



ELDERCARE RESOURCE SERVICES



INFO@ELDERCARERESOURCESERVICES.COM
WWW.ELDERCARERESOURCESERVICES.COM
"HELPING YOU HELP YOUR LOVED ONES"

JULY 2008
A FREE PUBLICATION ON ELDER ISSUES

DEMENTIA

"Dementia is a medical word that is used when damage in the brain causes at least four changes; memory loss, changes in how people talk, changes in how people act (wandering, hitting), and trouble doing tasks (getting dressed, bathing). Alzheimer's disease is just one of many diseases that can cause dementia." As reported by Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers.

The middle to late stage of dementia is when someone needs help with personal care, decision making, and may need someone with them all the time. The early stage causes someone to

have forgetfulness; unable to complete tasks someone has done every day, or someone has stopped doing things they always enjoyed such as meeting friends. The middle stage there is difficulty in walking, going to the bathroom, getting dressed and there could be changes in behaviors. The late stage is where someone does not recognize their family, sentences are fragmented and do not flow, incontinence, and assistance with walking. Dementia can cause changes in mood, loss of appetite, suspicion, paranoia, and anxiety. Continue to consult with your PCP as the disease progresses.

HALLUCINATIONS

Some people with memory loss they have visual hallucinations. Poor lighting, reflections from windows or mirrors, or even certain wallpapers can cause a person to see something that is not there. First, assess if that person is frightened or anxious. Some people are not bothered by what they see. Consult the physician and consider an eye exam. Mirrors can be removed and lighting can be changed so there are no shadows. It is best not to argue and do not ignore what the person has to say. It is real to them. If the hallucinations cause agitation and anxiety then they may need to be admitted to a geriatric-psych unit.

ABOUT US

ElderCare Resource Services is a geriatric care management company co-owned by Linda Sullivan RN, and Debbie Gitner LCSW. Our unique Nurse/Social Worker team are able to provide both psychosocial and medical consultation to our clients. Linda and Debbie work together on each case; Linda is able to answer and explain the medical aspects and Debbie can assist with services. Clients can call either one of us as we always work as a team. We are strong advocates for our clients giving them information to make them better consumers; getting their relative the best care possible. Together we are able to assist our clients and their families with information on Home Care, Assisted Living, and or Nursing Homes. Linda and Debbie each have over 30 years working with the geriatric population. Now is the time to plan for the future. Call us today if you have a question about our services. We'll be happy to chat.

LITTLE FIBLETS

A person with dementia may forget their parents died and may become insistent they are alive and coming to visit them. When this happens, it is best to go along and give an excuse for the parents tardiness. For example, tell them that they got

delayed in traffic or they called and have a cold and won't be over. Hearing for the first time that a person's parents are deceased is devastating. There is no carry over of major life events so each time a person hears about their parents dying it is

like it is the first time. Avoid this by using excuses and only discuss your relative's parents when they bring up the subject. Sometimes diversion can work well; such as television, music, eating, etc.



Member of:
The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

"Helping you help your loved ones"

info@eldercareresourceservices.com

Debbie Cell: 508-733-3964

Linda Cell: 508-958-8967

Fax: 508-405-0963

Toll Free: 866-280-2308

Phone: 508-879-7008

*ElderCare Resource Services
29 Gano Road
Marlboro, MA 01752*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: My mother told me that my father should not be driving any more but my father refuses to give up his license. What should I do?

A: Go out with your father, allowing him to drive. Is he getting close to cars, is he not seeing the lights or reading the signs, is he driving too fast or too slow? Discuss with your father your concerns but have a plan and a way of having your parents get to their appointments, food be brought into the home, and how other shopping needs will be taken care of. There are driving tests at the Beth Israel Hospital that your father can take to see if he is still safe on the road.

Q: My friend's mother is in her mid 50's and is forgetting when information is given to her. She admits to having problems at work, remembering her job tasks and has

solved the problem by writing everything down. Should my friend be concerned about her mother?

A: Yes she should be concerned. Alzheimer's is not a disease only for older people. We would urge your friend to have her mother seen by her primary care physician and inform him/her about the short term memory loss. The doctor can complete blood work to check for thyroid deficiency, anemia, B12, dehydration and other tests to see if there is a medical reason for the forgetfulness. Depression can affect memory loss. Once a medical work up has been completed then the doctor may believe it is early dementia. The Alzheimer's Association is good resource.

Q: Are there any good Nursing

Homes?

A: Yes. We suggest families tour at different times of the day, observe how the staff interacts with the residents, find out how long has the staff worked together, ask neighbors and friends for personal references on Nursing Homes and ask the Admissions Coordinator how the Nursing Home can meet your relative's needs. The fanciest Nursing Home does not mean the best care. It is the people inside that makes a Nursing Home a good one and not the color of the walls, chandeliers, or size of the bedrooms.

ElderCare Resource Services can assist families in locating a Nursing Home that meets the needs of their relative. Finding a Nursing Home is an emotional process and often there is little time to complete the search. Call us if you are investigating different Nursing Homes. We can help.