



CareLINK

A Newsletter For Caregivers

DECEMBER 2008/
JANUARY 2009

A Caregivers Newsletter that is published every other month for those who care for a loved-one, no matter the health situation. Enclosed we hope you find helpful information that you can use!

CareLINK can also be found at:

<http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/Aging>

~Sponsored & Published By The Kenosha County Aging & Disability Resource Center~

Alzheimer's Behavior Problems — Don't Take it Personally

When Alzheimer's disease (AD) progresses to the middle stage, there is no longer any doubt that the person has an illness. As a caregiver, you may need to learn how to help with activities of daily living—choosing the right clothes, maintaining good hygiene, taking medications, and eating the right foods. Think about planning the day so he or she is not rushed or bored. Plan several activities. It is important that she gets some stimulation but not so much that she becomes overwhelmed.

This is also the stage when difficult behaviors generally occur, although some may have already begun. When care is provided in a sympathetic and skillful way, these behaviors may not occur, or may not be as severe or burdensome.

Remember the person's typical habits, likes, and dislikes. Give her the right to say "no" when she doesn't feel like taking a bath or doing something else that you ask her to do. If possible, try again later, rather than forcing the issue. And sometimes you may need to just let the activity go. Just let it go.

These behaviors are caused by both the effects of the illness on the brain, and the way you and others interact with and care for the person. The person with AD cannot control her behavior, but you can control yours. Your reaction depends on how you interpret the behavior. If you can, think of these behaviors as the person's way of communicating what she needs and feels or what is upsetting her. If you believe that she is not trying hard enough or is being spiteful, you will probably react in an angry way that will only make the situation worse for both of you.

Think about the person's behavior from her perspective, and then ask yourself what would be the best way to help. Are you willing to change your expectations and approach? Remember, the person with Alzheimer's cannot decide to change. Can you?

Try not to get agitated yourself, even though the person with AD does. **Take a few breaths, stay calm, don't raise your voice, or take personally anything the person says.**

Don't forget that what used to bother the person in your care probably still will. While agitation may be a symptom of the illness, remember that you may have done something to offend the person that would have been distressing even before she became ill with Alzheimer's. If you realize you did something that upset her, apologize. A person with AD may not understand the words, but she will understand the tone of your voice. Keep your compassion and humanity and that of the person in your care in mind at all times, and you will provide better care. Also, be aware that if a person with dementia has recently become agitated for the first time or acts unlike her usual self, the first thing to look for is a medical or physical problem.

Source: The Comfort of Home for Alzheimer's Disease: A Guide for Caregivers; CareTrust Publications



Kenosha County Aging & Disability Resource Center
8600 Sheridan Road, Suite 500
Kenosha, WI 53143

When you need answers...
262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008
TTY (for Hearing Impaired) 262-605-6663
and, www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS



Q & A

Question: Do Christmas trees have mold?

Answer: Studies show that a live Christmas tree can be a significant source of mold spores. If you or family members have a mold allergy, you may not want to keep a live Christmas tree in your home for more than a few days. Artificial trees and ornaments collect dust in storage and are another source of allergy irritation.

Source: WebMD, Inc.

Did You Know?

Incontinence is a problem that involves the leakage of urine or feces over which the person has no control of. Bladder management medications are available; other possible treatments include bladder training, exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor (Kegel exercises), biofeedback, surgery, electrical muscle stimulators, urinary catheters, prosthetic devices, or external collection devices. A precise diagnosis for incontinence must be made in order to come up with an effective treatment plan. If the primary care doctor cannot solve the problem, consult an experienced urologist.

Managing Incontinence

Avoid alcohol, coffee, spicy foods, and citrus foods, which may irritate the bladder and increase the need to urinate.

Give fluids at regular intervals to dilute the urine, which decreases irritation to the bladder.

Provide clothing that can be easily removed. Keep a bedpan or a portable commode nearby.

Use adult diapers under clothes.

Keep the skin dry and clean. Urine on the skin can cause pressure sores and infection.

Your patience and understanding will help the person maintain confidence and self-respect.



Taking Care

Managing the Holidays

You can't be an effective caregiver if you are so stressed that you get sick, too. As hard as it is to find the time and motivation, it's important that you nurture yourself. Here are some helpful tips:



- **Organize and Pace Yourself:** Be careful not to take on more than you can.
- **Make lists** of things that *must* be done, and secondary lists of things you *would like* to accomplish if possible. Set strict limits with yourself and others for what you can and cannot do.
- **Ask for Help:** Make a list and ask everyone to pick the tasks they feel comfortable with.
- **Accept Invitations:** Even if you don't feel like going out at the moment, having activities to look forward to will help you feel less isolated and deprived of a normal life. Having fun, laughing, and focusing on subjects other than caregiving and ill health will help keep you in emotional balance.

