

Caregiver Connection

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Welcome to the Caregiver Connection Ezine. We have updated our look and technology so we can better send you the most current information about caregiving events, conferences, and issues that are important to you.



Please consult our website for more information: www.njcaregivers.org.

Possible US Postage Stamp Honoring Caregivers

A United States postage stamp honoring family caregivers is being considered by the U.S. Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee for introduction in 2011. This is a great way to recognize the family caregiver and all their hard work. To submit a letter of support please write to:

Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee
 c/o Stamp Development
 U.S. Postal Service
 1735 North Lynn St. Ste. 5013
 Arlington, VA 22209-06432

For more information, contact Mary Theresa Vasquez at caregiverstamp@aol.com

Quick Links

- Caregivers of New Jersey**
- The Family Support Center of New Jersey**
- The Family Resource Network**

[Join our Mailing List!](#)

Upcoming Events

The Gifts of Caregiving

Sunday, April 26, 2009, 1:00pm-4:00 pm
Overlook Hospital, Wallace Auditorium
99 Beauvoir Avenue, Summit, NJ 07902
Guest Speaker, Award Winning Author, Connie Goldman
Free Parking in the West Garage
Please RSVP to 908-522-5495.

Women and Heart Disease Summit

Monday, April 27, 2009, 8:30am-12pm
Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown, NJ
Featured Guest, Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen
Please call Barbara Ballard or Sarah Kan at (908) 212-0333 for more info.

Diversity and End of Life Care

Live via Satellite and Webcast
Wednesday, April 29, 2009, 1pm-4:30pm
Discuss the impact culture has at time of death and
bereavement, increase cultural sensitivity and overcome challenges
when cultural considerations cause ethical or moral concerns.
Call (609) 652-4227 for more information.

Fostering a Good Death: Encouraging Informed Discussion

Tuesday, May 12, 2009, 8am-5pm
The Richard Stockton College of NJ, Jimmie Leeds Road, Pomona, NJ
Join colleagues for a professional education opportunity about end of life issues.
For more information please visit www.stockton.edu/hshs,
contact cs-hshs@stockton.edu, or call 609-652-4227.

Rally at the State House

Thursday, May 14, 2009, 12pm-2pm
West State Street, Trenton, NJ
Join the NJ Association of Centers for Independent Living and
the NJ Statewide Independent Living Council to save funding of
independent living for citizens with disabilities.
Call (609) 581-4500 or (908) 782-1055 to sign up.

Seniors and Diabetes - What You Need to Know

By Senior Daily Living

Diabetes impairs the health and well-being of 16 million people in the United States, and senior citizens run a particular risk. Due to already existent challenges to their health and lifestyle, it is more difficult to diagnose seniors with diabetes. Often other illnesses can mask diabetic symptoms.

Seniors with diabetes run a greater risk of complications like heart disease, stroke, loss of limbs from poor circulation, kidney disease and even blindness.

Diabetes is a disease by which the body cannot make or use its own insulin, a substance in the body which transforms sugar into usable energy. There are two types of Diabetes; Type 1 and Type 2. Those who suffer from Type 1 are in most cases children or young adults. Type 2 accounts for 90%-95% of all diabetes sufferers, and is most often found in people over the age of 45.

The chances of getting Type 2 diabetes escalates as you age. Some 18% of people over the age of 65 are sufferers. Those at risk usually have a history of Type 2 in their families, are overweight, get little to no exercise, or have problems with their cholesterol. African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanic groups are at greater risk.

Common symptoms and warning signs include:

- Frequent urination
- Extreme thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Excessive Weight Loss
- Exhaustion
- Irritability
- Blurred Vision
- Difficulty seeing
- Frequent infections
- Cuts or Bruises that will not heal or heal slowly
- Tingling or Numbness in the hands or feet
- Recurring skin, gum, or bladder infections

So what are your options if you're diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes? For the most part, it's a self-managed disease. The most important way to regulate your own diabetes is through diet and exercise. Losing weight if you are overweight, staying active and consistently keeping your blood sugar levels under control through self-monitoring will keep your diabetes symptoms and overall health in check. You'll need access to supplies like meters, test strips, and insulin. These supplies are often covered through your health insurance policy.

It's unfortunately difficult for a person with diabetes to obtain and keep health and life insurance, but not impossible. Insurance options for seniors with Type 2 include Medicare Plan D, state programs like EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage) and State Health Insurance Counseling and Assistance Programs (SHIP). Research your options online or talk to a healthcare agent.

