



A Better Life News

A Better Life Homecare reduces family stress by promoting independence and providing expertise. We safely support "your life your way" at home and in the community.

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Dementia by Julie Beaulieu

Dementia is a word that is bandied about a great deal, sometimes used (inappropriately) as a synonym for Alzheimer's disease. Most simply, **dementia** is a deterioration of intellectual function, such as memory. Dementia is not a disease; it is a symptom.

Different types of dementia have different causes, some permanent and progressive and others, temporary and reversible. The following describes the most frequently occurring types of dementia:.

Alzheimer's– This is the most common and familiar form of dementia. Alzheimer's has a gradual onset and is progressive. It is NOT due to any other brain disorders

or medical conditions. There are several medications to treat the symptoms and slow the progress of A.D.

Lewy Body– Visual hallucinations and drastic fluctuation in symptoms and severity are typical symptom in Lewy Body dementia. In Lewy Body disease, symptoms fluctuate drastically, so people suffering from LB may experience a great deal of inconsistency in their performance. A person with LB dementia can perfectly fine and a few days later they will act completely different. Lewy Body also can manifest symptoms that "look like" Parkinson's Disease.

Vascular– Vascular Dementia has neurological signs such as, unsteady gait, abnormal reflexes, and weakness. There is also evidence of strokes on the scans. However, a stroke on a scan **does not** automatically make it Vascular Dementia.

Fronto-Temporal– This type of dementia results in major personality changes, the person is irritable, and sometimes quits communicating altogether.

Delirium-Delirium develops in a matter of days even hours sometimes and is usually reversible. It is generally caused by dehydration, liver or kidney failure, intoxication, and sometimes medications.

Did you know?

- There are 80 million Baby Boomers
- 80% of your time is spent in 20% of the spaces in your house
- 50+ million Ameri-

? ? ?

- cans are caring for a friend or family member
- You should eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day

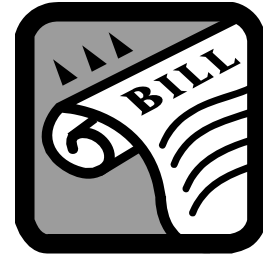
- Walking 30 minutes a day cuts the risk for heart attack in half
- There are 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the human body

Caregiver's Corner by Julie Beaulieu

Caregiver's Bill of Rights by Joe Horne

I have the right:

- To Take Care of Myself
- To Seek Help from Others
- To maintain facets of my own life
- To take pride in what I am accomplishing
- To expect and demand that new strides be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers
- To express difficult feelings
- To reject any attempts made by my loved one to manipulate me through guilt
- To receive consideration and affection for what I do



The next time things start to get difficult, take a look at this list, and realize **you have every right to feel the way you are feeling.**

Stress and the Older Adult by Julie Beaulieu

Stress is a major contributor to health problems in seniors, reported Dr. Roger Landry

At the Oklahoma Aging Conference, Dr. Landry identified two types of stress: **Mind Off Stress** and **Mind On Stress**. Mind off Stress is when we react without think-

ing. This unavoidable stress usually occurs in life or death situations. We often call it "fight or flight" response. It is a normal and healthy type of stress.

The second type of stress is **Mind On Stress**. Mind on stress is defined by the worries

we create for ourselves. This stress is damaging to our physical and mental health. Because many of us have difficulty living in the present moment, we spend lots of time regretting things in the past and worrying about things in the future.

Below are some tips to help **lower your stress level.**

- Decide who's in charge
- Compartmentalize
- Stay Connected
- Laugh
- Wherever you are ...be there

Begin your stress free life!

Home Sweet Home...Let's Keep It That Way! by Julie Beaulieu

As we age, our senses become less acute, our strength decreases and our balance becomes less steady. These normal changes put Seniors at higher risk for accidents around the home.

With just a little attention to our environment, we can significantly re-

duce the risk of accidents as we age. Pay attention to these areas and make your home safer:

Floors:

Avoid throw or area rugs; place furniture so it is easy to get around; keep wires and cords out of the walking path.

