



Newsletter

JUNE 2016

Making Homes Safe for Those with Alzheimer's

Having a dementia like Alzheimer's puts more people at risk when living alone or living with a family member. Early in this journey, often the only risk is forgetting an appointment or maybe taking the trash out on the right night. But, as this disease progresses, risks start to increase from forgetting to take important medications, to remembering how to use appliances including garden equipment safely or cooking appliances that could cause a fire.

June is National Safety month, and we thought it would be good to give you some tips on making homes safe for those with mild dementia living alone as well as for those living with a family or professional care provider.

For those living alone, the following tips can help reduce some of the risks associated with loss of memory, sequencing, and judgment.

1. Using technology that notifies you when someone leaves the home, uses kitchen appliances, uses the bathroom, and takes medications can be very helpful in the early stages of dementia. Technology can also let you know if they are doing the "normal activities of daily living" with timely alerts.
2. Early on in the process you might want to remove from the home ladders, garden equipment, poisons used in and around the home and maybe even some dangerous tools.
3. Having meals delivered prevents accidents while cooking. A main meal that is provided for lunch allows for more finger foods in the evenings. Monitoring the refrigerator is good at this stage – it lets you know if they are still getting good nutrition.



About Our Founder

Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 26 years.

MONTHLY AFFIRMATION: *"A safe environment can help insure quality of life for my loved ones"*

Some more tips for those living with a companion or spouse:

1. Remove all sharp knives and scissors from eyesight. You might need to take the knobs off the stove and only put them on when you are cooking.
2. Medications should be kept in a locked cabinet and given only as directed by the primary caregiver.
3. Showers need to be adjusted for temperature before the person steps in. Often using a shower seat and a hand held shower wand is preferred for safety. A care manager can help you create a safe way to bathe your family member.
4. Wandering can be a big problem with dementia. Early on provide your family member with the Alzheimer's Association bracelet. GPS devices are becoming more frequently used – the Alzheimer's Association has a store on their website with ideas.
5. Black mats in front of doors sometimes turn people away from the door – they see the mat as a hole in the floor. Delay egress systems with a buzzer can alert you to those coming and going. Some families have put signs on the back of doors that say “this is not an exit”, and that can deter escaping. Increasing daily exercise reduces wandering with some individuals and it is good for you and your family member.
6. Driving is an issue that can come up earlier in the disease due to disorientation, reaction times, and the likelihood of getting lost or being involved in an accident. If driving is an issue, we have an excellent booklet from the Hartford Insurance Company – call our office for that information or a copy of the booklet. If you are struggling with taking the car keys away, many hospitals have a safe driving evaluation program, ask your doctor for a referral.

The other major issue on keeping those with dementia safe is to provide activities that keep them engaged without frustrating their abilities. Day Care programs are a good solution providing activities and giving family respite. As is having a personal assistant trained in dementia care activities.

When you have a complimentary home assessment, we will do a home safety evaluation for you at the same time.

Upcoming Events

BE! Brain Enrichment

FRIDAY JUNE 10TH, 2016, 2:00PM - 3:30PM
10 WEEK COURSE – \$35.00 for all 10 weeks!

BE! Brain Enrichment is an interactive educational experience for adults with normal age-related memory changes. This 10-week course of one-hour interactive sessions will be facilitated by Giulia Brighi-Donato, LVN, from Eldercare Services.

Space is limited to 30 participants. Registration is required.

Caring for an Aging Family Member

2ND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH, 6:00PM - 7:30PM

Addressing the fears of Alzheimer's disease & other issues associated with aging.

When concerns of aging family members become a part of your every day routine, when they interfere with work, your health or other relationships, you may need to join a support group.

** No fee and no registration required.*

Location of Events:

Eldercare Services, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd.,
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

TO REGISTER

Call: **866.760.1808** or

Email: info@EldercareAnswers.com