



Introducing... The Alzheimer's Corner

Let me first start out by introducing myself. My name is Mike Casto and I am the Alzheimer's Respite Coordinator for the Community Services Division at the Area Agency on Aging. It is possible that I have met or spoken with you at a caregiver event or as your care manager.

What I hope to do is bring you relevant information that you can apply to every day situations you experience as a caregiver for a loved one living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. I do not claim to be an expert on the disease, but I can provide information that may better the life of not only clients and those living with the disease, but also the caregivers who play a vital role in the care and support of those living with this illness.

I would encourage you in your free time (what little of it you probably have) to contact the Alzheimer's Association or visit their website for any questions and/or information you may want regarding Alzheimer's disease.

If you would like to contact the Alzheimer's Association, their contact information is below.

I look forward to bringing you information in the future that can make your life easier as you deal with the issues and changes both mentally and physically associated with this illness.

Alzheimer's Association Hotline

(800)272-3900

Web site: www.alz.org

E-mail: info@alz.org

The Center for Senior Health: A Community Resource

The Center for Senior Health at Summa Health System is an outpatient geriatric assessment center whose purpose is to work with patients, families, and primary care physicians to improve function and maintain independence for older

adults. Each patient that is referred to the "Center" is seen by a geriatrician (a physician who specializes in the care of older adults), an advanced practice nurse and a social worker. The first visit can take up to three hours! (cont. p.2)

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November is ...

National Caregiver Month

Watch the mail for some interesting and exciting events that are being planned to honor you as a caregiver.

The Center for Senior Health: A Community Resource (cont.p.1)

The entire team is focused on addressing the unique problems that aging brings. Their nurses focus their attention on assessing geriatric syndromes, such as falls, urinary incontinence, depression, vision and hearing impairments. They will also gather information about your medical history such as medical problems, surgeries and medications taken. Their social workers take a detailed social history to understand how the living situation, financial means, and family relationships affect the patient. They will perform standardized memory and mood assessments. The geriatrician will receive all of the information and delve deeper into the main issues of concern to the family and patient. A complete physical exam is performed and laboratory studies and/or x-rays are ordered as appropriate.

Other specialists are available if the need arises. For instance, if incontinence is a problem, the



patients can see an incontinence specialist in our office. We also have a counselor and a neurophysiologist available for patients needing more in depth testing or intervention.

After the assessment takes place, the information is shared with the primary care physician. This information is shared with the family and patient at the time of the Family Summary Conference. This conference provides an opportunity for us to explain our recommendations and to answer any questions that may arise. We follow the patient along with the primary doctor to implement the recommendations and to adjust the care plan as the situation changes over time.

Medicare and any supplemental insurance will be billed to help cover the cost of the assessment.

If you are interested in this type of assessment or have questions please ask your primary care physician for a referral or contact the Center for Senior Health at (330) 375-4100.



Ask Nancy...

Question: My father is becoming more confused every day and as a result, my daily responsibilities are increasing. To be honest, I am overwhelmed and exhausted. I feel responsible since my siblings work full time and I am a stay at home mom. Do you have any suggestions?

Caregiving, at the very least, is a day-to-day challenge. It is normal for caregivers to feel frustrated, anxious, and overwhelmed with the daily tasks and responsibilities.

While I understand that your father's needs and concerns are foremost, it is equally important to recognize the need to care for yourself. If you allow yourself to become overwhelmed and

overstressed, you will be of no help to your father or yourself.

Here are some suggestions to avoid burnout:

Listen to your body: you will know when you are pushing too hard. You need to take "a time out." Try relaxation techniques or aromatherapy.

Pay attention to nutrition: eat properly and take vitamins if needed.

Exercise regularly: find time to take a walk or go to the YMCA for a swim and a sauna. (cont. p.4)



How's Your Ticker? Focus on Heart Health

Tips for Prevention of Heart Disease and Heart Attack



Stop Smoking



Reduce Blood Cholesterol



Aim for a Healthy Weight



Manage Diabetes



Reduce Stress



Limit Alcohol



Be Physically Active Every Day (Always check with your Doctor FIRST)

Warning Signs of Heart Attack



Chest Discomfort



Discomfort in Areas of the Upper Body



Shortness of Breath



Breaking out in a Cold Sweat



Nausea



Lightheadedness

GET TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK!

Signs and Symptoms of Heart Failure



Shortness of Breath



Persistent Coughing or Wheezing



Swelling in Feet, Ankles, Legs



Tiredness/Fatigue



Lack of Appetite



Confusion or Impaired Thinking



Increased Heart Rate



Nausea

For further information please contact the American Heart Association:

By Phone: (800)242-8721

By Website: www.americanheart.org

Source: American Heart Association



AREA AGENCY ON AGING, 10B, INC.

1550 Corporate Woods Parkway
Uniontown, Ohio 44685

330-896-9172
(800)421-7277

Giving caregivers a helping hand

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

[We're on the web:
www.services4aging.org]



Ask Nancy (Cont.p.2)

If you would like to talk to a Family Caregiver Consultant, please contact us at

(800)421-7277 (x3995)

E-mail: familycaregiver@services4aging.org

Take time off: just an hour can make a difference. A day would be better! This is a time when you need to relinquish control and tell your family you need help with dad.

Organize a Family Planning Session: bring your family members together to quietly sit down and review your father's needs and their accompanying responsibilities. Ask your brothers and sisters which tasks they would feel most comfortable in assuming. Have a calendar ready to list the days and times the person will be responsible.

Set boundaries and limitations: identify your own boundaries and limitations and stick to them. It is not selfish to take care of "you."

If you have a question you would like to "Ask Nancy"

E-mail her at

nburkhart@services4aging.org



Caregivers Corner

"YOU ARE HERE FOR A REASON!"

"In this particular time and place in your life . . . and perhaps the very specific challenges facing you right now are truly invitations to expand your capacity to be patient, courageous, flexible, forgiving, to make wise choices, to see things from a wider perspective and by embracing and growing through them, to become ever more fully the compassionate, insightful, aware, wise, deep and beautiful soul that you are truly meant to be."

-Caroline Joy Adams