



CareLINK

A Newsletter For Caregivers

**APRIL 2010/
MAY 2010**

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~

Nutrition for Healthy Body & Mind - Special Considerations

Bringing good nutrition to the table takes planning, attention, and some imagination. A healthy eating guide can be found in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's www.myPyramid.gov. Making smart choices from each part of the pyramid is the best way to ensure one's body gets the balanced nutrition it needs. Good nutrition is necessary for everyone, but sometimes things can get in the way of eating right. Ask the nurse, doctor, or pharmacist if any medications the person in your care is taking, have possible side effects that can interfere with appetite or affect the absorption of important vitamins and minerals.

Changes in mobility. If eating habits remain the same while activity drops off, weight gain can result. Added weight can increase fatigue, further limit mobility, plus strain the respiratory and circulatory systems (lungs, heart, blood, blood vessels), and increase the risk of other chronic illnesses. A registered dietitian can recommend an ideal weight and reasonable daily calorie intake.

Eating and emotions. Depression can affect appetite in different ways. Many people turn to certain foods for comfort when they are depressed. These may be old favorites from childhood (i.e. mashed potatoes) but the danger is in overdoing it. These foods are often high in fat, sugar, and calories that can easily add up. On the other hand, some people lose their appetite when they are depressed. Eating with others can help you and the person in your care stay connected.

Bladder problems. Quite often, fear of having to go to the bathroom frequently or loss of bladder control causes a person to limit fluids. This can cause problems such as dehydration, difficulty swallowing, loss of appetite, and constipation. If the doctor approves, find ways to fit extra fluids into the diet. For example, take water breaks during the day, have a beverage with each meal, and when traveling bring some bottled water with you.

Bowel management often involves preventing constipation. Fiber is found in cereal, grains, nuts, seeds, vegetables, and fruit. It is not completely digested (broken down) or absorbed (taken in) by the body. A diet rich in fiber (about 25 to 30 grams each day) along with adequate fluid intake and physical activity can help promote good bowel function. Fiber provides a sense of fullness, which helps reduce how much one eats.

**Kenosha County Aging & Disability
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When you need answers...
262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008
TTY 262-605-6663
and, www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS



Tips for Better Nutrition



* **Five to six smaller mini-meals throughout the day** may be easier to manage and help keep energy levels high. Choose items that provide the nutrition the person in your care needs. Some healthful choices can include reduced-fat cheese sticks, nuts and nut butter, fresh or dried fruit, hardboiled eggs, low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese, bagged salads, and cut raw vegetables.



* **Keep meal preparation simple.**



Rely on quick-cooking grains, easy-to-heat veggies and a whole-grain roll for side dishes.



* **When you cook, make more than is needed for one meal.** Store or freeze the rest in oven- or microwave-ready containers for quick reheating.



* **Save menus** from places that deliver *healthy* meals.



Alcohol & Drug Abuse



How can you tell if you have a drinking problem? Answering the following four questions can help you find out if you or a loved one has a drinking problem:

- Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?
- Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?

One “yes” answer suggests a possible alcohol problem. More than one “yes” answer means it is highly likely that a problem exists. If you think that you or someone you know might have an alcohol problem, it is important to see a doctor or other health care provider. They can help you determine if a drinking problem exists and plan the best course of action.

Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>

Did You Know?

On February 11, 2010 the Social Security Administration (SSA) added 38 more conditions to the SSA’s list of Compassionate Allowances. These conditions include adult brain disorders (i.e. Early-Onset Alzheimer’s Disease) to rare diseases that primarily affect children (i.e. Tay Sachs Disease). What this means is that a person who is diagnosed with any one of these conditions can get an expedited disability determination through the SSA. Thus the person will be determined disabled by SSA and receive their disability income quicker than going through the regular disability application procedure. The typical disability application can be long process and include an appeal process if the initial application is denied, which is typical for most applications. To find out what conditions are included on this Compassionate Allowances list, please go to:

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances/>

To apply for the SSA’s Compassionate Allowances, there are 2 different ways to apply:

- Calling SSA at 1-880-772-1213, or 1-800-325-0778 (TTY—for people who are hearing impaired or deaf) to schedule an appointment at your local SSA office.
- Go online at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability/adult/htm>

Avoiding Problems with Prescription Medications

When used responsibly, prescription medications can measurably improve lives. But these drugs also carry the risk of dependence and addiction—and seniors are particularly vulnerable. The changing metabolisms of older people can intensify the effects of drugs and alcohol. Aging is often characterized by loss and loneliness—two conditions that increase the risk of substance abuse.

