

January 2021

VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS



The ALS Association Greater Sacramento Chapter is committed to serving the needs of the ALS community during the COVID-19 crisis. We are offering Virtual Support Group Meetings to ensure those living with ALS and their caregivers continue to have access to their networks of support.

Please join whichever group best fits your schedule; you don't have to live in the specified region to access any of the listed virtual groups.

Making Connections Support Group Meeting (In place of Redding, Stockton, and Placer Groups)

When: Jan. 12, 2021 1:00 PM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84300184853>

Meeting ID: 843 0018 4853
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

Tahoe Support Group Meeting (For anyone affected by ALS)

When: Jan. 21, 2021 12:00 PM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83045617162>

Meeting ID: 830 4561 7162
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

Sacramento Support Group Meetings

(For Family, Friends and Caregivers)

When: Jan. 16, 2021 10:30 AM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82890649586>

Meeting ID: 828 9064 9586
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

(For Persons with ALS)

When: Jan. 16, 2021 12:00 PM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86700944697>

Meeting ID: 867 0094 4697
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

Transitions Support Group Meeting (For those coping with loss)

When: Jan. 26, 2021 5:30 PM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87609861271>

Meeting ID: 876 0986 1271
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

Chico Support Group Meeting (For anyone affected by ALS)

When: Jan. 28, 2021 12:00PM Pacific Time
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88232347061>

Meeting ID: 882 3234 7061
Call in: 1-669-900-6833

If you have any questions, your care coordinator will be happy to help you perform a test run prior to the meeting. Please call (916)979-9265 for assistance.

A support group provides a helpful setting in which you, your family and your caregiver can obtain and digest reliable information, find a supportive network of people in similar circumstances, and a context in which to share your experience, fears, concerns, and hopes. A support group can provide a reminder that there is hope for a good quality of life!

Why Come to an ALS Support Group?

Sharing Practical Information

The support group is an excellent forum for sharing practical information. The advantage to the person with ALS is that one learns from other individuals how to handle certain problems. There are many things that people with the disease may know much more about than does the physician, including which splints work best for different hand problems, preparation of foods and other techniques to help swallowing, and even ways to speak or communicate better. Within a support group, this information and tips are passed along. Anything that can be done to help muscles maintain optimal function, can prolong life span and improve quality of life. The support group is a good place for learning about better ways to improve adaptive functioning.

Emotional Support

There is also a great deal of emotional support that is needed by both the people with ALS and their family members. The group is a great place for people to get together and learn from each other about how to cope with various problems. It is quite important to see that people with ALS and family members are not completely unique, and that others also experience the similar emotions. Maybe you're nervous about seeing other ALS patients who might be in worse condition. *Will I be like that some day?* It's a natural question. However, you will see how people live productively with ALS and maybe even that your fears are lot worse than reality.

Education

Support groups can provide substantial educational opportunities about a wide range of topics. Common topics include:

- How to counteract problems in swallowing and chewing;
- Safeguards that can help avoid pulmonary complications;
- Physical and occupational therapies;
- Ways of coping with depression and caregiver "burnout;"
- New clinical trials and research; and
- The latest augmentative technologies and home adaptations.

One might say that all this can be learned from literature or directly from the doctor; however, the ALS support group is designed to provide information beyond the standard overview provided in many clinic visits.

Needs of the Caregiver/Spouse

Taking care of a person with ALS is not only a major time commitment, but an extremely important ingredient in making the most of life for this person. The well-being of the spouse or primary caregiver needs to be regularly monitored. Compassion fatigue is a problem that is often faced by ALS families. By utilizing a support group, the spouse or primary caregiver can talk with others experiencing similar feelings of fatigue and frustration. For many, finding out that these feelings are normal is a relief. One also learns how important it is to ask for and accept help with providing care, maintaining household routines and other activities. Needing time away does not mean that the spouse or caregiver is not doing a good job of caring for the individual with ALS, rather, it's a way to gain emotional support and the rest needed to do an even better job!