Stairs/Steps: Fix any broken or uneven steps; make sure there is adequate lighting by the staircase; keep carpet in good condition; use handrails

Kitchen Items: Keep frequently used items in reach; use a sturdy step stool when needed

Bathroom: use non-skid

mats in the tub/shower; have support in the tub/shower like a bath bench; have support by the toilet, such as a grab bar

Bedroom: Keep a lamp near the bed that is easy to reach and have a lighted path from the bedroom to the bathroom.

Prevent Falls: Live Longer by Lori Hauge

One in every three people over the age of 65 will fall within the next twelve months.

Accidents are the fifth leading cause of death in people over 65 and two-thirds of these accidents are a result of falls.

Falls can negatively impact all aspects of our

lives. Here are some things you can do to prevent falls.

1. **Exercise.** The number one way to prevent falls is to stay strong and fit by exercising regularly.
2. **Treat underlying illnesses.** Hypertension, hearing prob-

lems, vision problems, orthostatic hypotension, diabetes, etc.

3. **Learn adaptive strategies.** If you have illnesses or weakness that cannot be cured, talk with your health care team about equipment and strategies you can use to compensate and reduce

the risk of falling. For example canes, walkers, reachers, etc.

4. **Reduce environmental hazards.** If you would like to know about the risks and consequences of falls please visit our blog at:

<http://www.abetterlifehomecare.blogspot.com>

Sunflower Strawberry Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 c. sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 medium apple, diced
- 1 c. seedless green grapes, halved
- 1/2 c. thinly sliced celery
- 1/4 c. of raisins
- 1/2 c. strawberry yogurt
- 2 tbsp. of sunflower seeds
- Lettuce leaves (optional)

Directions: In a large bowl, combine strawberries, apple, grapes, celery, and raisins. Stir in the yogurt. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Add sunflower seeds and toss; serve on lettuce leaves if desired.

Now Enjoy!



Is Long-term Care Right for you? by Julie Beaulieu

- Do you worry about leaving your loved one home alone?
- Are you having trouble balancing your caregiver duties with your other responsibilities?
- Do you know what resources are available to you and your loved one?
- Do you need a break from your caregiver duties to get your own things accomplished?
- Are you feeling burnt out?
- Do you need assistance staying active in your community?
- Do you want to maintain a healthy lifestyle?
- Do you need help getting your shopping and errands done?
- Would you like someone to accompany you to your doctor's appointments?
- Do you need help maintaining a safe home environment?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then it may be time for you to consider looking at long term care.

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You're Not Getting Older ... You're Getting Smarter by Jolynn Officer

Do you feel that you have a poor memory? You may just have some “less-than-effective” habits when it comes to taking in and processing information. You can improve your ability to learn and retain information. Try these tips to improve your memory.

Pay attention. Most of us like to multi-task, BUT you can't remember something if you never learned it, and you can't learn something if you don't pay enough attention to it. So, if you really want to remember

something—focus on one thing at a time.

Choose the modality that matches your learning style. Most people are visual learners; they learn best by reading or otherwise seeing what it is they have to know. Auditory learners might benefit by recording information and listening to it until we remember it. Take advantage of whatever sensory modality is best for you.

Involve as many senses as possible. Read out loud what you want to

remember. Try to relate information to colors, textures, smells and tastes. The physical act of rewriting information can help imprint it onto your brain.

Relate information to what you already know. Connect new data to information you already remember.

Organize information. Write things down in address books and date-books and on calendars; take notes on more complex material and reorganize the notes into categories later.

Rehearse information frequently and “over-learn”. Review what you've learned the same day you learn it, and at intervals thereafter.

Be motivated and keep a positive attitude. Tell yourself that you *want* to learn what you need to remember, and that you *can* learn and remember it.

Check out some of these resources to help exercise your brain: <http://www.neurobics.com/exercise.html> or <http://www.exploratorium.edu>.



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