



ELDERCARE RESOURCE SERVICES



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"HELPING YOU HELP YOUR LOVED ONES"

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A FREE PUBLICATION ON ELDER ISSUES

PARKINSONS DISEASE

The symptoms of Parkinson's disease includes rigidity, changes in speech, and difficulty walking.

Tremors can occur when someone is awake or sitting. The tremors will dissipate when the affected body part is being moved.

Often times someone diagnosed with Parkinson's disease does not have swing in their arms when they walk. This is caused by rigidity in the muscles.

As the disease progresses many people begin to shuffle as they walk or take small steps. There is also some bending at the waist when walking; a stooped

posture.

There are seniors who have tremors but do not have Parkinson's disease. They may have 'essential tremors'. An essential tremor may occur in family members. With an essential tremor the affected part of the body is worse when it is in motion.

It is important to have a good neurologist to complete a comprehensive neurological exam. Medications can help with the symptoms. Approximately one-third of people diagnosed with Parkinson's may develop dementia.

THYROID

The thyroid gland is important. From the foods we eat and the water we drink the thyroid absorbs an element called iodine. This, along with tyrosine (amino acid) combine to make important hormones. The hormones travel through the bloodstream to the body's cells.

If someone has either low or high thyroid levels, other parts of the body can be affected. For example, with an under active thyroid someone may feel depressed and sluggish, have memory loss or hair loss. An over active thyroid can present with fatigue, nervousness, and a fast heart-beat.

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. 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. Look for our monthly column in the Metro West News called 'Senior Savvy.'

SUMMER HEAT

Many seniors do not feel the summer's heat. They will wear sweaters when it is hot and humid and refuse to put on the air conditioner. Some seniors become dehydrated, unaware of their condition. It is important to encourage and encourage

some more that seniors drink liquids. One idea is to put a mug with liquids next to their favorite chair. Watch for signs of perspiring, fever, change in affect, all of which indicate signs of dehydration.

Even seniors should wear sunscreen protection when going outside. Hats protect the body from the heat as well. On a hot humid day check that your relative has a fan and or air conditioner on in their home.



Member of:
The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

"Helping you help your loved ones"

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: My family members do not agree on what is best for my mother. My mother has early signs of memory loss and we all of have different opinions on what to do. How can we resolve this issue?

A: One suggestion is to have a third party complete an evaluation. As Geriatric Care Managers we are able to complete a home assessment making recommendations, answering questions, and providing support to the family and senior. This can resolve the differing opinions and ideas among the siblings. **ElderCare Resource Services** is a Nurse Social Worker partnership allowing both a medical and psychosocial assessment.

Q: My mother is very argumentative and is always right on every subject. She repeats the same stories. Also she is removing herself

from past activities spending more time in her house. What is happening?

A: It is possible that your mother is presenting with early signs of memory loss. If you are seeing your mother having difficulty writing checks or balancing her checkbook, if she is asking others to make phone calls to contractors, and going out less it could be due to very early signs of memory loss, it could be related to a depression (or combination of both). There could also be something medically going on. Contact your mother's physician (fax a note to the physician) explaining what you are seeing but do not to tell your mother. Maybe the physician can help determine why changes are occurring.

Q: My mother now needs help in

the house with laundry, food shopping, meal preparation and keeping the house organized. My mother refuses help. How can I convince my mother to accept help?

A: Sometimes you need to come in through the "back door". Your mother does not see a need for help but more importantly your mother does not want to admit she can not manage the house and that she is getting older. If getting help is in your mother's best interest then consider these approaches. Tell your mother that by her having help it will allow you to visit and not spend time picking up, or tell your mother the services are free (and they may be from an Aging Service Access Point office), or on the next visit to the primary care physician have him/her discuss help with your mother. Some seniors accept services when the doctor tells them they need it.