



Caregiver Corner



... Ideas and information for people caring for others 778-2411

Winter Survival Tips

1. Listen to forecasts and warnings to avoid being caught in a storm.
2. Make sure you have an adequate supply of heating fuel on hand.
3. Have an emergency supply of food and water in case you are snowed in.
4. Have emergency cooking equipment such as a camp stove in case of a power loss.
5. You should have a battery powered flashlight and a battery operated radio with extra batteries.
6. In bad weather, travel only when necessary.
7. Keep a full tank of gas in the car and make sure the car is in good condition with appropriate tires.
8. Have storm supplies in the car such as sand, a scraper, a rope, flashlight, and batteries.
9. Travel in daylight and use major roads.
10. Avoid overexertion.

Other ways to protect you in the winter months are to eat properly and to dress warmly. Well balanced meals help the body produce its own heat. Wearing several thin layers of clothing provides increased protection.

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Older people are at risk for hypothermia. Hypothermia is a condition marked by an abnormally low internal body temperature, usually, below 96 degrees. Alcohol consumption, chronic illness, and certain medications can cause a decrease in body temperature. A person suffering from hypothermia can be disoriented, drowsy, have a slow heartbeat, a weakened pulse, and slurred speech. A person experiencing symptoms should seek medical attention as soon as possible. To prevent hypothermia, a person should be kept warm and dry.

Winter will be less of a hardship with some advanced preparation and taking precautions.

Caregivers' Chat

Would you like to chat with other caregivers in a friendly, informal setting? Come and share your experiences or just listen. The next **Caregivers' Chat** will be **Monday, January 8th** from 1-3 PM at the Stay Healthy Center, which is located in the Oakdale Mall near Sears. Caregivers' Chat is a small informal discussion group for people who are concerned about an older friend or relative. We ordinarily meet the first Monday of each month at the Stay Healthy Center; this month we are meeting the second Monday due to the New Year's Day holiday.

You are welcome to bring a snack or beverage with you and enjoy the company of other caregivers.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Andrea Wright or Judy Bobinski at 778-2411.

Caregiver Services and its publication, "Caregiver Corner" are supported by a grant from the New York State Office for the Aging

Medicare Update

With the introduction of Medicare D and some other changes, there is a lot happening with Medicare. It can be confusing and at times overwhelming. To help caregivers and seniors learn about Medicare coverage and where to turn for help, the Broome County Office for Aging will host a "Medicare Update" on Wednesday, January 10, 2007 from 6-8 PM at the Broome County Library, 185 Court Street, Binghamton. Our presenter will be Cathy Tulloch from Action for Older Persons.

Pre-registration is requested. Light refreshments will be served. For questions or to register, please call Andrea Wright in Caregiver Services at 778-2411.

"How to Balance a Checkbook"

Sometimes women find themselves needing to take over the family finances for the first time. *How to Balance a Checkbook* is a 2 hour session designed to help the first time money manager. The past sessions have been well attended and future sessions will be scheduled if there is enough interest. Pre-registration is required. Please call Caregiver Services at 778-2411 if you would like to attend a session or if you have questions.

An Alphabetic Guideline for Living (Adapted from an article in *The Mustard Seed*)

Take each of the thoughts below and use them as they work for you:

A is for Attention
B is for Beauty
C is for Connections

D is for Devotion
E is for Enthusiasm
F is for Faith
G is for Grace
H is for Hope
I is for Imagination
J is for Joy
K is for Kindness
L is for Listening
M is for Meaning
N is for Nurturing
O is for Openness
P is for Play
Q is for Questing
R is for Reverence
S is for Silence
T is for Transformation
U is for Unity
V is for Vision
W is for Wonder
X is for Mystery
Y is for Yearning
Z is for Zeal

Caregiver Resolutions

Chances are that many times in your life, you have made New Year's resolutions and then broken them. It isn't too late to try and make some resolutions and keep them. Here are some tips to help you make resolutions that will stick:

- Be realistic in your goals.
- Think about what you hope to accomplish.
- Outline your plan.
- Make a list of pros and cons for each resolution.
- Reward yourself for your successes.
- Don't get frustrated.
- Keep trying.

