

# 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*

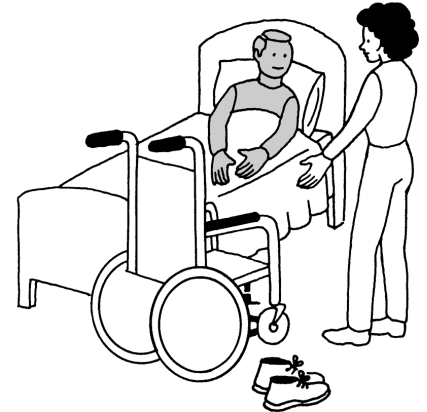
**www.aaa7.org** **Helping You Age Better!**



**MAY 2021**

## **Back Safety and Transfers**

Even during the pandemic, you still may need to take the person in your care out in a car, whether it be for a necessity such as a doctor’s appointment or for a drive for pleasure. Being a caregiver puts you at risk for shoulder and back injuries. Many occur when lifting, moving, transferring, or changing the position of the one 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.



Maintain good posture, and exercise to strengthen your back and stomach muscles. If you are overweight, lose weight. Excess weight puts extra stress on back and stomach muscles and on joints. One pound of extra weight puts four extra pounds of stress on knee joints.

### **General Rules**

First, consider the task at hand. Think about what you are capable of, what assistance you might need, and to what degree the one in your care can assist you.

The following rules will help you use proper body mechanics and be safe.

- Let the person you are helping do as much as they can do safely.
- Never allow the person you are helping to place their arms around your neck.
- Always tell the person you are helping what you are going to do.
- To create a base of support, stand with your feet 8”–12” (shoulder width) apart with one foot a half step ahead of the other.
- Bend your knees slightly.
- Keep your spine in a neutral (normal arched, not stiff) position while lifting. USE YOUR LEGS instead of your back to do most of the work—leg muscles are stronger than back muscles.
- When lifting, shift the position of your feet to turn (pivot) instead of rotating your spine.
- Push or pull an object instead of lifting whenever you can.
- Know your limits.

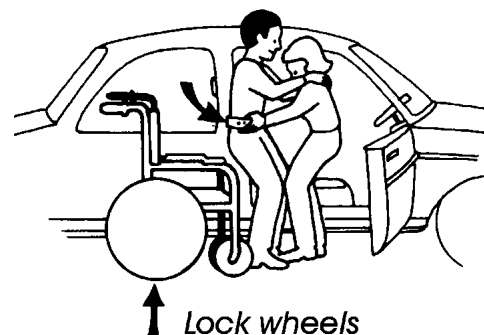
TIP - If you’re not sure about the proper body mechanics for lifting and transferring, ask a therapist to show you how.

# Transferring from a Wheelchair to a Car

Wear appropriate non-slip footwear, which are safer for both you and the person in your care. Be sure the car is parked on a level surface without cracks or potholes.

1.

- Open the passenger door as far as possible.
- Move the left side of the wheelchair as close to the car seat as possible.
- Lock the chair's wheels.
- Move both footrests out of the way.



2.

- Position yourself facing the person.
- Tell the person what you are going to do.
- Bending your knees and hips, lower yourself to their level.
- Grasp the transfer belt around their waist to help them stand while straightening your hips and knees.
- If their legs are weak, brace their knees with your knees.



3.

- While the person is standing, turn them so that they can be eased down to sit on the car seat.
- GUIDE THEIR HEAD so it is not bumped.



4.

- Lift their legs into the car by putting your hands under their knees.
- Move them to face the front.
- Put on their seat belt.
- Close the door carefully.
- Secure walkers, canes and similar items. They can become airborne and cause injury during a sudden stop or crash.

For resources for getting in and out of cars, visit <https://dailycaring.com/4-advanced-auto-mobility-aids-help-seniors-get-into-cars/>

NOTE: For someone with Alzheimer's, dementia, Parkinson's, stroke, or mobility issues, getting into and out of a car can be even more difficult. It might even take multiple people to help them in and out safely.

# Taking Care of Yourself



## Make Someone Else Happy

Look for people who are stressed out. When you find them, ask yourself, “How can I relieve their tension?” Since humor comes from tension, focusing on what someone else is frustrated about can often produce laughter.

All you have to do is ask a cashier or salesclerk, for example, “What is the worst thing that has happened to you today?” Suddenly two things occur. One, they get to vent that they are upset thus getting some immediate relief. And two, they will often laugh when they hear themselves complaining. So the next time you see someone stressed out, keep asking yourself: “How can I relieve the tension?”

*Source: Make Someone Else Happy by Allen Klein. Allen Klein is an award-winning professional speaker and best-selling author. For more information about Allen’s books and programs, visit [allenklein.com](http://allenklein.com).*

## **HEAP**

### **Home Energy Assistance Program**

Now open for applications for 2020-2021. This program can help eligible Ohioans manage their heating bills. Applications are available from your local Community Action Agency


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*If interested or if you have questions, contact your county Community Action Agency or the AAA7 Resource Center at 1-800-582-7277.*

### **Telephone Caregiver Support Group**

**Thursday, May 20th**  
**1:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

If you are interested in this free support, please contact Vicki Woyan for more details.



**Call: 1-800-582-7277, ext. 215**  
**E-Mail: [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org)**



## **FREE Wellness Classes Coming Up!**

Virtual Chronic Pain Self-Management - Starting May 27th!  
Telephone Diabetes Self-Management - Starting June 9th!

*You must pre-register at 1-800-582-7277 or [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). Classes for age 60 and over.*

## **Memory Care**

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### **Balance**

Changes in balance and coordination combined with poor memory can make it difficult for a person with Alzheimer’s to both get from one place to another and avoid hazardous objects at the same time. They may miss a step while looking for a door or trying to listen to someone’s conversation.

# Driving and Alzheimer's Disease

There are many reasons family members are reluctant to acknowledge that the person with dementia should no longer drive. Perhaps no one else is able to drive and no other means of transportation is readily available. They may want to protect the feelings and dignity of the person with the diagnosis of dementia.



Signs that the person is no longer a safe driver:

- *Braking often for no apparent reason.*
- *Not paying close attention to the road (traffic signals, road signs, lane markers, other vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians).*
- *Not anticipating or reacting quickly and consistently to the actions of other drivers.*
- *Getting angry easily.*
- *Swerving in and out of lanes and getting lost in familiar places.*
- *Dents on car.*
- *Driving too fast or too slow.*
- *Turning around to talk to the person in the back seat and forgetting that they are driving.*

*Source: The Comfort of Home for Alzheimer's Disease: A Guide for Caregivers*

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*Some content in this publication is excerpted from The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented or the reader's misunderstanding of the text.*



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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7](https://www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7)

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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](mailto:info@aaa7.org).*