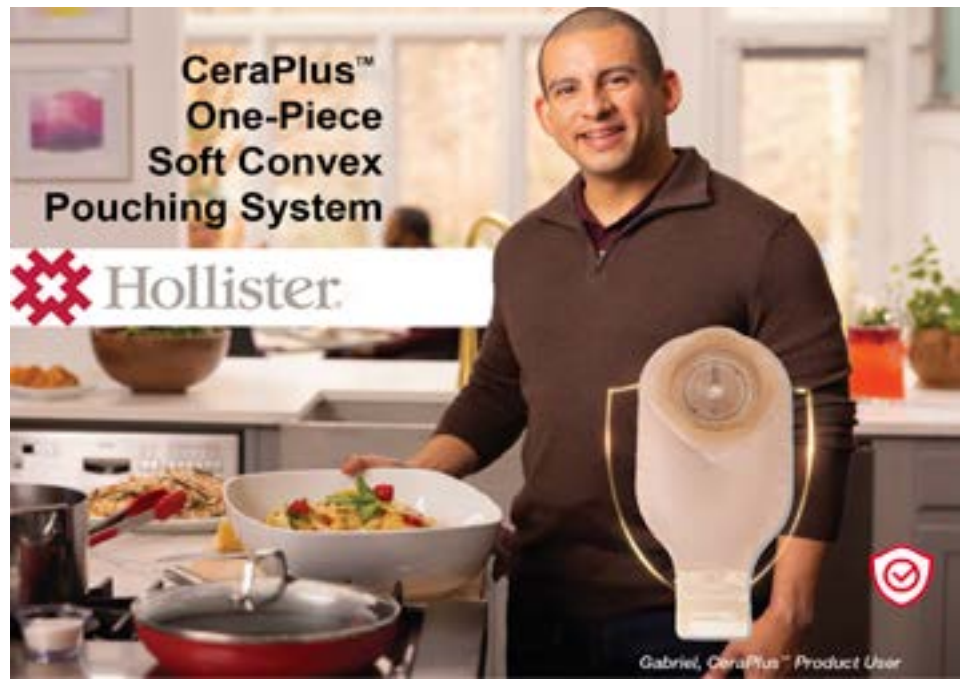
“If your barrier is the exact same size as your stoma, it could rub and cut you and you would never feel it,” she said. “We recommend you open the hole at least 1/8 inch larger than the base of your stoma. An ostomy nurse helps with measurements.”

Soucek said a WOCN can help navigate surrounding dips, creases, and folds and present the best product options. She said assessment of the stoma and skin should be done while sitting, and not when lying down. Fitting also involves twisting side-to-side, lifting legs, leaning forward, etc.

“I’d say getting the right fit, the right convexity takes a bit of teamwork,” Soucek said. “If things are uncomfortable or your skin is irritated, get into the offices and let’s work it out.”



Rhonda Soucek, RN BSN CWOCN of CHI Health



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LOA leader strikes new, positive chord

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that didn't have to be forced to practice. She loved it and it continued as she earned a Master's Degree in Piano Performance from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She plays weddings, colleges, and church. She said she's found a balance with music and she makes her family and church the highest priority.

THE JOURNEY BACK

Amy's life after surgery required more mountains to climb. She battled pouching issues and painful skin problems for more than two years. "It's been a hard journey," she said. "Having family and a love for running and playing the piano created healthy outlets for my

recovery."

Amy also took the helm as president of the Lincoln Ostomy Association in January. She seeks to normalize, advocate, and educate those with ostomies.

"I'd love to see the group grow and have members from all different life stages," she said. "More involvement means we can do more in the community and provide more outreach for new and struggling ostomates."

"In God's hands, hard things can become good things," she said. "LOA is one of those good things. I am so grateful for that group and the connections made there, and believe in its potential to be an important, safe, and welcoming place for all with ostomies."



