Caring for the elderly
Outline

• Tips for the elderly to stay healthy
• Caring for the elderly
• Changes during old age
• Tips for caregivers
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Tips for the elderly to stay healthy

• Embracing a positive attitude
• Stimulating their mind
• Limiting stress and staying connected
• Supporting their body with exercise
• Making healthy diet choices
Caring for the Elderly

• Life is often about, being taken care of in childhood, or being a caretaker for others. The lessons are sometimes about nurturing, love and compassion.

• We cherish our children when they are born.

• We try to give them everything we can so that they will be able to survive in this world today.
Caring for the Elderly

• These actions and feelings also should hold true when caring for the elderly.
• It should not be a burden to care for them, for we have to remember at some point they cared for us.
• Also, at some time we will be them, and we will hope someone will be there to help us.
• Be sure the senior you are helping gets the best care available and understands their changing needs.
Changes during old age

• Old age brings a whole new gamut of changes in an individual’s life.
• While these may seem gradual to the individual himself, they can often seem worrying to those around him.
• These changes range from simple changes such as a mild memory loss or forgetfulness to more serious changes such as changes in the functioning of the brain and nervous systems
Changes During Old Age

Physical Changes:

• Older people experience a decline in muscular strength, reaction time, stamina, hearing, distance perception, and the sense of smell.

• They also are more susceptible to severe diseases due to a weakened immune system.

• Mental disintegration may also occur, leading to dementia or ailments such as Alzheimer's disease. Factors such as physical therapy and exercise have been identified as potential modulators of physical decline.
Changes During Old Age

Among the common physical changes observed in late adulthood are the following:

- Hearing loss
- Poor eye-sight
- Creaky bones and achy joints
- Brain slowing down
- Weak heart and cardiovascular problems
- Digestive problems
- Weight decline
Changes during old age

Cognitive Changes:

• Old adults, like middle-age ones, show decline in information-processing speed, but in a much-faster rate.

• Memory for names and locations decline. Information recall slows down.

• Because of this, old adults, when forced to solve problems, manipulate information instead of relying on casual recall.
Changes during old age

Socio-emotional Changes:

• Old-age adults tend to be selective in their social interactions - maximizing emotional satisfaction, and minimizing emotional risks.

• Generally, they prefer visits from family, relatives and close friends. Some often crave for attention from their families while others prefer to be independent so as not to become a burden on their families.
Changes during old age

• Old adults are more attuned towards emotional information and get affected more by negative emotions.

• Some older people do not feel or act their age while other dote on it and they find it difficult realizing they are growing old.

• Medications often can cause depression; moodiness; anger outbursts or memory lapses.

• People who have certain illnesses may decide to be more active to try and forget while others may stick at home and become depressed.
Case Study

N has a demanding job, a family of 4 and elderly parents that he needs to look after. He works from 9 to 7, rushes to see his parents five times the week, aside from weekends and reaches home by 9:30 everyday.

He’s been feeling very stressed out lately, making simple errors at work and is upset over the fact that he doesn’t get much time with his wife and 2 kids.

He’s extremely confused about how he should handle the situation.

• Should he visit his parents less? They depend on him for everything, including food and medicine supplies.
• Should he talk to his wife about moving his parents in with them? What if she doesn’t agree?
• Should he put them in a home or arrange for a caregiver?
• How can he best handle this situation?
Taking care of the elderly

• Accept your parent for the way they are now.
• Understand what your parent can and can't do.
• Keep things simple. Work within their limitations.
• Understand your parent's feelings and how they have changed.
• It is OK to get angry - just remember to apologize.
• Enjoy the time you have with your parent.
Tips for Caregivers

Take time for yourself:

• It’s important that you get some personal time to unwind from all your work stress and relax from constantly looking after your parents.

• Spend time with your immediate family, have an evening out with friends, watch a movie, practice yoga.. anything that helps soothe your mind and body.
Tips for Caregivers

Social interactions are important:

• Social interactions are extremely important to an elderly person’s mental and emotional health.

• Regular interactions with people of all ages should be encouraged unless they are ill.

• If there you are a member of a club, encourage them to participate in mid-week club activities such as bingo or tombola.
Tips for Caregivers

Share responsibility for elderly care:

• One person should never have the sole responsibility for caring for an elderly family member.

• Traditionally, one might expect children to look after their elderly parents, but grandchildren, nieces, nephews and siblings should also be involved.

• An entire family looking after its members reduces the overwhelming burden.
Tips for Care Givers

Explore all available resources:

- Investigate all the benefits available to your elderly family member via health plans, insurance or Medicare.
- You may need to get a power of attorney established in order to fill out any necessary paperwork.

Show thoughtfulness, compassion and respect:

- Remember that elderly adults are not children. While some adults suffer from mental frailties such as Alzheimer’s and dementia, the majority remain mentally active and alert.
- Do not talk to them as though you are in charge.
Caring for the terminally ill

• It's not easy caring for a dying person - and it's much harder when you care about them as well.

