

HomeTimes

America's Choice In Home Care

Your resource for an at home senior lifestyle.



6 Tips to Help Your Loved One Keep Track of Medication

Proper and safe medication adherence is a nationwide problem for people of all ages, especially the elderly. One study suggests approximately 1 in 5 new prescriptions are never filled, and of those, approximately 50 percent are taken incorrectly.

While medications can improve quality of life, extend life expectancy, and cure or mitigate disease, they can lead to severe consequences if forgotten or taken in the wrong dosage.

Know Your Loved One's Medication

Ensure you fully understand the intent of the medicine and that your loved one follows instructions. Read all labels and any available documentation. Speak with your loved one's doctor or pharmacist to know what directions your loved one should follow.

Fill all prescriptions at the same pharmacy so the pharmacist can confirm there are no interactions or duplicates — especially if your loved one receives prescriptions from more than one doctor.

Find the Right Medication Reminder System

Here are six helpful strategies to help your senior loved one stay on track with medication reminders:

Create a Simple Checklist

Create a weekly written checklist or a grid to track medications and dosages.

Use a Pill Organizer

If the drug packaging is cumbersome and not user-friendly, you can transfer the medication into the pill organizer to alleviate trouble. Help your loved one fill their pill organizer on a weekly basis to pre-plan each week's medications.

Tie Medications to Daily Activities

Look for opportunities to form a habit. For example, your loved one could take medication when sitting down at breakfast or when brushing their teeth at night. This will vary depending on the medication, time of the day it should be taken, with or without food, etc. Follow the instructions from your doctor or pharmacist.

Set Alarms

Call your loved one to remind them to take their medication or you can install a medication reminder app on their smartphone.

Track and Count Pills Regularly

This will help track missing or extra doses. Create an additional vetting process, such as counting pills to ensure your loved one follows the prescribed medication schedule.



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Hire a Professional Caregiver

If your senior is having trouble managing their medications even with a solid system in place, hiring a professional caregiver to be by their side is often helpful. A dedicated Visiting Angels caregiver can be an extra set of eyes to monitor your senior's safety and comfort.

Visiting Angels West Springfield offers medication reminder support. Contact us for a free home care consultation at 413-733-6900.*

How Visiting Angels Can Make Work from Home Easier

Working remote has enabled many individuals with aging loved ones to become more involved in senior care at home. However, some may find it challenging to balance employment responsibilities with the demands of managing a loved one's care needs long-term.

When working from home, you may need to answer emails, participate in video conference calls, write reports, and do other tasks you conducted at the office. However, it can be difficult concentrating when you need to take frequent breaks to meet the requests of an older adult who is living with you or nearby.

The responsibilities increase—and can be overwhelming—when you factor in family and household duties like school pick-ups/drop-offs, doctor appointments, meal preparation, shopping, and cleaning and laundry.

How Can Visiting Angels Help?

Whether your senior resides with you or not, an in-home personal caregiver can handle senior care tasks during your work-at-home hours.

Here are some benefits of hiring a professional caregiver:

Reduced Interruptions

Frequent interruptions can break your concentration, lower productivity, and limit your ability to host a conference call or talk on the phone. A caregiver can anticipate and meet

your loved one's needs so you can devote your full attention to business.

More Companionship

A professional caregiver at home will give your loved one someone to interact with to reduce feelings of loneliness and boredom. Plus, it will allow you to complete your work and catch up with your loved one at a more convenient time.

Increased Safety

If your senior has cognitive, health, or mobility issues, they may need constant attention to maintain their safety. A trusted professional caregiver can be by your loved one's side to prevent accidents and mishaps if critical work tasks have you tied up longer than expected.

Flexibility to Fit Your Schedule

At Visiting Angels, we understand not everyone works 9-5. Our caregivers are available to help you care for your older loved one if you work evenings, overnights, or weekends. We can also assist if you only need part-time care for a few days or hours per week.

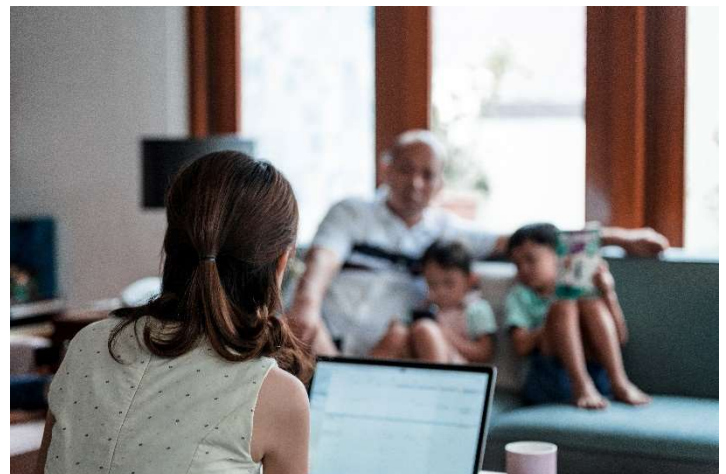
Time for Self-Care

Caring for an older loved one while working from home isn't easy. Even if you have help during your workday, it's important to focus on yourself.

