



## How to Work with a Parent's Caregiver

The parent-child relationship will eventually begin its 180-degree turn. This can happen gradually – or overnight – as your loved one starts to need more supervised assistance, or even during an emergency situation. Whether slowly or suddenly, when you become the caregiver for your parent, it's your new normal.

## The Caregiver Role

Being a caregiver is a challenge. It's a role reversal. When the person who cared for you as a child struggles with mobility, memory, managing their medications, or personal hygiene, you must protect them while preserving their dignity. It is a delicate balance.

Your parents may not tell you they need help. You'll have to come to your own conclusions based on observations.

### ? Questions to Ask Yourself ?

- Are your parents struggling to perform routine activities?
- Does it appear they are losing considerable weight?
- Has their home's exterior fallen into disrepair?
- Do you see bruises on their body consistent with a fall?
- Is there a stack of unpaid bills?
- Have they lost interest in things they once enjoyed?

You must eventually ask yourself, "Can I do this alone?" Or do you introduce a professional caregiver into the equation?

## Introducing a Professional Caregiver

Make detailed notes about what you've observed as well as a list of concerns. Be certain you have their full medication list and current medical history.

Then, take advantage of a complimentary consultation with your local Visiting Angels office to discuss what types of caregiver services can fulfill those needs. You may or may not want to include your parent at this juncture. This consultation could serve as an additional fact-finding session as you get advice from our Care Coordinators.

Other relevant discussion points should include:

- Best contact methods if you have a question
- Reporting expectations about your parent's progress
- How you can be a contributing member to the effort
- Point person in your family to maintain communications

Once you are armed with some information, speak to your parent privately, no need for them to feel like there's a conspiracy. This may not be an easy conversation, but you need to let them know you love your role as their son or daughter and don't want that to change. We all need assistance in our lives for a variety of things. This is one of them.

## Aging in Place

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), aging in place with a caregiver is "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level."

With a caregiver on the job, you no longer have to stress and run every errand. Instead, you can stop in after work to take your mom to dinner or stay in and watch a movie together. What you'll find at the end of the day is some balance restored.

Helping your loved one remain in a familiar environment surrounded by their cherished possessions is attainable with caregiver support. Once your parent can live life on their own terms (with a little help), you might be surprised how quickly they acclimate.

At Visiting Angels®, we understand the power of a team when it's focused on the same objectives. Contact us to request a free in-home consultation, and find out more about our caregiver services.



# Does Your Senior Drink Enough **water**?

You've probably heard the claim that drinking eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day is important to health. While no scientific evidence backs this directive, drinking fluids throughout the day is important to keep our bodies hydrated and running optimally. This fact especially holds true for seniors who may need increased amounts of fluid to remain properly hydrated.

## How Much Water is Enough?

We all need different amounts of water to sustain hydration. Body weight, activity level and even weather are major factors in determining the amount of water an individual needs on a daily basis. A person should consume at least one cup of water

for every 20 pounds of weight. If living in a warm climate, seniors might perspire and need more water. Exercise also increases the need for water as does medications and health conditions. Consult with your physician for a recommended amount of water your aging adult needs each day.

## Seniors at Higher Risk of Dehydration

Seniors lose water content in their body during aging. In fact, the amount of water in the body decreases by 20% by the age of 80. The progressive loss of kidney function decreases the body's ability to retain water. In addition, thirst sensation decreases with age so older adults may unknowingly decrease his/her fluid intake. Chronic illnesses such as diabetes, dementia

and kidney problems also compound the problem along with certain medications that cause more frequent urination.

A senior with swallowing problems or illness might experience a lessened desire to drink at a time when more water is needed to fuel the body. Those with mobility and continence problems may voluntarily limit water intake due to the inconvenience of getting a drink or going to the bathroom at night. Adults with memory problems can forget when and if they did drink and how much.

## Consequences of Severe Dehydration

Seniors that lack sufficient body hydration over time can aggravate existing chronic conditions or create more serious health problems including:

- Kidney stones
- Urinary tract infections
- Heat stroke
- Seizures
- Blood clot complications
- Lowered blood volume shock

Proper hydration is challenging for seniors with lessened thirst sensation and health conditions that lead to fluid depletion. Many seniors may not understand the importance of water, so caregivers need to ensure enough water is consumed to maintain healthy hydration levels.



## DEHYDRATION SYMPTOMS



Check for **MILD** to **SEVERE** symptoms that could signal dehydration in your elderly loved ones.

## MILD

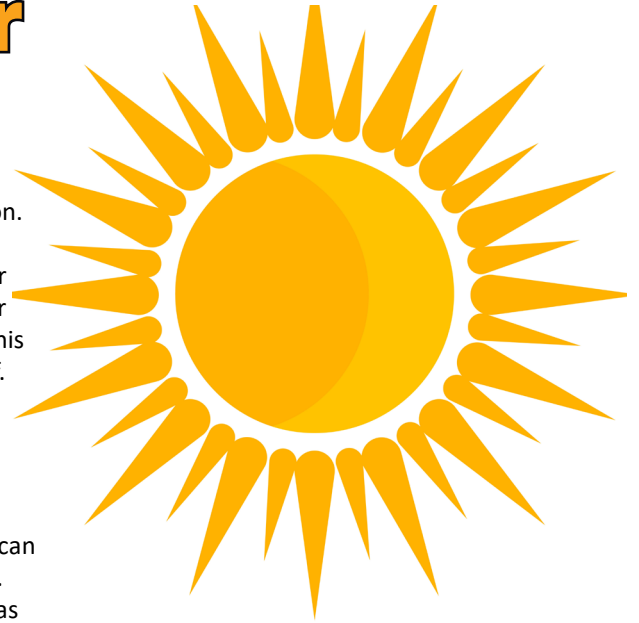
- Dry or sticky mouth
- Infrequent or dark urination
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Muscle Cramping

## SEVERE

- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Confusion or disorientation
- Fainting
- Fast heart rate and breathing
- Drop in blood pressure
- Vomiting



# Finding the **Brighter** Side of Elderly Care



When families research elderly care for a loved one, it is often stressful and can leave adult children fearful for their parent's future. Families often assume their loved one's need for assistance will cause a decline in quality of life.