Below are some samples of resolutions that were found on the Internet:

Example 1

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- ✓ I resolve to take better care of myself.
- ✓ I resolve to ask for help when needed.
- ✓ I resolve to accept help when offered.
- ✓ I resolve to forgive myself for ____.
- ✓ I resolve to forgive the person I care for about ____.
- ✓ I resolve to accept the situation for what it is.
- ✓ I resolve to seek out and use appropriate services.
- ✓ I resolve to attend a support group when needed.
- ✓ I resolve to learn everything I can about the person's illness/condition.

Example 2

- ✓ I will commit the time to find some kicks.
- ✓ I will start to mix with others who are also caregivers.
- ✓ I will deep six the following: anger, fear, shame, and guilt.
- ✓ I will remember to smile and laugh a bit.

Use these examples as a guide and make some resolutions that will help you, the caregiver.

Be Aware of Caller ID Scam

If you have Caller ID to protect yourself from unwanted calls, be aware that there is a new scam called "spoofing" that uses Caller ID displays. There is a new technology that enables a caller to manipulate the phone number and name that show up on a person's Caller ID display. There are a number of firms that sell this service. This is how it works:

A person purchases a card that gives them access to a toll-free number. When they call the number they enter their PIN, a fake caller identity, and the number they want to call. They then can select a voice to use. There are times when spoofing is legitimate. Sometimes law enforcement uses it and people can use it if they need to disguise a phone number. The dark side is that scam artists are using this service to get people to reveal their personal information, such

as Social Security numbers. One example is where a Spoofer uses a number that indicates the call is coming from the courthouse. The voice tells the person that they failed to show up for jury duty and must pay a fine. They ask the person for personal data to reschedule them for jury duty to avoid the fine. **If you should receive a call like this, do not give out any information.** The bottom line is that you cannot assume that the information displayed on your caller ID is accurately identifying the person on the other end.

Members Wanted for Online Caregiver Support Group

Are you a caregiver who has access to the Internet? If so, please visit our online support group, *Southern Tier Caregivers Support*. This message board style support group is sponsored by Broome County Office for Aging Caregiver Services and is available on the Yahoo Groups network. You can log on to www.gobroomecounty.com/community/sccgcgroup.php and post a message, read messages, ask a question, or provide an answer. All of this can be done in the comfort of your own home. You can also remain anonymous. Please check us out!

New Group for Caregivers of Older Adults with Vision Problems

Are you helping an older relative or friend who has a vision problem? If you are, do you sometimes feel stressed or down? You are not alone and there are people that can help.

Lighthouse International is now offering a free statewide telephone support group for caregivers of older adults with vision impairments. It is led by a counselor and "meets" over the phone every two weeks for 9 one-hour sessions. Participants will have the opportunity to share concerns, learn practical tips for dealing with stressful situations, learn how to improve communication,

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and have a private, one-hour session with the counselor to discuss personal issues.

Lighthouse International is a leading non-profit organization that helps people of all ages who are at risk for, or are experiencing, vision loss. They provide services, research and education, and advocate to help people with low vision and blindness live safe, independent and productive lives.

Diabetes is a disease that can cause damage to small blood vessels in the eyes. High blood glucose levels cause this damage. Damaged blood vessels in the eye could cause blurred vision, and may eventually lead to blindness. The Lighthouse International telephone support group can help caregivers of people with diabetes who are experiencing vision problems.

If you are interested in participating in the free caregivers support group or would like to learn more about the group, please contact Verena

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Your January 2007 "Caregiver Corner"

January 2007

Cimarolli in the Arlene R. Gordon Research Institute at Lighthouse International at (212) 821-9376 or e-mail at vcimarolli@lighthouse.org.

For more information about diabetes or complications of diabetes such as vision loss, contact the Southern Tier Healthy Living Partnership toll-free at 1-877-276-1019, option 2.

New Service for Spanish-Speaking Seniors

The number of Latino elders in our community has increased in recent years, and is expected to continue to grow in the future. Broome County Office for Aging has arranged to have a Spanish-speaking translator available on the first Thursday of the month from 1-3 p.m. The Office for Aging is located on the 4th floor of the Broome County Office Building, which is located at 44 Hawley Street in downtown Binghamton. This service will begin on March 1, 2007. For more information, call the Senior Resource Line at 778-2411.