From left, New LOA president Amy, with Elenor, Chloe and Michael Fairchild.

Music seen as potent tool for health

In the realm of healthcare, music emerges as a potent tool, offering solace and support to individuals grappling with adversity. Its therapeutic effects are well-documented, with studies highlighting its ability to alleviate stress, anxiety, and even chronic pain. By tapping into the brain's pleasure centers, music triggers the release of endorphins, fostering a sense of calm and aiding in the healing process.

Beyond its physiological impact, music serves as a vehicle for emotional expression, bridging gaps where words falter. Whether through listening to uplifting tunes or participating in music therapy sessions, individuals find respite from the tumult of life's challenges.

Moreover, recent research suggests that music may hold cognitive benefits, enhancing memory recall and facilitating faster learning. This multifaceted

approach to healing underscores the profound impact of music on both mind and body.

As we navigate the complexities of healthcare, let us not overlook the power of music as a therapeutic modality. By incorporating music therapy into patient care, we can provide a holistic approach to healing, offering comfort and support to those in need.

JOIN US!

The [Lincoln Ostomy Association](http://lincolnostomy.org) provides critical tools that people with an ostomy need to build their lives. LOA, and this newsletter, Sparrow, is a link to latest supplies, treatments and a community of others who can provide support and experience. UOAA suggests ostomates get in touch with other people with ostomies. You can ask questions that you might be embarrassed to ask your doctor or nurse.

<http://ostomynebraska.com/lincoln>

DID YOU KNOW?

Students who attend LOA meetings often use the time for class credit! and will have more knowledge to help future ostomates. Win Win!

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Tips from Triumph Home Health

Choosing the right medical supplier for monthly supplies is crucial for ostomates. To ensure high quality products and reliable service consistently, here are the essential considerations to help choose a supplier.

1. **Insurance Coverage and Affordability:** Check if the supplier accepts your health insurance plan and offers affordable pricing options for out-of-pocket expenses. This is key for ostomates as insurance providers reimburse for supplies at highly varied rates.
2. **Prescription Compatibility:** Ensure that the supplier can fulfill prescriptions accurately and provide the specific brands or types of supplies prescribed by your healthcare provider.
3. **Customer Service and Support:** Look for suppliers that understand ostomates and their unique needs, that offer responsive support, easy communication channels, and assistance with insurance claims or product inquiries.
4. **Convenience and Accessibility:** Choose a supplier that offers convenient ordering methods, such as texting and automatic reminder services. Consider factors like delivery speed and reliability, especially if you rely on timely delivery of supplies. By considering these factors, you will be ahead and on your way to monthly supply success. You know best what works for you and your supplier should be an extension of that knowledge.

Thanks Triumph and Joe Frey, a long-time friend of LOA & local supplier of ostomy products.

Crohn's implant sensor

Northwestern University is testing a [ultra-mini temperature wireless communication](#) sensor which may speed up the treatment of Crohn's Disease flareups.

The tiny, soft device is like a smooth round capsule that rests in the GI system, without affecting natural processes for long-term recordings.

The key is heat. Early treatment based on heat can prompt therapy which normally takes weeks for blood analysis, tissue biopsy, or fecal analysis.

The technology is in testing with animals and still requires adaptation for humans, data transmission, and wireless recharging.

The study suggests the sensor could be inserted in the intestines against the "luminal wall" (wherever that is).

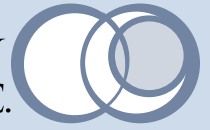
Stay tuned! :)

New to ostomy?

After surgery, new ostomates may fear that their social role may be changed and that others may not accept them as in the past. One of the first concerns seems to be how to tell others about your surgery, who to tell and when.