Visiting Angels respite care services can give you a break to run errands, attend a social function, or meet personal or family obligations that fall on evenings or weekends.

If working from home while caring for your senior has you feeling stressed and overwhelmed, hiring a Visiting Angels caregiver may be the ideal senior care solution.

To learn more about how professional in-home care can assist, contact Visiting Angels West Springfield today at 413-733-6900.*



What's New at Visiting Angels West Springfield?

Check out what's happening in the month of October at our office.



Bianca is October Employee of the Month

This month, we are celebrating Bianca, our Client Care Coordinator, as our October Employee of the Month.

Though we typically recognize a caregiver each month that has shown exceptional dedication to their craft, this month we're showing our appreciation for an office staff member who continually goes above and beyond. Bianca is a

shining star in our office whose professionalism, positivity, and willingness to help deserve to be recognized.

Bianca first started at Visiting Angels West Springfield as a CNA where she quickly established herself as a dedicated caregiver. She formed wonderful client relationships and showed dedication to her position. In January 2023, Michele, Owner of Visiting Angels West Springfield, asked her to come on board our administrative team.

Bianca quickly settled into her role as Client Care Coordinator and immediately began to make a positive impact on our administrative operations. She has a knack for identifying a lack and crafting a solution, whether it be systematizing her role for greater efficiency or making improvements to our operations to ensure client safety.

"For example, we had an incident in the office last year," Michele reported. "Bianca realized that for safety reasons, we needed to have headshots of all of our clients in their profiles and she added that to part of our system."

Not only does she do our at-home consultations and ensure client care is running smoothly, but Bianca also makes the effort to fill in anywhere she can. Whether it's attending a marketing event on a Saturday afternoon or running into downtown Springfield to pick up food for an office celebration, Bianca is the first to volunteer

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to perform a variety of odd jobs for our operations. And she always does it with a smile!

"She's a sunshine," Michele remarked with a huge grin. "She lights up every room that she's in. Clients' families choose us because of her. I feel so blessed to have her on our team."

Bianca is a shining star at Visiting Angels West Springfield. Her humility and willingness to tackle each day with optimism and confidence is contagious and endlessly appreciated. Thank you for all you do, Bianca!

Office Staff and Caregivers Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

On Tuesday, October 17, Visiting Angels West Springfield administrative staff invited caregivers into the office to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. With a majority of our caregiving and office staff being of Hispanic heritage, Michele and the team took this opportunity to show their appreciation for all that they do for our organization.



The celebration included decorations, goodies, and tons of yummy food such as empanadas and sandwiches. It was a fantastic day in the office!



Visiting Angels WS Welcomes New Office Staff Members

Visiting Angels West Springfield has recently welcomed two new office staff members, Kari Pyle and Christina Trikas.

Kari Pyle joined us this past summer as our new Onboarding Specialist. She works directly with new hires to conduct orientations, walk-in interviews, and process documentation. Kari has fit in seamlessly so far, jumping in to help the office staff with new client inquiries by onboarding new caregivers.

She came to us with over 26 years of experience in the healthcare industry, the latter 14 of which were on the administrative side. In 1998, Kari obtained her CNA license and spent the next 12 years traveling to long-term care facilities where she worked with a variety of patient needs. In 2010, she switched into an administrative role for her homecare agency and took on roles of coordinating and scheduling caregivers. Kari is proud to have dedicated 26 years to the healthcare industry.

Christina Trikas joined our administrative team at the beginning of September, and she has already made great contributions to our office environment. Christina is working alongside Natali as another Staffing Coordinator as well as taking on HR roles. The team oversees running orientations with new caregivers as well as managing staff schedules as new client inquiries need staffing.

Christina graduated from the American Red Cross as a CNA/HHA and chose to go into home care. She began work with Allied Health Systems as an HHA in 2012 until she was promoted to Clinical Scheduler in 2014 due to her diligent and meticulous work ethic. Six months into her new position, Christina was asked to audit 180 employees and excelled in her new roles. She then received a promotion to HR and soon after, Office Manager. Though she misses working directly with clients, she has developed a new passion for assisting seniors in other ways- making sure they are receiving proper care from an administrative perspective.

We are honored to have two wonderful additions to our new office team who both have a passion for helping seniors on the administrative side.

