



# YOUR SOURCE Balancing Work, Family & Life

## Caring for Aging Loved Ones

Is caring for an aging loved one in your future? Or, are you already caring for an older adult? As our population ages, caring for an aging family member is a responsibility that many adult children are taking on.

Helpful information on how to be the best caregiver you can be while still taking care of you is just a click away! Log on to access “Caring for Aging Loved Ones” in the *Spotlight* section for information on housing options, caregiving tips, hiring help, caring from a distance, resources and tools.

### Podcast: “Talking to an Aging Loved One about Driving”

Tune in to our podcast to learn how to talk to your aging loved one about driving and explore some of the key risk factors for senior drivers as well. This podcast is available on the website under *Tools, On Demand Learning, Webinar Recordings and Podcasts*.

### Log on to check it out online

Log on to your program’s website to access “Caring for Aging Loved Ones” and other helpful resources in the *Spotlight* section.

Caring for an aging loved one is demanding both emotionally and physically. Yet, with the right information and support, you will be better equipped for the challenges and rewards that come from this experience.

Employee Assistance Program  
For Professional Consultation

**Call 1-800-523-5668**

For TTY Users: 1-800-882-7610



*The answer is D. The services provided by family caregivers represent 80% of all home care services and are conservatively valued at more than \$250 billion a year, more than twice the amount spent on paid home care and nursing home services combined.*

**Do you know what percentage of home health services are provided by family members of the elderly and chronically ill?**

- A. 25%
- B. 50%
- C. 75%
- D. 80%

*Check your answer on the bottom.*

## Now That’s an Idea!

**Looking Good!** Regardless of our age or physical condition, we all want to look and feel our best. You can help make your loved ones more comfortable and feel more stylish by helping them find the right clothes. You can also make caregiving easier by purchasing hassle free fabrics. Be sure to look for:

- Clothing that is washable and wrinkle-free.
- Pants and skirts with elastic or tie waistbands.
- Shoes that have a non-skid tread. And shoes that are comfortable but will not slip off too easily.
- Interchangeable and color coordinated clothing that is easy to mix and match.



*Getting Better All the Time™*

# A Crash Course in Caregiving

As you begin the caregiving journey, there are some things that you simply have to know:

- Know your loved one's date of birth and Social Security number to access many services.
- Gather details about your loved one's physicians and health insurance, including:
  - Names, phone numbers and addresses of doctors, dentist and pharmacy.
  - Copies of health insurance policies, insurance cards and their Medicare card.
  - A list of medications, dosage amounts and instructions for use. Take this to your loved one's medical appointments.
  - Dates and results of recent medical tests and exams.
  - Health history (also take this to your loved one's medical appointments).
- Call a family meeting. Allow all family members a chance to express their feelings about what should be done. Discuss whether your loved one has a Will, Durable powers of attorney for finances and health care, or a Living will.
- Explore what available financial resources your loved one has to help with their care.
- Find out about nearby senior centers, adult day services, meal delivery and transportation options.
- Consider using a care manager. They are trained to assess the situation, make recommendations for services and coordinate community resources and insurance. Many health insurers offer this service.
- Talk to friends, neighbors or support groups who have experience caring for aging loved ones. Sometimes the best advice comes from these sources. And it helps knowing that others have been where you are and found their way through.
- Talk to your loved one. Allow them as much independence as possible. The more you can consult with them, and consider and respect their wishes, the smoother the caregiver/care receiver relationship will be.

## BANISH BOREDOM!

Boredom can sap intellect and spirit, so planning activities gives your loved one something to look forward to and enjoy.

Here are some ideas:

- Instead of just leaving the television on all day, check the TV listings each morning together and choose what you will watch.
- Get large print/audio library books.
- Go out to lunch or the early-bird specials at restaurants.
- Visit an art-hobby store to explore a craft they'll enjoy.
- Invite family or friends over for dinner or lunch or just for dessert or a snack.
- Visit museums, the zoo or parks.
- If appropriate, adopt a pet from your local animal shelter.
- Consider buying a computer with Internet access. Teach your loved one how to use it to find information and to stay in touch with family by e-mail.
- Many fraternal, religious, and social organizations have activities specifically for older people. This can be a great way to extend your supportive network.

