



fittleworth

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reach out

A hello from Andy

Dear Fittleworth family member,

COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the way we live, disrupting many things we now realise we took for granted. With this realisation we have discovered new appreciation for other elements of our lives. Personally, much more of my time has been spent with my wife and children, getting exercise and enjoying nature. This experience has given me clarity on what is important in my life that I have never had before.

Our sole mission at Fittleworth has always been to provide you with an unparalleled service. COVID-19 did not change this, in fact, it reinforced it. A lot has

happened over the last few months... From making sure our team are properly protected and cared for whether they are working from a Fittleworth location, home, or shielding, to ensuring continuity of stock and supporting your NHS nurses. I swell with pride as I reflect on the caring, dedication, and courage shown by our Fittleworth team as we banded together to fulfil this mission.

For now, things have settled a bit and we find ourselves in a routine, albeit a new one. With you in mind, this newsletter contains a wealth of support you might find valuable as well as a few new ideas we have coming up later this year; from recipe

ideas for Ostomates, to hydration guides and support if you're finding the challenge of being at home isolating.

On behalf of the entire Fittleworth team, I wish you and your loved ones well. Please let us know if there is anything you might need.

Kind regards,

Andy





Let's Get Topical: How the lack of open public toilets impacts the ostomy community

We are joined by Sahara Fleetwood-Beresford, who is living with a permanent stoma and is a pro-active IBD and ostomy advocate. She runs #IBDSuperHeroes fundraising and awareness campaign and she is an active member of the online IBD and ostomy community.

I've seen quite a lot of posts about the lack of open public toilets due to COVID-19. I even got caught with a rapidly filling ostomy bag myself while in the queue for the supermarket! Fortunately, it stopped before becoming unmanageable, but I had to rush around the supermarket and home again with a pretty heavy addition on my abdomen. It was not a pleasant experience. The lack of public restrooms has impacted so many, especially those of us with continence issues.

Though I haven't had to shield, many of the chronic illness community has and now the latest UK guidance update means those who have been shielding will soon be allowed to roam. But will they want to? It's a very anxious time and the lack of public toilet facilities just adds to that anxiety.

Input from the community

I have seen posts on social media from people asking those in their local area to let them know which toilets are open. Many don't feel they can go anywhere without knowing they will have access to facilities. A few people have mentioned that they have requested access to staff toilets but have been declined due to infection control.

Some people have talked about going out completely prepared – tissues, wipes, disposal bags etc. – if they need to do an emergency ostomy bag empty, but most don't feel comfortable because they don't know they will even be able to find a private space to comfortably do that.

Others even commented that they'd be happy to be in charge of sanitising the facilities, before and after use (and they probably will anyway, even if they don't have to).

Published guidance

I was pleased to see the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs published guidance on 28 June for local councils on opening public toilets.

This guidance includes the following statements:

"Closed toilets may also impact disproportionately on certain groups who for health reasons rely on access to public toilets to be able to leave their homes. They can also make life difficult for young families and people who work outside."

"Public authorities should also consider the equality implications of those with particular health needs who need to use the toilet more often."

They include advice on measures that can be taken to open toilets in a safe way. So, here's hoping toilets will be widely accessible really soon!



Not all bad

It's a sorry state of affairs, but I don't want to leave on a negative note.

A friend posted a photograph and shared that she had been on a walk in the countryside and had emptied her ostomy bag into disposal bags in the car.

The handbrake doubled up as a toilet roll holder!



What we've been up to: In Good Company Episode 3

While we are excited to see shops, cafes and restaurants reopening, many of us still feel safer in the comfort of our own home. With this in mind, we are pleased to announce the third episode in our In Good Company podcast series.



**In Good Company
podcast**

We launched the podcast late last year as a way to stay connected to you because we understand loneliness is a big issue – even more so during these uncertain times. Whether you are often surrounded by people or spend much of your time solo, it is completely natural and normal to feel lonely or isolated. In fact, new research from the Office for National Statistics, released for Loneliness Awareness Week, suggests that 7.4 million people have suffered from 'lockdown loneliness'.

Here at Fittleworth, we want you to know you're not alone. We talk to over 2,000 clients every day and we understand how challenging it can be to manage all that comes with a long-term medical condition, it can take its toll both on our physical and mental health.

Our podcast, In Good Company, is all about helping you to reconnect. Although reconnecting with your social life (virtually or from a distance) after a period of illness or self-isolation may feel daunting, it is also incredibly worthwhile.