But in reality, a decline in quality of life is far from a sure thing. Home care often improves the quality of life for seniors, providing them with some of the best years of their lives. This should be welcome news to anyone who's thinking of hiring elderly care for a member of their family.

Every caregiving situation is unique. Here are some ways elderly care can not only maintain quality of life but substantially improve it.

## **Small Changes, Big Impacts**

Many people understand the impact small lifestyle changes can have on seniors' health. But in many cases, small changes made possible by in-home care can have a transformative impact on seniors' wellness.

A big reason for this is how interconnected our health can be. When you make a small change in one area, the improve-

ment can set off a chain reaction. For example, seniors who get better sleep tend to have better moods, more energy, and fewer cravings for unhealthy foods. This improves quality of life by itself. But if you feel happier, exercise more, and eat a balanced diet, you'll enjoy a host of additional health benefits.

A professional in-home caregiver can reinforce these improvements. In many ways, a caregiver acts as a wellness coach, encouraging seniors to take care of themselves when they need a small nudge or a helping hand. As a result, many seniors who receive elderly care see a noticeable improvement in health and well-being in the months after starting in-home care.

## **Social Interactions and Enrichment**

One of the most underestimated risks to elderly adults is social isolation from aging. Many elderly adults feel isolated at home because of their decreased strength, coordination, vision and hearing. These impairments make it difficult for them to visit family and friends.

This has a severe and understandable impact on emotional health. Moreover, it dramatically reduces physical wellness. In fact, researchers have found that social isolation reduces life expectancy more severely than smoking or obesity.

Elderly care can brighten seniors' lives in important ways by:

- \* Providing regular social interaction at home
- \* Making trips to see friends and family
- \* Venturing out into the community

## **New Activities and Favorite Pastimes**

Age-related physical and cognitive challenges can keep seniors from living the way they want and doing the things they enjoy. Without assistance, they can become closed off to new experiences or favorite hobbies, narrowing the scope of their day-to-day lives.

Elderly care services can change this by providing seniors with a pastime or helpful activities. Caregivers can introduce seniors to new technologies and interests, providing them with the stimulation that many seniors lack.

Caregivers can make favorite hobbies possible again. Whether lending a hand with baking, helping out in the garden, or giving a lifelong card shark the benefit of a new playing partner, elderly care can help seniors do the things they love.





## Healthy Pasta Primavera

2 cups whole grain penne pasta  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1/2 cup chopped onion  
1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces  
2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms  
1 small yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise and sliced  
2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved  
1/2 cup shredded carrot  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano  
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes  
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese  
Lemon wedges

## Instructions

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add penne and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender yet firm to the bite, about 11 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in an extra-large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add asparagus, mushrooms, and squash; cook until just tender, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, carrot, garlic, oregano, black pepper, salt, and red pepper flakes; cook until tomatoes begin to soften, about 1 minute.

Drain penne; stir into vegetable mixture along with 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. Top servings with remaining cheese and serve with lemon wedges.

**Serving Size: 4**

**Calories Per Serving: 281**

[www.allrecipes.com/recipe/270838/healthy-pasta-primavera](http://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/270838/healthy-pasta-primavera)



## Grandma's Lemon Meringue Pie

1 cup white sugar  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
3 tablespoons cornstarch  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cups water  
2 lemons, juiced and zested  
2 tablespoons butter  
4 egg yolks, beaten  
1 (9 inch) pie crust, baked  
4 egg whites  
6 tablespoons white sugar

## Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).

*To Make Lemon Filling:*

In a medium saucepan, whisk together 1 cup sugar, flour, cornstarch, and salt. Stir in water, lemon juice and lemon zest. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring frequently, until mixture comes to a boil. Stir in butter. Place egg yolks in a small bowl and gradually whisk in 1/2 cup of hot sugar mixture. Whisk egg yolk mixture back into remaining sugar mixture. Bring to a boil and continue to cook while stirring constantly until thick. Remove from heat. Pour filling into baked pastry shell.

*To Make Meringue:*

In a large glass or metal bowl, whip egg whites until foamy. Add sugar gradually, and continue to whip until stiff peaks form. Spread meringue over pie, sealing the edges at the crust.

Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes, or until meringue is golden brown.

**Serving Size: 8**

**Calories Per Serving: 298**

[www.allrecipes.com/recipe/15093/grandmas-lemon-meringue-pie](http://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/15093/grandmas-lemon-meringue-pie)



## America's Choice In Homecare®

Since 1998, Visiting Angels has been providing adults and seniors with the needed assistance to continue living at home. At our nationally known, locally owned agency, it is our mission to maintain the independence and familiar surroundings for those in need.

We offer help with personal care, light housekeeping, meal preparation, transportation, shopping, companionship, respite care for families, live-in care and assistance with daily living activities. Call us today for a free, no obligation consultation! We care every day, in every way!