Office Staff Show Appreciation for Michele Anstett on National Boss' Day - October 16

"Thank you for believing in me and pushing me to reach new heights. Accepting your job offer four years ago is the best thing that has happened to me. As you know, this job answered a prayer, and I can see it daily. Thank you!" ~ Iris

"Michele is one of the reasons I'm still here 14 years later! She genuinely cares for and appreciates her employees' needs! Thank you, Michele, for putting up with me!" ~ Natali

"Thank you, Michele, for being so supportive, understanding and kind this past year during my breast cancer journey. I couldn't have done it without you. I appreciate your compassion and kindness and flexibility during this difficult time. I will always remember. Happy Bosses Day to the very best!!! A true Angel." ~ Mary

"I can say so much in such a short time being employed by Visiting Angels about Michele. From the moment she reached out to me I knew she was the kind of person I wanted to work for. Her passion and love for people is beyond amazing and beautiful. She has allowed me to find new trust in an employer that I had lost. Our interview that went four hours long but only felt like 30 minutes was the most amazing interview I've ever had. I am so grateful that she has given me this opportunity. Thank you, Michele, for being the woman and boss you are. In this short time you have become a special person in my life." ~ Christina

"Thank you, Michele, for being an incredible woman to work for! Your understanding, compassion, and heart for your employees is so admirable. Your work ethic and perseverance through the toughest seasons is commendable and inspires my work every day. Thank you for seeking me out and answering my prayer when you first hired me. I'm grateful every day for the trust you have in me professionally, and that you've allowed me the creative freedom to build my digital marketing role throughout this past year. Thank you, Michele, and Happy Boss' Day!!" ~ Rachel



Cheddar Bay Biscuit Chicken Cobbler

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 4 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
- 1 (15 ounce) package frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme, plus more for garnish
- 1 ½ cups chicken broth
- ¾ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste
- 1 (10.5 ounce) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 package cheddar biscuit mix

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350° F (175° C). Coat the bottom of a 13x9-inch baking dish with melted butter.

Place shredded chicken and vegetables into the dish; season with thyme, pepper, and salt. Pour over condensed soup, broth, and cream; stir until well combined.

Prepare biscuit mix according to package instructions.

Drop 8 (about ¼ cup) biscuit dough portions onto chicken and vegetable mixture.

Bake in the preheated oven, uncovered, until biscuits are golden brown on top and casserole is bubbling around the edges, about 40 minutes. Sprinkle with thyme.

Nutritional Information: Serving Size: 8 servings • Calories: 531

www.allrecipes.com/recipe/8533467/cheddar-bay-biscuit-cobbler/



Chocolate Chip Pumpkin Bread

- 3 cups white sugar
- 1 (15 ounce) can of pumpkin puree
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- ⅔ cup water
- 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon ground nutmeg, or to taste
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

Instructions:

Gather all ingredients. Preheat the oven to 350° F (175° C). Grease and flour three 9x5-inch loaf pans (or three empty 16-ounce coffee tins).

Combine sugar, pumpkin, eggs, oil, and water in a large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Blend in flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, and salt.

Fold in chocolate chips and nuts.

Evenly divide batter between the prepared pans; they should be ½ to ¾ full.

Bake in the preheated oven until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean, about 1 hour.

Remove from the oven and let cool on wire racks before removing from the pans. Enjoy!

Nutritional Information: Serving Size: 30 servings • Calories: 252

www.allrecipes.com/recipe/6732/chocolate-chip-pumpkin-bread

About Visiting Angels West Springfield

The West Springfield franchise of Visiting Angels has announced that Michele Anstett, co-founder of the business, has transitioned to full ownership and assumed the role of President and CEO. Visiting Angels offers **in-home care services** to **seniors** and **elderly veterans** throughout the Pioneer Valley in Western Massachusetts. Anstett started the business in 1999 is the Owner, President, and Director for the West Springfield franchise.

Since 1999, the home-care industry has changed dramatically in the Pioneer Valley and Greater Springfield Area. Anstett's experience growing the business for the past 25 years in an evolving sector makes her uniquely equipped to handle the modern challenges of the industry and successfully direct the business. Anstett's franchise was the ninth franchise in the Visiting Angels network, which has since increased in size to over 600 agencies internationally. With her guidance as Owner and President, the franchise has grown to provide over 80,000 hours of care annually, helping seniors to maintain a sense of independence, dignity, and quality of life in their own home setting. Anstett brings dedication, compassion, experience, and attention to detail to the role – fundamental skills for successful leadership in the ever-evolving home-care industry.



Now, with over two decades of servicing the Hampden County region, Visiting Angels has helped over 4,000 seniors maintain a sense of independence, dignity and quality of life in their own home or assisted care setting. While Visiting Angels West Springfield has grown since 1999, they continue to build lasting relationships by offering that same, family-like compassionate care and dependability since day one. Visiting Angels has been a *Homecare Provider of Choice since 2015!*

Visiting Angels West Springfield provides [in-home care](#), senior homecare, elderly care, [Dementia care](#) and [Alzheimer's care](#) in Southampton, [Westfield](#), Southwick, [Holyoke](#), [West Springfield](#), [Agawam](#), [Chicopee](#), [Springfield](#), Indian Orchard, [Longmeadow](#), [East Longmeadow](#), [Wilbraham](#), [Ludlow](#), Feeding Hills and [Montgomery](#). The franchise covers the entire Greater Springfield Area and most of the Lower Pioneer Valley region.

Visiting Angels West Springfield can be reached at [413-733-6900](tel:413-733-6900) to request more information about in-home care services for your loved ones or to inquire about [current employment](#) opportunities (CNA, HHA, and PCA).

Visiting Angel West Springfield

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West Springfield, MA 01089
413-733-6900

America's Choice In Home Care®

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!