Our open, honest and insightful conversations are hosted by BAFTA award-winning broadcaster and Crohn's & Colitis UK ambassador, Carrie Grant. Working in partnership with older people's charity Independent Age, the podcasts look to address the common issue of isolation, and how to overcome it by reconnecting with people.

"It was very isolating because people couldn't understand."

In the latest episode, Carrie catches up (virtually, of course) with top guests. Cosy up in your favourite chair and follow along with a mini meditation session from yoga, mindfulness and meditation tutor Sophie Mills. Listen to a heartfelt and inspirational interview with Bobbie Minshull, who takes us through her journey of health challenges and how she's not let them beat her, and hear expert advice on how to get back out there from Colostomy UK's Giovanni Cinque and Independent Age's Senior Wellbeing Manager Julie Bennett.



Our support materials include

Reconnecting with People Guide



Independent Age Loneliness Guide

To listen to the podcast and access more information and tips on combatting loneliness, visit:

www.fittleworth.com/ingoodcompany



Summer Special: Action hydration stations

With the summer sun making an appearance, it is even more important to stay hydrated. If you are using a urinary catheter, you're likely to be extra aware of the importance of hydration in order to maintain a healthy bladder as well as avoiding urinary catheter complications and catheter associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs). Hydration is important for all aspects of our bodily functions and the water in our bodies helps transport nutrients, regulates our temperature and aids the removal of waste.

Many people become dehydrated by not drinking enough fluid or by losing fluids and not replacing them. If our bodies lose too much fluid, or if we don't consume enough, this can lead to medical problems that may require treatment in hospital.

For most of us, this means imbibing 6-8 cups (1.8-2.4 litres) of fluid per day. Try to drink regularly throughout the day and if you are active and/or the weather is particularly hot, you should increase your fluid intake.

Dehydration can cause several health problems, including urinary tract infections (UTIs), headaches and confusion.

Common signs of dehydration:

- Less frequent, a lower volume and darker urination
- Dry lips, mouth and eyes
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded (especially on standing)
- Headaches
- Muscle cramps
- Lack of concentration
- Constipation

Signs of severe dehydration:

- Feeling unusually tired or confused
- A weak or rapid pulse
- Fits (seizures)
- Being unusually drowsy/unrousable

It is important to acknowledge that some medical conditions, such as heart or renal failure, may require advice on fluid restriction – always follow your doctor's advice.

Not all fluids are hydrating, and some can even contribute to dehydration. Water – fizzy, still or from the tap – is a good choice. If you prefer flavoured water, stick to low sugar options. Well-diluted squash, coconut water and milky drinks are also hydrating and if you regularly drink fewer than 3-4 cups of regular caffeinated tea or coffee a day, these drinks can be hydrating. However, consuming more than 3-4 cups of these drinks a day can mean the caffeine over-stimulates the bladder and bowels, causing you to lose more fluid. Milky decaf lattes are a good bet for coffee lovers.

Top tips to stay hydrated

- Carry a bottle of water with you when you leave the house
- Make drinking a social activity – have a socially-distanced cup of tea with a friend or neighbour
- Eat foods which have a high water/fluid content such as soup, yoghurt, ice cream and jelly
- Make healthy and hydrating ice lollies from diluted squash, fruit juice or milky smoothies
- Add sauces to meals or desserts to increase fluid intake, including gravy or custard
- Add ice cubes to drinks – 1 ice cube adds 25ml of fluid
- Use the Fittleworth hydration tracker available in our handy guide

For an in-depth look at the importance of hydration and to access the hydration tracker, download our free guide from:

www.fittleworth.com/advice-centre/continence/hydration-guidance/



LIVING WITH
A STOMA

Living with a stoma should
not prevent you from eating
delicious, nutritious food

Download your free 36 page
nutritional guide and
8 tasty recipes

Go to www.fittleworthfit.com



Coming soon...

Simple Steps We are here for you, every step of the way. That's why we are lining up a new exercise programme to help ostomy patients in post-surgery recovery. From motivational advice to exercise tips, we're here to support you. Watch this space to find out who we've signed up as our expert partner...

Summer recipes

We've handpicked some simple, gut-friendly summer recipes from our Ostomates Kitchen recipe guide for you to whip up at home. Delicious and nutritious, you don't have to be an ostomate to enjoy them!

