

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!**



JULY 2013

Emergencies - Be Ready

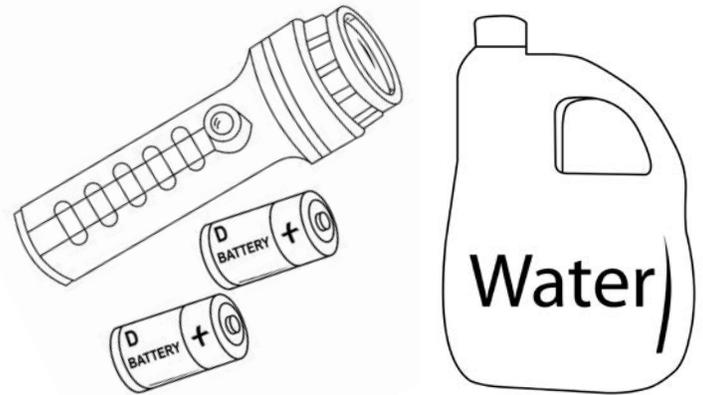
Gather Emergency Supplies

Weather emergencies and natural disasters can strike anywhere. Prioritize the needs of those in your care, then take steps to provide for those needs in case of an emergency. Store a minimum of three (3) days' worth of:

- **Water:** The average person requires at least one (1) gallon of water a day for drinking, food preparation, and basic hygiene. Always keep ice on hand - in the event of a power outage, ice in the freezer will keep things cool longer. You can use ice in a cooler chest to keep essentials cool for a day.
- **Medications:** Prescription and over-the-counter medications and medical supplies (syringes, catheters, etc.) should be replenished at least three (3) days BEFORE they are used up. For essential maintenance meds, keep a one-week "buffer" supply. For medications that need to be refrigerated (like insulin), buy a small cooler chest for emergency storage.
- **Food:** If the person in your care requires special foods (Ensure, diabetic foods, etc.), make sure you have at least a three-day supply of these types and other

non-perishable food items. Use and replace them frequently to keep them fresh.

- **Pets and Service Animals:** Keep a three-day supply of pet food and water.



Emergency Supplies Kit*

Lists: prescription medications, dosage, and allergies; doctors and emergency contacts; the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers.

Copies: medical insurance, Advance Directives, Medicare cards, Social Security card, ID.

- Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries, wheelchair batteries or

other special equipment.

- Flashlight, battery-operated radio, fresh batteries, extra blankets, work gloves, sturdy shoes, a manual can opener, eating utensils, and a whistle.
- Extra clothing and incontinence supplies.
- Cell phone with charger and extra cash.

**Visit the following websites for a more detailed comprehensive supplies checklist and information about after-disaster help.*

FEMA

www.fema.gov

www.disasterassistance.gov

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Heat Wave Survival Tips

In recent years, excessive heat has caused more deaths than all other weather events, including hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined, according to the American Red Cross. When we are exposed to high temperatures and high humidity, our bodies lose water and salt as we perspire to stay cool. This can lead to heat cramps. If not addressed, dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion leads to heatstroke, a potentially life-threatening condition.

Older adults, and people with chronic diseases (like heart or lung diseases), are most at risk of developing heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heatstroke. Those taking diuretics (water pills) and beta-blockers are at special risk.

Early signs of heat-related illness include fatigue, thirst, muscle cramps, and profuse sweating.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- dizziness and lightheadedness
- weakness
- headache
- nausea and vomiting
- cool, moist skin
- dark urine

Symptoms of Heatstroke

- fast, shallow breathing
- pulse is fast and weak
- confusion and strange behavior
- fever
- skin is red, hot and dry
- seizures
- loss of consciousness

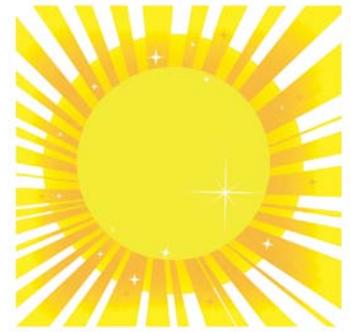
First Aid for Heat-Related Illness

- Take the victim to a cool place.

- Have them lie down with their feet up.
- Apply cool, wet cloths (or cool water alone) to their skin. Cold compresses can also help.
- If the person is conscious, have them drink water or a salted drink. Do not offer drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine.

When to Call 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 if the person has blue



lips and fingernails, a high fever, difficulty breathing, a seizure, is confused or behaving irrationally, or has lost consciousness.

Older Bodies Need More Water

As people age, they feel less thirsty and must make a special effort to drink fluids. Fluid balance can be affected by medication, emotional stress, exercise, nourishment, general health, and the weather.

