



Grandparents Corner

November 2017

When Your Child Has a Disability

Hearing that your child has a disability can be overwhelming. You may feel a range of emotions, including disbelief, anger and helplessness. These are all common reactions. This may not be an easy time, but there is much you can do that is positive. Of course, every child and family is unique. Try to take it one day at a time – and know you are doing the best you can for your child.

Take Heart - The hopes you had for your child can seem so different since learning of a disability. You may find sadness and fear. Your worries might range from wondering about your child's future to whether you could somehow be to blame. Again, it's important to know that feelings such as these are normal. Yes, there will be challenges ahead, but you don't have to face them alone. It can be reassuring to know that there are resources available for children and families.

Seek Knowledge - Begin by moving forward and learning what you can about your child's disability. Being knowledgeable about the disability will help you understand what to expect or how you can help. Look for resources which include national organizations that focus on specific disabilities, or talk with the doctors and other professionals who see your child. Ask questions as much as you need to.

Connect with Other Parents - Many people find it very helpful to talk with other parents of children with disabilities. This might be one-to-one or in a support group. In today's world, you don't necessarily need to meet in person. Online networks make it easy for parents to reach out when it's most convenient for them.

Open Up - Are there people in your life – perhaps family members or close friends – who you know will be supportive? You might lean on them for strength. Or, simply let them listen and care. Don't hesitate to speak with a counselor, as well.

Live Your Life - Try to take positive steps each day. These tips can help you cope – and help your family thrive:

- √ Take care. Look after your own mental and physical health. If caregiving is wearing you out, ask for help. Don't feel guilty. Remember, your child needs you to be well.
- √ Focus on what's good. There will be tough days. But, there will be happy times ahead, too.
- √ Be a family. Other children may feel overlooked. Or, spouses may find themselves drifting apart. Ask loved ones how they're feeling. And, spend time together. Balance is important in any family.

Remember, above all, your child needs your love and acceptance. Just as you would want others to do, appreciate your child for the unique and wonderful person they are.

Source: *United Healthcare* - www.uhc.com

People with COPD may be affected by irritating substances in the air. Any kind of air pollution inside or outside of the home should be avoided. Some people are highly allergic to mold and may have trouble breathing if they are exposed to it. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. *Oxygen therapy can greatly improve energy levels, the ability to breathe, and overall quality of life. T F*
2. *Care must be taken to avoid having anything flammable in the room where the oxygen container is kept, such as a cigarette lighter or gas range. T F*
3. *When lung disease progresses to the point that the lungs can't supply enough oxygen to meet the needs of the body, the doctor may prescribe home oxygen therapy. T F*
4. *One of the main goals of rehabilitation for people with lung disease is to increase the ability to breathe. T F*
5. *If you are used to smoking, it does not make any kind of lung disease worse. T F*
6. *People with COPD often have excess mucus in their lungs, which makes breathing more difficult. T F*
7. *Drinking enough fluid every day keeps the mucus thin. T F*
8. *There is nothing that can be done to clear mucus from the lungs. T F*
9. *Many people with COPD become sick during flu season, and the flu can lead to pneumonia. T F*
10. *Diaphragmatic breathing, also known as belly breathing, helps a person to relax and get more air out of the lungs. T F*

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. T 4. T 5. F 6. T 7. T 8. F 9. T 10. T