TRAY BAKED SEA BASS, FONDANT POTATO & MEDITERRANEAN VEGETABLES

2 sea bass fillets
2 fondant potatoes
cut to 6cm x 3cm
1l vegetable stock
40g chorizo
2 sprigs of thyme
1 sprig of rosemary
2 garlic cloves
1 courgette
½ aubergine
1 bell pepper
50g green beans
20g olives, pitted
1 lemon
1tbsp parsley
Olive oil
Salt / Pepper

Serves: 2
Time to prep: 25min
Time to cook: 20min



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Place the potatoes in a saucepan with a sprig of thyme, a clove of garlic and a pinch of salt, then add vegetable stock until the potatoes are covered.
2. Cook the potatoes for roughly 20-25 minutes and remove them from the pan and place onto a rack until needed.
3. Peel the courgette and aubergine, slice them into 0.5cm thick pieces. Cut the pepper into 0.5cm long strips, trim both ends of the green beans, crush the remaining garlic clove and slice the lemon.
4. Place all the vegetables into a bowl and toss them together with the olives and a little salt, pepper and olive oil.
5. Cut the chorizo into little cubes, place in a frying pan with the fondant potatoes and cook for roughly 5 minutes until both have crispy edges.
6. Place the vegetables and potatoes into a roasting tray and sprinkle with chorizo cubes. Add to the oven for 10 minutes.
7. Season the fish with salt and pepper. Remove the tray from the oven and place the fish over the vegetables. Sprinkle with thyme and rosemary.
8. Cook in the oven for an additional 10 minutes.
9. Serve with an extra drizzle of olive oil and a lemon slice on the side.
10. Sprinkle with parsley to finish.

Fish is sometimes unnecessarily avoided by those with stomas and this recipe shows you what you've been missing. Fish provides unsaturated fatty acids that are healthy for your heart and brain, but is also light and can be easier to digest than meat.

The flavours from the parsley, rosemary and lemon can balance the fish if people are concerned with stoma-pouch odours. This tasty Mediterranean meal is a nutritious and balanced meal, but we insist you try it for yourself.

TURKEY BURGER & SWEET POTATO WEDGES

For the burger

2 burger buns
4 slices of cheddar
360g turkey mince
1 shallot
1 garlic clove
1 carrot
1tsp dry herbs
1 egg
40g bread crumbs
Salt / Pepper

For the wedges

1 large sweet potato
1tsp cumin
1tsp smoked paprika
1tsp dry oregano
Salt / Pepper
Sunflower oil



GREEN SMOOTHIE

200g baby spinach
1 banana
1 mango
150g plain yoghurt
100ml milk
1tbsp honey



Red meat can be tricky to digest for some; enter the turkey burger! Turkey contains less saturated fat and is easier on the gut than red meat, it's also less calories for those who are mindful of this.

This meal has starchy-carbohydrates and soluble fibre from the burger bun, grated carrot and sweet potato wedges – great for those wanting to minimise stoma-pouch overflows.

Burger

1. Peel and dice the shallot, peel and crush the garlic, peel and grate the carrot.
2. In a mixing bowl, add the turkey mince, shallot, garlic, carrot, dry herbs, egg, bread crumbs and a little seasoning and mix until combined.
3. Form four burgers using a burger press or your hand, press firmly to make sure they hold well.
4. Heat a frying pan with a little oil, add the burgers, turn over when brown and place a slice of cheese on top of each of them. They should need roughly 5 minutes on each side.
5. Remove from the pan, leave to the side to rest.
6. Place the burger buns into the frying pan to get some colour and crispiness.
7. Build your burger with the bun, the burger and cheese.

Wedges

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C. Peel the sweet potato and cut into wedges.
2. Place in a bowl with the spices and herbs, add a pinch of salt and drizzle of sunflower oil and mix well.
3. Place onto a tray and cook in the oven for 20-30 minutes or until cooked.

Smoothies can be thought of as a 'stoma-taboo' – you're often told to have a low-fibre diet, so why have a smoothie? Smoothies blend fruits and vegetables, which starts the digestion process, making digestion easier for our bodies and retaining more of the nutrients.

This smoothie provides added protein through the milk and yoghurt as well as vitamins and minerals from the fruit and spinach. A little honey finishes the smoothie with an extra sweetness, but this can be missed if you're watching your sugar intake.

Method

1. Peel the banana and the mango then cut both of them into small chunks.
2. Put all the ingredients into the jug of a blender, then blend for a couple of minutes or until smooth.
3. Keep in the fridge for a few hours.

Share your thoughts

We always want to ensure we're bringing you useful and interesting information. If you have any feedback on our latest newsletter that you'd like to share or thoughts for what you'd like to see included in the next, let us know at marketing@fittleworth.com.



Can we help?

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to support you. If there is something urgent, here's how you can get hold of us:

Contact us now on FREEPHONE

UK: **0800 378 846**
Scotland: **0800 783 7148**
Lines open -
Mon to Fri, 8am-8pm
Sat, 9am-1pm

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