Physical activity is a must, even for seniors without diabetes. Check with your local YMCA for physical fitness classes geared towards seniors, or if you're homebound, chair exercises or just simple tasks like gardening and cleaning can be helpful. Check with your physician before beginning any physical regimen.



How Do You know if Your Loved One is Happy?

Todd Goldberg, MD, CMD, FACP, from American Medical Directors Association newsletter, Caring for the Aging, March, 09

It is important to know if your loved one's needs and wants are being met in a long term care facility. The physician can help make sure that he or she gets the food, activities, attention, spiritual support, and other things to be happy and comfortable.

There are clinical tools to assess the quality of life and even happiness, but these may not always be reliable. When people can communicate, it is easy - and important - to ask if they are happy, talk about things they would like to do, and discuss fond memories.

If your loved one has dementia or can't tell someone how they feel, you should make sure to let the staff at the long term care facility know what he/she was like before they got sick. This should include foods they like/dislike, the kinds of work they did, hobbies, religious or ethnic traditions, and favorite things such as dogs or movies.

When the staff knows what makes someone happy, they can better enhance their quality of life so even seriously ill residents/patients can find pleasure in everyday life.

Questions to Ask Your Physician:

What will happen if my loved one seems sad or unhappy?

How can you tell if my loved one is depressed? When might treatment be needed?

What can I do to make my loved one more happy and comfortable in the facility?

How can my loved one have his or her choices filled?

How do we balance *chance* with *risk*?

How can I be involved in facility activities and programs to share happy times with my loved one?

What You Can Do:

Talk to the physician and staff about your loved one's hobbies, favorite things and other facts about their lives that will help them keep your loved one happy.

Make sure the physician and staff know about things that are upsetting or that your loved one dislikes.

Bring possessions from home that might make your loved one more comfortable, such as family photos or a favorite quilt.

Work with staff to arrange for your loved one to be part of activities they enjoy. For example, make plans to watch Sunday afternoon football with Dad.

Don't forget the joy of small things - a hand massage, a new book, or favorite flowers.

Anticipation is an important part of happiness. Try to plan events, such as watching a movie together every Friday night.

For a Happiness Assessment Scale and other information, please [click here](#).

For more information please follow the links below for more articles on happiness:

[Sadly, It's Hard to Measure Resident Happiness](#)

[Happy Old Folks](#)

Lifespan Respite To Receive \$2.5 Million

The FY09 Omnibus Appropriations bill signed by the President on March 11, 2009 includes \$2.5 million for Lifespan Respite for the current year. These funds must be obligated before September 30.

The NJ Lifespan Respite Coalition is seeking \$71.1 (the amount authorized in the Lifespan Respite Care Act) for fiscal year 2010.

The Act authorizes competitive grants to Aging and Disability Resource Centers in collaboration with a state respite coalition or organization to make available respite services to caregivers regardless of age or disability.

To join the NJ Lifespan Respite Coalition, contact Dana Goldberg at (732) 262-8020.

National Caregivers Conference Opportunities Available

The National Caregivers Conference, hosted by the Family Support Center (a sister organization of CNJ) will take place on October 29, 2009 at the Woodbridge Hotel and Conference Center, Woodbridge, NJ.

Numerous sponsorship opportunities remain including Presenting (\$20,000), Silver (\$7,500), Show Bag (\$3,000), Continental Breakfast (\$3,000) and Caregiver Scholarships (\$1,500). Contact Heather Comstock at (609) 392-4900 if you wish to explore these and other opportunities to connect with caregivers.



In addition, in an effort to meet the needs and interests of all attendees, we are looking for a broad range of presentations that will focus on issues and topics that impact the quality of life of individuals, family members and caregivers. Please visit www.nationalcaregiversconference.org to submit an electronic Call for Proposal or email Laura Kay at laura.kay@fscnj.org.

Become a Fan of Caregivers of New Jersey!

Social networking sites are all the rage these days, so Caregivers of New Jersey has joined the ranks of Facebook in order to help stay connected to caregivers around the state inbetween newsletter issues and events. Visit [our fan page](#) to be added as a fan! If you don't have a Facebook account, it's free and it's easy to sign up, just visit their homepage at www.facebook.com.

[com](http://www.facebook.com).

Thank you for reading Caregiver Connection! If you have any information you would like included in our e-zine, or know of anyone that would like to be added to our listserv, please email me at dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org or click the "Join Our Mailing List" button on the top right side of the newsletter.

Additionally, CNJ is dedicated to spreading awareness and knowledge of caregiving, so we invite you to utilize the "Forward Email" button at the bottom of this email.

Sincerely,

Dana Goldberg, Administrator
Caregivers of New Jersey

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