Source: Jacqueline Marcell is the author of Elder Rage. For more information: <http://www.ElderRage.com>
Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Jacqueline_Marcell



Caregiver Websites

Alzheimer's Association

www.alz.org/sewi

Our local resource that offers comprehensive information for family caregivers.

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center

www.alzheimers.org

Latest research and information on AD.



We Want To Hear From You!

What are your thoughts and suggestions for making
CareLINK even better?

Please complete the enclosed survey form and mail back to the
Aging & Disability Resource Center which is already addressed
on the form.

We appreciate your valuable input!

~Take Note~

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation

An Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia open forum for people who have been recently diagnosed, and/or who are caring for a loved-one who has Alzheimer's or dementia. This event is being hosted by the Alzheimer's Association.

Date/Time: Wednesday, December 10th from 4pm—5pm

Location: University Of Wisconsin—Parkside, Tallent Hall—Orchard Room,
900 Wood Road, Kenosha, WI.

To register and/or information, please call Paulette at 262-595-2387.

MS Self-Help Support Group Holiday Banquet

You and your guests are welcome to come and join in on the festivities.

Date/Time: Thursday, December 4th starting at 5:30pm.

Location: Fireside Restaurant, 2801 30th Avenue, Kenosha, WI

Cost: \$12 per person. Please contact Alice Schwalbe at 496-8592 to make your reservation.



~Just A Thought ~

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

~Helen Keller



Local Support Groups



Alzheimer’s Caregiver Support Groups –

*Respite is provided during each meeting below. Please register 1 wk. prior for respite.

When: 2nd Tuesday of each month
Time: 7:00pm-8:30pm
Where: Kenosha Area Family & Aging
7730 Sheridan Road, Kenosha
Contact: Jennifer Swartz - 262-658-3508 ext. 106

AND/OR

When: 3rd Monday of each month
Time: 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Where: Westosha Community Center
Hwy. C, Bristol, WI 53104
Contact: Kathy Hinks - 262-605-6646

Amputee Support Group -

When: Next Meeting is Jan.13th;
meets 2nd Tuesday of every other month.
Time: 7:00pm
Where: Kenosha YMCA—Callahan Branch,
7101 53rd Street, Kenosha, WI 53140
Contact: For information or to register, call Reichert & Kelsey at 262-654-4300.

Cardiac Support Group –

When: 4th Tuesday of each month
Time: 10:00am
Where: United Hospital – Kenosha Campus
2nd Floor – Cardiac Rehab Classroom
6308 8th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53143
Contact: Sally Berzinski - 656-2245

Cancer Support Group –

When: 3rd Thursday of each month
Time: 12:00pm
Where: United Hospital – St. Catherine’s Campus
Joseph F. Andrea Regional Cancer Center
9555 76th Street, Pleasant Prairie
Contact: Krin Kramer - 262-577-8543

Diabetes Support Group –

When: 1st Tues. every month
Time: 6:30pm - 7:30pm
Where: United Hospital - KMH Campus
Community Education Room
Contact: Marian Hinder - 652-7124

Epilepsy Support Group –

When: 2nd Thursday of each month.
Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Where: YMCA—Callahan Family Branch
7101 53rd Street, Kenosha, WI 53144
Contact: Ericka Werve—262-995-0016

MS Support Group –

When: 1st Thursday of each month
Time: 6:30pm
Where: St. Mary’s Lutheran Church
2001 80th Street, Kenosha, WI 53143
Contact: Alice Schwalbe – 262-496-8592.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Support Group –

When: 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
Time: 6:00pm
Where: St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
39th Avenue & 88th Street, Kenosha, WI 53143
**Use East Entrance.
Contact: 262-652-3606; leave a message.

Young Onset Parkinson’s Support Group -

When: 2nd Wednesday of each month
Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm
Where: Aurora Medical Center
1st Floor Family Room
10400 75th Street, Kenosha, WI 53142
Contact: 1-800-499-5736 for more information.





We want your thoughts. Please complete this short survey to help us make CareLINK a newsletter you want to read.

1. Do you like it? Yes No Why or why not?
2. Is the information useful to you? Yes No
3. Where did you get your copy of CareLINK?
4. How can we make CareLINK better?

5. Any other comments?

You may return this survey, or call the Aging & Disability Resource Center at 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008, or e-mail your comments to adrc@co.kenosha.wi.us

Thank you for your valuable input!