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*Last Updated: 05/2023*



## Ostomy Awareness Month, 1984

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Ostomy is a type of surgery which allows for drainage when a person has lost the normal function of digestive or urinary systems due to birth defects, disease, injury or other disorders. Nearly 1.5 million Americans have had ostomy surgery, and approximately 125,000 new ostomates join their ranks each year.

Ostomy was formerly referred to as "the secret surgery" because ostomates did not want others to know. Today, largely through the efforts of the United Ostomy Association, Americans needing this treatment are becoming more aware of the opportunities for education, mutual aid, and support that are of such great benefit to them and to their families. Increased public understanding of ostomy will eventually help dispel the fear of those about to undergo this surgery as well as the fear that confronts their families. Both the Federal government and the private sector are deeply committed to the proper care and advancement of knowledge about gastrointestinal diseases and public education about ostomy.

To increase public acceptance of ostomy surgery and to emphasize the need for continued educational efforts, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 587, has designated the month of August 1984 as "Ostomy Awareness Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim August 1984 as Ostomy Awareness Month, and I call upon all Americans to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

*Ronald Reagan*