- Ostomates can **explain surgery** with a few brief statements such as, "an ostomy is a surgical procedure for the diversion of bowel (or bladder)."
- Ostomates **do not have to tell everyone** about surgery. Be selective about who and how much to tell. It may be only to friends who will be supportive through rehabilitation.
- Returning to work place may present a concern about **restroom facilities**, interaction with co-workers, and feelings of being "watched."
- **A few co-workers may need to know** in the event of an emergency.
- **Employability and insurability** are issues for some individuals. If these issues develop, seek help from healthcare professionals and/or talk with others who have found solutions.
- **Sexuality issues are common** concerns. Linked closely to our feelings of sexuality is how we think about ourselves and our body image.

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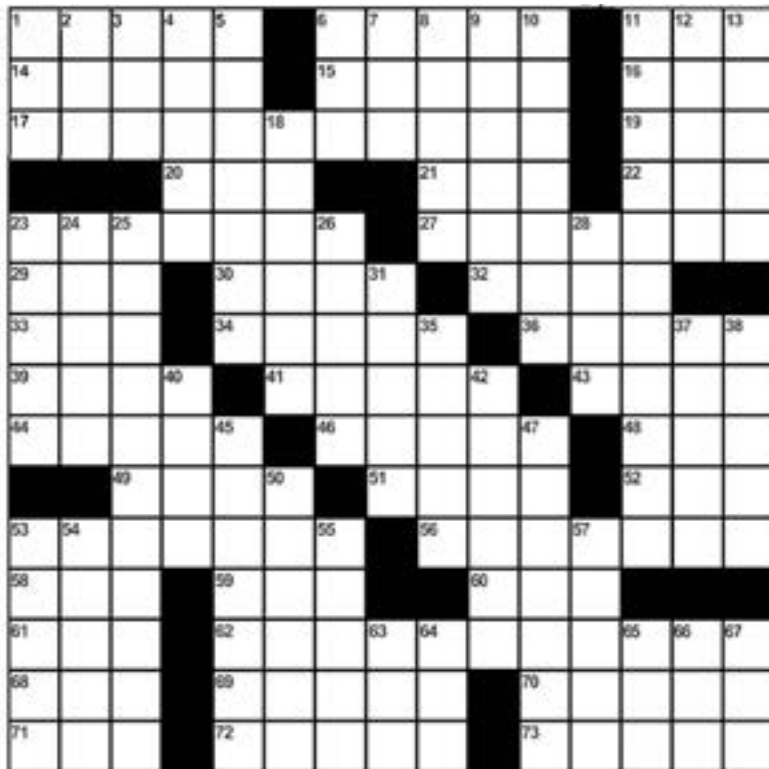
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LOA crossword challenge

ACROSS

- 1) Dare alternative 43)
- Yachting across the Pacific
- 6) Enlightened one, in Buddhism 44) Go inside
- 11) ABC overseer 46) Polar drudges
- 14) "Faster!" 48) Sphere
- 15) First class alternative
- 49) Huge Aussie birds
- 16) "Iron Horse" Gehrig
- 51) Congressional gofer
- 17) Unlimited power 52) Function
- 19) Museum attraction 53) Freckle
- 20) Sound of enlightenment 56) Load-carrying animal
- 21) " _ the ramparts ... " 58) " ... an _ dog new tricks"
- 22) Machine gun sound effect 59) Little piggie, for one
- 23) Strikes make them happy 60) "Thanks a_!"
- 27) In a clumsy way 61) Lennon's bride
- 29) "To _ is human 62) How some tea is served
- 30) Bites lightly 68) Spotted, to Tweety
- 32) Fable 69) Four-person race
- 33) "East" on a grandfather clock 70) Black-key material
- 34) Chips and a pop, e.g.
- 71) Egg source
- 36) Camp shelters 72) Demagnetize a tape
- 39) One who favors



- dressing in 73) Sight, for one
- black
- 41) Galahad's quest
- DOWN
- 1) Notwithstanding that, informally
- 2) Bacardi, for one
- 3) Pedestaled vessel
- 4) Courtroom event
- 5) Jack-in-the-box needs?
- 6) Go before the camera
- 7) Fish eggs
- 8) Asian capital
- 9) Brogue or twang, e.g.

