

Caregiver Assistance Newsletter

“CARING FOR YOU...CARING FOR OTHERS”

Emergencies—When to go to the Emergency Room

In the course of caring for an elderly person or one with Alzheimer’s disease, an accident may occur or the person will appear to be seriously ill. A person with dementia can fall and break a bone, and not complain of pain. Also, a relatively minor illness or discomfort may make the person extremely upset. Because of his/her dementia, the person may not be able to help you to decide what kind of care is needed. Is this an emergency? If it is, you should call 911, the fire department or whatever agency is in charge of sending the Emergency Medical Service in your area. You should *not* try to take the person to the emergency room on your own. Call for an ambulance if a person has these symptoms—

- Becomes unconscious or has a marked change in mental state
- Sudden, severe chest pain
- A fall that results in severe pain or inability to move
- An accident that results in a blow to the head
- Uncontrollable bleeding
- High fever accompanied by confusion and delusions
- Difficulty breathing
- Has no signs of breathing (no movement or response to touch or voice)
- Repeated or forceful vomiting; if vomiting blood or bleeding from the rectum
- Failure to urinate for more than twelve hours
- Sudden slurring of speech, loss of vision or balance, extreme weakness
- Violent or uncontrollable behavior
- Swallowed a poisonous substance
- Has had a seizure

- Has a severe headache and slurred speech
- Has pressure or severe pain in the abdomen that does not go away



OR

- If moving the person could cause further injury
- If traffic or distance would cause a life-threatening delay in getting to the hospital
- If the person is too heavy for you to lift or help

Ambulance service is expensive and may *not* be covered by insurance. Use it when you believe there is an *emergency*.

In An Emergency

Step 1: Call 911

Step 2: Care for the victim

Also **call 911** for emergencies involving fire, explosion, poisonous gas, fallen electrical wires or other life-threatening situations.

Items to Take to ER

- Insurance policy numbers
- List of medical problems/medications being taken
- Personal physician’s name and number
- Name and number of relative/friend of person in care
- Your own wallet, with credit card, cash, I.D. and reading material
- Pair of shoes, clothes and coat to be worn home if the person is not admitted to the hospital

NOTE:

Make sure 911 is posted on your phone, or is even on speed-dial. Keep written driving instructions near the phone for how to get to your house. If you have a speakerphone, use the speaker when talking to the dispatcher. This way, you can follow the dispatcher's instructions while attending to the emergency.

**DNR**

If the person in your care has signed a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order, have it available to show the paramedics. Otherwise, they are required to initiate resuscitation (reviving the person). The order must go with the patient. The Do Not Resuscitate order must be with the patient at all times.

Chest Pain

Any chest pain that lasts more than a few minutes is related to the heart until proven otherwise. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.

Don't wait to see if it goes away. Danger signs include—

- pain radiating from the chest down the arms, up the neck to the jaw, and into the back
- crushing, squeezing chest pain or heavy pressure in the chest
- shortness of breath, sweating, nausea and vomiting, weakness
- bluish, pale skin
- skin that is moist
- excessive perspiration

If the person is unresponsive (no movement or response to touch or voice), **call 911**. Be prepared to start CPR.

Note

Courses in CPR are available from your local American Red Cross, hospital, or other agency.

Taking Care of Yourself— **Better Sleep for Better Dieting**

If you are trying to lose weight, get a sufficient amount of sleep. If you are not getting enough sleep while dieting, you may be hungrier and struggle to adhere to the regimen.

Sounder sleep rules:

- Reserve your bedroom for only sleep and intimacy. Make your bedroom a sanctuary from the normal hustle and bustle of life.
- Make a sleep schedule. Before that sleep period starts, give yourself time to unwind slowly. Dim the lights in your bedroom an hour before sleep.
- Make sure your room is cool at around 67 degrees.
- Don't eat a large meal two to three hours before going to sleep.
- Limit alcohol. It can help you fall asleep more quickly, but later it disrupts sleep.
- Avoid caffeine for at least three hours before going to sleep.

Most of all try to clear your mind of hurts, worries and future planning.

Source: *Annals of Internal Medicine*; *New York Times*; *WebMD*

Inspiration

*Life is ten percent
what you make it and
ninety percent how you take it!*

Live Life Laughing!

Breathe
in and out.

Is there
any other way?



Don't Fall – Be Safe

Messy Floors? Are papers, magazines, books, shoes, or other objects strewn on the floor? Always keep objects off the floor.

Note

A major cause of emergency room visits for frail or demented older adults is dehydration, which occurs when a person is either not getting enough liquids or excreting too much urine. The most common symptom is headache.

Family Ties

LifeSpan Resources
PO Box 995, 33 State St.
New Albany, IN 47151



Family Matters

Phone: 812-948-8330
Toll Free: 1-888-948-8330

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**LifeSpan Resources
"Family Caregiver
Support Group"**

Below is the meeting time for our family caregiver support group. This is a great place to find relief from stress, meet other caregivers and draw from their experiences.

**1st Thurs. of ea. month
St. Luke's United Church
of Christ
329 Walnut Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47130
6:30pm to 8:00pm**

Farmers Market Coupons Availability – June 15, 2011

Coupons to use at area state approved Farmers Markets will be available on a limited basis to those 60 years of age and over who qualify. There are six \$3.00 coupons, for a total of \$18.00 for each participant. Availability is on a first come, first serve basis. If the participant is not mobile, he or she may appoint a proxy at least 18 years of age to obtain the coupons and go to the market in the participant's place.

Basic Qualifications:

- Must fill out application and pick up coupons in person at LifeSpan Health Services, located at 317 East Fifth Street in New Albany
- Must be an Indiana resident of Floyd, Clark, Scott, or Harrison county
- Must be 60 years old by October 1, 2011
- Must be willing to spend all coupons at designated local Farmers Markets by October 15, 2011 (a list of Farmers Markets will be provided)

Income Qualifications:

- Income is recorded on the enrollment application based on a verbal declaration of income or documentation of participation in another means tested program
- Applicant must have a maximum self-reported household income of no more than 185% of Annual Poverty Guidelines (monthly income for household of one: \$1,679; monthly income for a household of two: \$2,268)
OR if applicant shows TANF, Food Stamp or SFCP documentation at time of application
OR if applicant is a member of a household participating in the Indiana WIC program

For information please contact: Janet Manzo at 812.948.6061 or jmanzo@lsr14.org