

HomeTimes

Your Independent Senior Living Resource for Aging in Place

From America's Choice in Homecare.



A Cure for Senior Loneliness

A recent study, the National Poll on Healthy Aging, found that one in three seniors is lonely. "Living alone, in particular, was highly associated with feeling lonely. Among those living alone, 60% reported feeling a lack of companionship and 41% felt isolated." In the report, homecare assistance was listed as one of the solutions to help alleviate this problem.

The emotional impact aside, this research also showed that loneliness has major repercussions on senior health. "Chronic loneliness can impact older adults' memory, physical well-being, mental health, and life expectancy. In fact, some research suggests that chronic loneliness may shorten life expectancy even more than being overweight or sedentary, and just as much as smoking."

Loneliness is a state that can develop over time. It may start with increasing geographical distances between families as seniors are often left behind when adult children relocate for job opportunities. Then, one

by one their contemporaries begin to pass away. Those seniors who survive their siblings often feel even more isolated. Medical problems or the death of a spouse can make seniors even less likely to engage, compounding their feelings of loneliness.

The study goes on to say that "encouraging and supporting meaningful social connections and more frequent interactions — through activities such as volunteerism, participation in community or religious groups, or home visiting programs — may help mitigate loneliness and its associated health challenges."

This is one of the many reasons why adding professional homecare assistance to your loved one's life can have such a positive impact.

Has Your Family Considered Homecare Assistance?

Your life is busy. You're balancing children, a career, and managing a household. It can feel like there are not enough hours in the day when you don't have an opportunity to stop by and visit your mom or dad. You start to wonder: Did they eat a nutritious meal for breakfast? Are they wearing their medical alert pendant? Did they remember to lock the front door? Did they take their evening pills?

These questions flash through your mind as you're trying to get the kids to bed so you can finish the presentation for tomorrow's meeting. And then the guilt sets in. Are you doing everything in your loved one's best interests? Are you taking as good care of them as they did of you?

Being a family caregiver is a lonely road. People don't understand the challenges until they have experienced it themselves. If you're on this road, now may be the time to explore homecare assistance?

Stephanie Cacioppo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago, is also director of the university's National Institute on Aging-supported Brain Dynamics Laboratory. She states, "The misery and suffering caused by chronic loneliness are very real and warrant attention. As a social species, we are accountable to help our lonely children, parents, neighbors, and even strangers in the same way we would treat ourselves. Treating loneliness is our collective responsibility."

That's where Visiting Angels® comes in. The responsibility you feel can be shared with our compassionate homecare assistance staff and your loving family. We're here to ease the stress you're feeling while also providing your parents with friendly, joyful companionship.



At Visiting Angels®, we understand the power of a team when it's focused on the same objectives. To request a free in-home consultation, and find out more about our homecare assistance today by calling Kelly at 714-379-4546.

Alzheimer's Care: Helping To Manage Sundowners Syndrome

Living with Alzheimer's can be a challenge for the entire family. Whether your family has professional Alzheimer's care assistance or if you are caring for your loved one alone, it can seem as if each day is full of new challenges and developments.

One of the things that makes Alzheimer's care so challenging is that those living with the disease can have different needs at different times of the day. Late afternoon and early evening can be especially hard for those who experience Sundowner's Syndrome.

What is Sundowner's Syndrome?

It is a change in behavior, temperament, or personality that occurs in the late afternoon or early evening. This occurrence is also known as "sundown syndrome" or "sundowners" or "sundowning."

The experts at WebMD cite that 1 out of 5 people in need of Alzheimer's care suffer from Sundowner's Syndrome. Doctors do not really know what causes the sundowning behavior. However, the part of the brain that tells you if you are awake or asleep breaks down in Alzheimer's patients. Some scientists think these neurological changes affect the inner body clock.

Sundowning can manifest in several ways. Your loved one may become:

Agitated

Restless

Irritable

Confused

Demanding

Suspicious

They may even yell or pace around the room, sometimes hearing or seeing things that are not there. They could exhibit mood swings. These behaviors can become progressively worse and can range in duration from a short time to the entire night.



Suggestions for Managing Sundowner's Syndrome

As a family caregiver, you will need to demonstrate flexibility and empathy to help your loved one feel as peaceful as possible.