Remember, air-conditioning is one of the best protections against heat-related illness and death. Visit senior centers, movie theaters, libraries or malls to cool off - even for just a few hours.



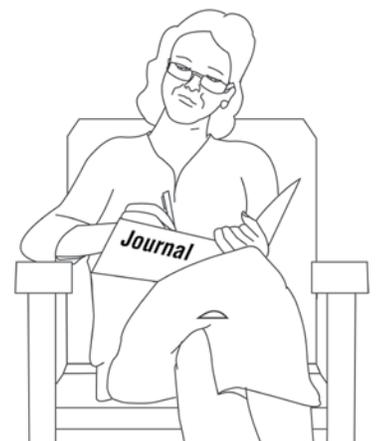
Source: Environmental Protection Agency - www.epa.gov/aging

Don't Fall - Be Safe!!

Write down the details, including when, where and how the person in your care fell.

Note instances when he or she almost fell as well.

These details may help a doctor or occupational therapist identify specific fall-prevention strategies.



"Expect nothing. Live frugally on surprise." - Alice Walker

Taking Care of Yourself

How to Manage Frustration

It's a fact of life: the people closest to us are the same ones who best know how to "push our buttons." Feeling frustrated or resentful toward the people you live with, work with, or care for is a stressful and unhealthy situation, both for you and for others. Instead of letting negative feelings "simmer" or worse, giving in to angry or unkind words and actions, take a time out to be grateful for the very people who can drive you nuts. The people in our lives are there because we value and appreciate them. Every time you're tempted to wish them out of your life, imagine losing all the good they bring into your life as well as the "bad." Let a feeling of gratitude fill you and frustration evaporates.



Source: *Happiness in this World* - www.happinessinthisworld.com

When an Emergency Strikes...Those with Special Needs

An older adult or a person with disabilities may face some special challenges if an emergency strikes. Caregivers can help them learn about the challenges that they may face and help them prepare ahead of time so that they will be better able to cope with a disaster and recover from it more quickly.

Source: *National Organization on Disability* - www.nod.org; www.ready.gov; www.fema.gov; www.disasterassistance.gov; www.redcross.org

Upcoming Alzheimer's Association Workshops

Understanding and Dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or Another Dementia

alzheimer's
association®

These programs will provide an opportunity for families and caregivers to learn and ask questions about Alzheimer's disease and dementia, while receiving support from others in similar situations. You are invited to attend any or all of the programs listed below. Programs are free of charge. No registration required.

Scioto County - Best Care Nursing and Rehab in Wheelersburg from 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Remaining Topics: August 13th - Caregiver/Family Stress and Grief • October 8th - Safety Considerations
December 10th - Activities and Interaction

Gallia County - 2881 SR 160 (HMC Thaler Building) in Gallipolis from 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Remaining Topics: September 24th - Caregiver/Family Stress and Grief • November 19th - Safety Considerations
January 28, 2014 - Activities and Interaction

What Families Need to Know...When the Diagnosis is Alzheimer's or Related Dementia

This series of educational sessions provides an opportunity for families to learn and share together in an informal setting. Topics are presented by experts in their fields, including physicians, nurses, social workers and attorneys. Session topics include: The Nature and Progression of the Disease, Changes in Communications and Behavior, Legal Planning for Families, and Family Coping Strategies and Community Resources. The two-part series is free of charge, but reservations must be made in advance. Please call the number listed at the bottom in the purple box.

Adams – August 19 and 26 from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm at Adams County Regional Medical Center in Seaman

Highland – September 23 and 30 from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm at Highland District Hospital in Hillsboro

Scioto – August 14 and 21 from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm at the Vern Riffe Community Center in New Boston

For more information about these programs and other similar programs available in or near your community, or for assistance with registering, please call Melissa Dever, LSW, from the Alzheimer's Association, at (740) 710-1821.



Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Toll-Free Number: (800) 582-7277 • TTY: 711 (Relay Ohio)

Website: www.aaa7.org • E-Mail: info@aaa7.org • Facebook: www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7

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 nurse or social worker 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.

What if You are Delayed or Injured? _____

If you are responsible for the regular care of another person, what happens if you can't be there? An accident or medical emergency can happen to anyone, at any time. It is important that emergency personnel (police, fire department and/or emergency room professionals) know that you are a caregiver and that someone is counting on you for their health and safety. To ensure the well-being of the person you care for, always carry an emergency ID card in your wallet that identifies you as a caregiver. On the card, list the name and location of the care recipient, your relationship to the person, an alternative caregiver or family member and their phone number, additional information on the person's medical condition and needs, and a message indicating whether the person in your care is OK to be left alone.

Place an emergency file card on your refrigerator with the same information. Paramedics are trained to look at the refrigerator for information about you.



Source: seniornavigator.org