- 10) Contract adverb
- 11) Steamrolls
- 12)_ Gables, Fla.
- 13)_ Sark (scotch)
- 18) Working in a crew
- 23) Brown shade
- 24) Belted constellation
- 25) Like things you don't want to forget
- 26) Extra
- 28) "Don't hurt me!" for one
- 31) Dandruff origin
- 35) Pueblo Indian dwellings
- 37) Short and snappy
- 38) Swashbuckler's sword

- 40) Parts of skirts
- 42) Lentil, for one
- 45) Burst
- 47) Ancient Hebrews, e.g.
- 50) It may be better than later
- 53) Starter for "sayer"
- 54) Arm stiffeners
- 55) Electric car brand
- 57) Annapolis freshman
- 63) "Now, where _ I?"
- 64) Mr. Potato Head part
- 65) Persona-grata link
- 66) Naval rank (Abbr.)
- 67) One way to be blond

4 STEPS TO MAINTAIN A FITNESS LIFE ...

- 1 REGULAR EXERCISE** ...
Aim for a minimum of 1 hour of moderate activity per week. Include cardio, strength training and flexibility exercises.
- 2 BALANCED NUTRITION** ...
Follow a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.
- 3 REST AND RECOVERY** ...
Get 7-8 hours of sleep per night for physical and mental recovery. Incorporate active rest days to prevent burnout.
- 4 MONITORING** ...
Set realistic goals and adjust your routine based on achievements and challenges.

"We cannot solve problems with the kind of thinking we employed when we came up with them."

- Albert Einstein

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Visitation Marie 402-750-5621
Communications John 402-310-3496

Lincoln Ostomy Home

LOA welcomes calls from ostomates, especially new people, with questions on everything from, “how do I shower?” to “what about clothes?” Call our visitation specialists above (Denise & Marie).

Meetings (Let’s meet, shall we?)

In person meetings are at a church at 8230 South St., starting at 1:30 p.m.
May 5 - Jacques Izard, Wellness, disease & microbiome research
June 2: Peggy from Convatec
Aug. 4 - Dan Keim, Hollister
Sept 8 - TBD
Oct 6 - Jenny Gow, Buttomy Bear Charity
Nov 3 - TBD
Dec 1 - Christmas Party
updates at ostomynebraska.com/lincoln

Contact, Advertise

Contact or visit LOA to learn more about support group meetings, ostomy products and educational opportunities. Sparrow is a quarterly publication for the Lincoln Ostomy Association. If you’d like to advertise or to submit an article, email lincolnostomy@gmail.com

Ostomy Nurse Contacts

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Dr. Goehler talks moods and microbes

Studies on bowel disease continue to point to diets and intestinal microbes which can influence health and even mood.

Dr. Lisa Goehler, Ph.D., a neuroscientist shared some thoughts on these mind-body interactions with *Sparrow*.

“Bowel disease in general is linked to stress and increased anxiety and depression, and people with IBD who undergo surgery have higher rates of the symptoms,” she said. “Ostomates have the highest risk for mood symptoms, and there are probably multiple reasons for that. Gut factors may include effects of ostomy-related dietary factors on gut microbes, which are known to influence mood.”

Goehler said social support is key for stressful situations which ostomates often find themselves in. She said the lack of general public

understanding of GI disorders (especially ostomies) makes organizations like Lincoln Ostomy Association important for well-being.

“Practical advice and resources can help people feel more empowered with the knowledge and that other people are addressing the same challenges,” Goehler said.

Dr. Goehler will be presenting a special educational session called “Understanding the Gut Brain: Stress, Appetite, Digestion, and Mood” on May 3 at The Graduate Lincoln Hotel at 141 N 9th Street. To register for this event, [visit www.ibpceu.com](http://visit.www.ibpceu.com).