• You want to help, but you may fear that something you say or do will further distress them.

• You may feel exhausted, but guilty about wanting respite for yourself.

• However, you can make a difference to the quality of the final months, weeks and days of someone's life.

• Being calm enough and having the spare energy to help the dying person is what this session can give you.
Caring for the terminally ill

Needs:

• Terminally ill have the same emotional, physical and spiritual needs as everyone else. Everyone has the need for quality attention, intimacy, dignity, security, and a sense of control at least over some things.

• A terminally ill person may worry more about being abandoned and disconnected from every day life.

• They may fear losing control over their body and lives or about being in overpowering pain or grief. (terminally ill people can grieve the life they are leaving).
Caring for the terminally ill

• A person suffering terminal decline may worry about change in their appearance or tying up financial matters.

• They may be plagued by worries about people they will be leaving behind or what will happen to their possessions.

• They may want to talk about their life as a whole or what their life has 'meant.' It's important to be able to listen calmly.
Caring for the terminally ill

Care:

• Terminally ill patients need to have their emotions taken seriously, not brushed aside or minimized.

• It's normal for someone who is terminally ill to experience and express negative feelings such as anger and irritability, anxiety, fear and sadness.

• Their emotions are real, and they need to be respected, acknowledged and expressed.

• A gentle touch can be wonderfully psychologically healing.

• Many dying people are comforted by caregivers who gently touch their arm or wrist, hold their hand, or hug them.
Caring for the terminally ill

Keeping your own emotions together:

• If you care for a dying person then it's easy to feel overwhelmed by your own emotions.

• Letting them know how much they mean to you can be wonderful but if your emotional outpourings cause them (and you) greater distress then you need some control.

• This relaxing hypnotic session will help you feel more balanced and calm when you are with the dying person.

• When you are calm you can apply more real compassion and practical support because you can think more clearly.
Caring for the terminally ill

Getting your needs met to better help them:

• Caring for someone with a terminal illness can be emotionally and physically exhausting.

• It can be too easy to focus entirely on the needs of the terminally ill person you are caring for and forget to look after yourself.

• The better you look after yourself, the more rested you are the better able you are to care for the terminally ill person in your life.
Caring for the terminally ill

• You need to take care of yourself to care for the dying person to the best of your ability. By helping yourself you'll be helping them.

• You need to take regular relaxation breaks.

• This will help recharge your batteries getting you feeling refreshed and strong again when you become overwhelmed or exhausted.
Case Study

Z had recently informed her live-in mother that she needed some alone time when she returns home from a full day’s work.

For her, this meant having about 45 minutes of alone time while sitting in her favorite chair sipping tea and reading the newspaper – uninterrupted.

She felt horribly guilty saying anything because her mom was starved for attention after not having had much interaction all day.

She feared she was the only one who could give her the attention she desired and, that she would be considered a “bad daughter” if she requested any time for herself.
Handling Resentment

• Most caregivers feel morally obligated to help their parents.

• They often find themselves sandwiched wondering how they can help their parents and how to handle the fact that they resent being stuck in a situation that seems to leave them no choices.
Handing Resentment

• If your parents are in their own home, get some in-home help and learn to be comfortable enough with the quality of care they are getting so you can take a day, or a week, off from caregiving.

• If your parents live with you or you live with them, you still need to look for outside help if you and your spouse can't get away at all. Even a good friend or neighbor may work out as a respite caregiver for a few hours. But everyone needs a little time away from their responsibilities.

• Ask yourself is everything you are doing is necessary or if it's about trying to control an uncontrollable situation. Do you really need to be with them every day?

• Ask yourself if you are performing for an audience so everyone will say "what a wonderful daughter you are," or if some of what you do could be delegated to other people.
Handing Resentment

• If you are guilt-ridden or filled with resentment no matter what you do, see a counselor.

• Talk through what your life, as you are living it, is doing to you.

• Sort out the things that are really necessary sacrifices – likely sacrifices that you make so willingly you don't consider them such – and what is obsessive caregiving.
Any questions
What is EAP?

- EAP is independent counselling and resource service sponsored by your employer
- Available 24/7 to employees and their families via phone, e-mail or live chat
- Assists with personal issues that could interfere with health, happiness, & work
- Provides counselling and family support,
- No personal information shared without your knowledge and consent
How to access help

Call the 24/7 phone number
INDIA:
1800-102-7293 (Toll Free)
1800-209-8424 (Toll Free)
+91 80 653 93 188/89 (Access Anywhere)
1800 425 1212 (Toll Free Backup Line)
Log in at www.livewell.optum.com

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- Face-to-Face Counselling
- 24/7 Telephone Counselling
- EAP for Managers