

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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Elder Abuse

Abuse can happen to any older person, but often affects those who depend on others for help with activities of everyday life—including bathing, dressing, and taking medicine. Most victims of abuse are women. The most likely targets are older people who have no family or friends nearby and people with disabilities and/or dementia. One in ten adults over age 60 are abused, neglected or financially exploited.

Types of Elder Abuse

Sometimes caregivers become exhausted, and resentment starts to build, especially when caring for someone with dementia or a very difficult or abusive person. Elder abuse can take many forms:

- **Neglect**—Failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation constitutes more than half of all reported cases of elder abuse. It can be intentional or unintentional, based on factors such as ignorance or denial that the individual needs as much care as he or she does. This can be refusing to provide food, medicine and personal care, such as bathing or helping a person with toileting; over-medicating; or withholding eyeglasses, dentures or walking aids.
- **Physical violence**—Slapping, kicking or sexual abuse. Physical elder abuse is a non-accidental use of force against an older adult that results in physical pain, injury, or impairment. Such abuse includes not only physical assaults such as hitting or shoving but the inappropriate use of drugs, restraints, or confinement.
- **Emotional abuse**—Intentionally keeping the person from friends and family; verbally attacking or demeaning him or her.
- **Financial abuse**—Stealing money, credit cards or property; tricking an older adult into signing documents, such as wills.



If an older adult’s behavior changes and appears to be fearful of a caregiver or family member and you suspect elder abuse, contact the Adult Protective Services Agency in your county department of human services or call your local Area Agency on Aging for guidance. If someone you care about is in imminent danger, call 911 NOW. If your concern is for someone who lives in another state, call the Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116 for in-state help-line phone numbers. All these hotlines are free and anonymous.

Source: National Institutes of Health; CDC

Dealing with Difficult Behaviors in Alzheimer's Disease

In your caregiving, you will find some Alzheimer's disease (AD) behaviors more difficult to deal with than others. You will need to learn skillful ways of coping both with the behavior and how to keep yourself from caregiver burnout. Your reaction depends on how you interpret the behavior. If you can think of these behaviors as the person with Alzheimer's way of communicating what they need and feel or what is upsetting them, you may have an easier time responding calmly.

Check if the person in your care may be —

- feeling ill, in pain, overtired, or having a reaction to a medication.
- not able to understand what you want them to do or just not in the mood for what you have in mind.
- bored, overstimulated or just having a bad day— symptoms often vary from day-to-day.

Check if you are —

- trying to make them do something at a different time of day.
- expecting too much for their skills or rushing them.
- giving too many directions at once.
- speaking in an angry or bossy way or acting stressed out.

Physically Aggressive Behavior

People with AD may become physically aggressive, although this does not occur as often as people think. They may sometimes throw things, hit, kick, bite, or pinch the caregiver. They may not know why they are doing this, and they may not even realize that they are doing it. These displays of behavior can be very frightening. Try to remember that these behaviors are probably an indication that the person with AD is very upset about something.

When it looks like they are becoming upset and may seem to be spoiling for a fight, or perhaps using threatening language, you may feel frightened and tempted to fight back. Try to stay calm, use a reassuring tone, and distract the person. Usually, the person with Alzheimer's disease will calm down in a few minutes if you do not bother them.



Memory Care

Medications - When changes in the environment and the way care is provided have not worked, certain medications may help the person to be more cooperative and comfortable. Medications have side effects and don't work for every person, so be prepared to work with the person's doctor to find the best one.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Feeling Cold

Winter is here and one of the common changes people notice while they are aging is that they are more sensitive to cold temperatures; however, even healthy people who are growing older may also experience feeling cold. This is because the blood vessels, which help conserve body heat, are not as elastic as they used to be and their responses to changes in temperature become slower. Feeling cold does not necessarily mean that you need treatment. Sometimes, the best thing to do is to just have a cup of hot tea, put on a warm sweater and a cozy pair of socks. If you have been feeling cold for some time, and bundling up does not seem to help, ask yourself if the unusual feeling is related to other symptoms. For example, have you noticed any changes in weight or any weakness? Do you feel cold all over or is it just your hands and feet? Help your doctor evaluate your symptoms by discussing them with him or her.



Census 2020: Everyone Counts

Once a decade, America comes together to participate in the decennial census. The census provides the basis for reapportioning Congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing billions of dollars in federal and state funding to support your state, county, and community's vital programs. Look for information mailed to your home in March, and for the first time, you can choose to respond online, by phone or by mail.

CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!

Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

Everyone Counts

The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.



Your privacy is protected.

It's against the law for the Census Bureau to publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you or your household.

By law, your responses cannot be used against you and can only be used to produce statistics.



The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data.

That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.

It's about \$675 billion.



2020 will be easier than ever.

In 2020, you will be able to respond to the census Online.



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Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the Area Agency on Aging District 7 can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency can also be reached via e-mail at info@aaa7.org.

Safety Tips - Threatening Behavior with Alzheimer's Disease

Do not restrain the person. This could cause serious injury to both of you.

1. Get out of striking distance. Step away so that they cannot reach you.
2. Call for help if you need it. You can call a friend, family member, or neighbor to help you get the person calmed down. If you have to, you can also call 911 or your local emergency number.
3. Try to avoid creating a situation in which the person with Alzheimer's Disease will feel threatened because this will only make them more upset.



What seems like violent behavior may be the way this person is responding to changes in their brain or to events that they do not understand and interpret as dangerous in some way. These might be an unfamiliar person entering the room, attempts to take something away from them, fear of being hurt, an exaggerated response to something happening suddenly, not knowing how to express anger appropriately, or just an effort to avoid complying with a demand.

Source: The Comfort of Home for Alzheimer's Disease