

Caregiver Assistance News

"Caring for You - Caring for Others"

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike,
Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age Better!**



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Lifting Safely - Watch Your Back!

As a caregiver, you may have to help the person in your care move from place to place by lifting them. When you learn how to control and balance your own body, you can safely control and move another person. You can injure your back by not focusing on what you are doing, whether you are bending improperly to pick a pen up off the floor, or loading the dishwasher. Being a caregiver places you at even more risk for back injuries. Many occur when lifting, moving, transferring or changing the position of the person in your care. Improper movements can cause injury to the person being moved, such as abrasions to skin, strains, sprains and tears - even fractures. Learn how to avoid harming yourself and the one in your care.



Prevent Back Injury

Use the same procedure for all transfers, so that a routine is set up:

- Never lift more than you can comfortably handle.
- Create a base of support by standing with your feet 8 - 12 inches apart (about shoulder width), with one foot a half-step ahead of the other.
- DO NOT let your back do the heavy work: USE YOUR LEGS. (The back muscles are not your strongest muscles.)
- If the bed is low, place one foot on a foot stool. This relieves pressure on your lower back.
- Consider using a back support belt.
- If sitting for extended periods, get up every 20 minutes to give your spine relief.
- Gently stretch often during the day.
- Maintain a healthy weight to reduce pressure on your spine.
- Have a program to manage stress such as yoga, meditation, or even simple walking.
- Quit smoking, as nicotine slows the flow of blood to the vertebrae and disks, and impairs their function. Smokers tend to lose bone faster than non-smokers, placing them at risk for osteoporosis.

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Prevent Back Injury (continued from Page 1)

Extra Stress on Back and Joints

If you are overweight, lose weight. Excess weight places extra stress on back and stomach muscles and on joints. One pound of extra weight places four extra pounds of stress on knee joints.



Raising the Person's Head and Shoulders

1. If possible, ask the person to lift their head and dig both elbows into the bed to support their body.
2. Face the head of the bed, feet 8 - 12 inches apart, knees bent, back in neutral.
3. Help the person lift their shoulders by placing your hands and forearms under the pillow and their shoulder blades.
4. Use bent knees, back in neutral, and locked arms to assist the lift.
5. Adjust the pillow.

Helping a Person Sit Up

1. Tell the person what you are going to do.
2. Bend the person's knees.
3. Roll them on their side so that they are facing you.
4. Reach one arm under their shoulder blade.
5. Place the other arm in the back of their knees.
6. Position your feet 8 - 12 inches apart with your center of gravity close to the bed and the person.
7. Keep your back in a neutral position.
8. Count "1-2-3" and shift your weight to your back leg.
9. Shift the person's legs over the edge of the bed while pulling their shoulders to a sitting position.
10. Remain in front of them until they are stabilized.

NOTE: If during a transfer you start to "lose" the person, do not try to hold them up. Instead, lower them to the floor.

Community Wellness Classes

brought to you by the Area Agency on Aging District 7

Chronic Disease Self-Management • Diabetes Self-Management

A Matter of Balance Falls Prevention • Tools for Caregivers

Classes available throughout our ten-county district in 2016. Contact us to learn more about these FREE classes and when we will be in your area!

1-800-582-7277 or info@aaa7.org



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF



Live Longer with Exercise

Studies show that regular exercise can make us live longer. Why you should start making some lifestyle changes to be more active:

- Exercise gives you a healthier heart because it burns fat and helps lower bad cholesterol while increasing good cholesterol levels.
- Exercise keeps the brain healthy, thus reducing the risk of stroke, dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.
- Exercise helps you maintain a healthy weight and reduce blood sugar levels, thus preventing diabetes.
- Exercise helps you stay strong and mobile because it improves muscle strength, joint mobility and flexibility, and bone mass.

Be Wary of Scams

Guard your Medicare number – which in most cases is your Social Security number – the same way you would protect your bank and credit card information. Don’t give it to anyone you don’t know for certain is part of your health care team. Medicare will never call or email you with product offers.



Alzheimer’s Support Events

JACKSON/VINTON - Alzheimer’s/Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group

Third Thursday of Each Month from 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
(Locations listed below will rotate)

Four Winds Nursing Facility, 215 Seth Avenue, Jackson, AND
Jenkins Care Community, 142 Jenkins Memorial Road, Wellston
Call Melissa Dever at 740-710-1821 for more information about location.

SCIOTO COUNTY - Alzheimer’s/Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group

First Tuesday of Each Month from 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Southern Ohio Medical Center - East Campus
2201 25th Street (Gibson Building - 1st Floor), Portsmouth

Can’t Attend in Person?? Teleconferencing Option Now Available!! - During the meeting time, call (401) 283-4239 and enter PIN# 95249, or call Melissa Dever w/ the Alzheimer’s Association ahead of time with your number to be called to join once the meeting starts. Ms. Dever can be reached at 740-710-1821.

Don’t Fall - Be Safe

Have your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses. Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.





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Safety Tips - *First Consider the Task*

Think about what you are capable of, what assistance you might need, and to what degree the one in your care can assist you. Eliminate hazards such as clutter, throw rugs, or excess furniture. When planning on the space you need to transfer, allow for more space than you think you need.

- Let the person you are helping do as much as they can do safely.
- Never let the person place their arms around your neck.
- Have the person PUSH off rails, chair arms, etc. (No pulling)
- Avoid sudden jerking movements; move slowly and communicate what you are doing and need the person to do. Remember, if the person in your care does not move often, they may become lightheaded with a change in position - move slowly!
- Have all equipment you need ready, such as a transfer belt, wheelchair, etc. Make sure the wheelchair or bed brakes are locked.
- If, during a transfer, you start to “lose” the person, do not try to hold them up. Doing so will probably result in an injury. Instead, lower them slowly to the floor and call for assistance.