Observe. Take careful notice of events that trigger the behavior. Does the evening news instigate agitation? Is the late afternoon a time of significant activity in your home? Anything that disturbs the normal order of the day could prompt a behavioral change. Nutritional triggers can also stimulate behavior. Assess and possibly limit caffeine, sugar, and alcohol intake.

Distract. If this is their new reality, you must endeavor to understand it. Don't rail against them, but calm them with activities, music, or television shows they enjoy. It will divert their attention from troubling thoughts yet soothe them with the familiar things they love.

Adjust. In addition to natural light, the use of bright lights in the room during the day will ward off the evening shadows and maintain the daytime glow until it is time for bed.

Simplify. Adjust their sleep environment to one that is welcoming and serene. Light-blocking curtains can create a cocoon-like setting that encourages a restful night's sleep.

Consult. Check with your loved one's doctor* about natural supplements and discuss the possibility of recommending anti-anxiety and even anti-depressant meds. Use caution when purchasing anything over the counter unless the doctor has confirmed there is no interference with already prescribed medications.

Finally, try to have patience. It may take a little time to figure out what combination of solutions works for your loved one. When it comes to Alzheimer's care, everyone is different. If you need us, we are here to help.

Together with your family, we will give your loved one all the respect and love they deserve with the finest in Alzheimer's care. To request a free in-home consultation, and find out more about our caregiver services, contact your nearest Visiting Angels office today.



Slow Cooker Beef Pot Roast

1 (5 pound) bone-in beef pot roast	1 tablespoon tomato paste
salt and pepper to taste	2 1/2 cups chicken broth
1 tablespoon all purpose flour (or as needed)	3 medium carrots cut into chunks
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	2 stalks celery cut into chunks
8 ounces sliced mushrooms	1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 medium onion chopped	2 sprigs fresh thyme
2 cloves garlic minced	
1 tablespoon butter	
1 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour	

Instructions:

Generously season both sides of roast with salt and pepper. Sprinkle flour over the top until well coated, and pat it into the meat. Shake off any excess.

Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Sear the roast on both sides for 5-6 minutes each, until well browned. Remove from the skillet and set aside.

Reduce the heat to medium and stir in mushrooms and butter; cook for 3-4 minutes.

Stir in onion; cook for 5 minutes, until onions are translucent and begin to brown. Add garlic, stir for about a minute.

Stir in 1 1/2 tablespoons flour; cook and stir for about 1 minute. Add tomato paste, and cook for another minute.

Slowly add chicken stock, stir to combine, and return to a simmer. Remove skillet from the heat.

Place carrots and celery in the slow cooker. Place roast over the vegetables and pour in any accumulated juices. Add rosemary and thyme.

Pour onion and mushroom mixture over the top of the roast. Cover slow cooker, turn to high and cook the roast for 5-6 hours, until the meat is fork tender.

Skim off any fat from the surface and remove the bones. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 8 servings • Calories: 778
www.allrecipes.com/recipe/220125



Best Bread Pudding with Vanilla Sauce

3 eggs (beaten)	For the Sauce:
1 1/2 cups white sugar	1/2 cup light brown sugar
2 tablespoons light brown sugar	1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon	1 pinch ground cinnamon
1/4 cup butter (melted)	1 egg
3 cups whole milk	2 tablespoons butter (melted)
10 slices hearty farmhouse bread (toasted and cut into cubes)	1 1/4 cup whole milk
1 cup raisins	1 pinch salt
	1 table spoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease a 2-quart baking dish.

In a mixing bowl, whisk 3 eggs, white sugar, 2 tablespoons of light brown sugar, 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon, 1/4 cup of butter, and 3 cups of whole milk together, and gently stir in the bread cubes and raisins. Lightly spoon the mixture into the prepared baking dish.

Bake in the preheated oven until browned and set in the middle, 50 to 55 minutes; cover the dish with foil after 30 minutes to prevent excessive browning. Let the pudding stand for 10 minutes before serving.

For vanilla sauce, whisk 1/2 cup of light brown sugar, the flour, a pinch of cinnamon, 1 egg, 2 tablespoons of melted butter, 1 1/4 cups of whole milk, and salt together in a heavy saucepan until smooth. Heat over medium heat, whisking constantly, until thickened and the sauce coats the back of a spoon, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in the vanilla extract. Pour sauce over warm bread pudding, or serve on the side in a bowl.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 8 servings • Calories: 546
www.allrecipes.com/recipe/217181