Painkillers and sedative labels warn against alcohol use, but an elderly person may forget about the warning. Even a small amount of alcohol, in combination with certain prescription medications, can suppress breathing—with fatal results. It's also essential not to combine drugs—prescription or not—without consulting your health practitioner, or to deviate from the prescribed dosage. Caregivers can help by encouraging older adults to use pain killers and sedatives only when absolutely necessary, and to taper off as soon as they can. It's equally important to help seniors tackle the underlying problems, and not just treat their symptoms.

- Remind them to *always* avoid alcohol when taking painkillers or sedatives.
- Encourage them to bring all their medications to their doctor when they go for their yearly checkups, so the physician has a record of exactly what they're taking.
- Check medication use—prescription and over-the-counter—and be sure they understand label warnings and the dangers of drug interaction.
- Encourage them to throw out outdated prescription and over-the-counter medications. Know what medications the person in your care is taking, and why.

Source: *Caring.com*



Helpful Resource



Alcoholics Anonymous

www.aa.org

Local Phone Number - 262-554-7788

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.com

Provides medical information and tools for healthy living.

Support Groups

For information on local support groups, please contact the ADRC at 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008.

~Take Note~



National Healthcare Decision Day - April 16, 2010:

The United Hospital System is offering an opportunity for you to draft your Medical Power of Attorney for Health Care and Living Will. Appointments will be available at both United Health Care campus locations.

Location/Time: Kenosha Medical Center, 6308 8th Avenue, Kenosha, from 8am - 12pm.

St. Catherine's Medical Center, 9555 76th Street, Pleasant Prairie, from 1pm - 4pm.

There is no fee for this service, but you must make an appointment by Friday, April 9th by contacting Jaymie Laurent, United Health Care System at 262-656-2922.



"Planning Your Days" - Alzheimer's Activities:

This informative presentation will provide you with the keys to successful day-to-day activities and interactions for your loved-one who has Alzheimer's. Diane Baugh, Education & Training Services Manager from the Alzheimer's Association of Southeastern WI, will be leading this presentation.

Date/Time: Monday, April 19th from 6pm - 7pm.

Location: Westosha Community Center, 19200 93rd Street (Hwy C), Bristol, WI.

Please call Kathy Hinks at 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008 by April 12th, if you are needing free on-site respite care while attending this presentation, or if you have any questions.



Understanding Medicare:

The Benefit Specialist program will offer this workshop which covers a basic overview of the Original Medicare, as well as other health and prescription drug coverage options. You will learn how to read and understand a Medicare Summary notice and how to file an appeal. It also covers other helpful benefits you may be eligible for.

Date/Time: Thursday, April 29th, from 10am - 12pm.

Location: Kenosha County Job Center, Room S 10, 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, WI.

OR

Date/Time: Thursday, May 27th, from 2pm - 4pm.

Location: Parkside Manor, 6300 67th Street, Kenosha, WI.

Please call the ADRC at 262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008 for additional information and to register as space is limited at each workshop.



Current Treatment Options for Hip and Knee Arthritis:

Dr. William B. Lutes, DO, an Orthopedic Surgeon, from Aurora Hospital will present this workshop.

Date/Time: Friday, May 7th, from 9:30am - 11am

Location: Kenosha Public Museum, 5500 1st Avenue, Kenosha, WI.

Please call the ADRC at 1-262-605-6646 or 1-800-472-8008 to register for this workshop.

~Just A Thought ~

It's better to get laugh wrinkles than worry worts!

-Unknown