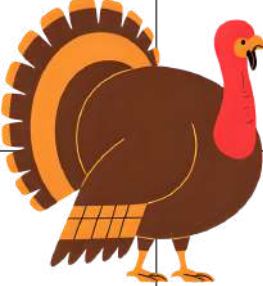




November

2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 F2F Walk for Memory Water's Edge Park @ 9 AM
2	3 Caregiver Education Group @ Elan 1:00 PM	4	5 Cup of Care Caregiver Group @ Lindale 12:00 PM	6 Caregiver Summit @ Brookdale Trinity (101 N. Upper Broadway) Starts 8:30 AM	7 Open Enrollment Clinic at the AAA Office 9 AM - 1PM	8 Walk to End Alzheimer's @ Heritage Park 9 AM
9	10 Caregiver Education Group @ Brookdale Trinity 1:00 PM	11 Caregiver Group @ Brookdale 10 AM Time of Reflection W/ Dr. Praderio @ Lindale 12 PM	12 Caregiver Education Group @ YWCA 11:00 AM	13	14	15
16	17 Understanding Alzheimer's & Dementia "Caregiver Group" @ Joe Garza 12:00 PM	18 Grandparent Caregiver Group @ AAA 10:00 AM	19 Caregiver Pot Luck @ Joe Garza Rec Center 11 AM	20	21	22
23	24 Caregiver Education Group @ The Viera 1:00 PM	25	26	27 Thanksgiving 	28	29
30						

November 2025 Events

VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON CAREGIVER EDUCATION GROUPS

When: MON. November 3rd 2025 "Caregiver Education Group"

Where: Elan Corpus Christi @ 5144 Lipes Blvd., Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

Time: 10:00 PM to 2:00 PM

RSVP: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343 or Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

When: WED. November 5th 2025 "A CUP OF CARE" MEMORY CAFE

Where: LINDALE SENIOR CENTER @ 3135 Swantner St. Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Support & for Loved Ones

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

RSVP: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343

When: THURS. November 6th, 2025 "Caregiver Education Group"

Where: LINDALE SENIOR CENTER @ 3135 Swantner St., Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

RSVP: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343 or Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

When: MON. November 10th 2025 "CAREGIVER EDUCATION GROUP"

Where: Brookdale Trinity Towers @ 101 N. Upper Broadway, Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

Time: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Info: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343 or Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

When: TUE. November 11th 2025 "CAREGIVER EDUCATION GROUP"

Where: BROOKDALE @ 6410 Meadowvista Dr., Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Info: Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

**When: TUES. November 11th 2025 "A Time of Reflection"
with Dr. Nestor Praderio**

Where: Lindale Senior Center @ 3135 Swantner St. Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Support and Education

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Info: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343

When: WED. November 12th 2025 "CAREGIVER EDUCATION GROUP"

Where: YWCA @ 4601 Corona Dr., Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Support and Education

Time: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Info: Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

When: MON. November 17th 2025 "CAREGIVER EDUCATION GROUP"

Where: Joe Garza Rec Center @ 3202 Highland Dr. Corpus Christi

Type: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Info: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343 or Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

When: MON. November 24th 2025 "Caregiver Education Group"

Type: In-Person Caregiver Support & for Loved Ones

Where: The Viera Memory Care Unit @ 3010 Airline Rd.

Type: In-Person Caregiver Support & for Loved Ones

Time: 1:00 PM - 12:00 PM

Info: Mary Ann Mondragon (361) 826-2343 or Christina Edwardson (361) 232-5150

Dr. Nestor H. Praderio, M.D.

**Face to Face Dementia Educational
Program for The Caregiver**

WHEN: WED. November 24th 2025

WHERE: Virtual

TYPE: Caregiver Support Program

TIME: 5:00 PM

RSVP: Texas Face to Face (361) 359-2199

**Grandparents and Other Relatives
Raising Children**

MCH Family- Empowerment Group

WHEN: TUESDAY November 18th 2025

WHERE: Area Agency on Aging @ 2910 Leopard St.

TYPE: In-Person Caregiver Education Group

TIME: 10:00 - 11:00 AM

PHONE: (361) 334-2255 or (361-) 883-3935

Alzheimer's Association

**Where: Visit alz.org/CRF to register or call:
800-272-3900 VIRTUAL/PHONE CAREGIVER
SUPPORT GROUP**

For Additional Information contact:

Christina Edwardson

Family Caregiver Specialist

Office: (361) 883-3935 Ext: 51



*Facilitations are provided by:
THE NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM
a program of
Texas Health and Human Services*

Caregiving in
The Comfort of Home®

Caregiver Assistance News

“CARING FOR YOU ... CARING FOR OTHERS”

Heart Disease – Our Leading Cause of Death

Heart Attack

A heart attack occurs when the blood flow to a part of the heart is blocked, usually by a blood clot. If this clot cuts off the blood flow completely, the part of the heart muscle supplied by that artery begins to die.

Warning signs of a heart attack can be both sudden and intense or they can start out with mild aches and pains and develop slowly. It is important to be able to recognize these warning signs and report them immediately by calling 911:

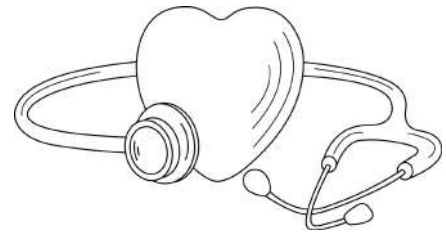
- New chest pain or discomfort that lasts longer than 15 minutes and is not relieved by rest or medication
- Discomfort in other areas of the body (jaw, neck, back or arm)
- Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea/vomiting or lightheadedness
- Fainting spell or loss of consciousness

About every 26 seconds, an American will suffer a coronary event, and about every minute someone will die from one.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients

with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS

for rapid transport to the emergency room. *Source: American Heart Association*



Heart Attack Symptoms in Women

Even though heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women in the U.S., women often view the symptoms to be less life-threatening conditions such as acid reflux, the flu or aging.

Many women think the signs of a heart attack are unmistakable. Actually, the signs of heart attack in women may not be obvious and can be confusing. Even when the signs are *subtle*, the outcomes can be deadly if the woman doesn't get help right away.

Call 911 to get to a hospital right away if noticing these symptoms:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It may last more than a few minutes or go away and come back.
- Pain or discomfort in one these areas— arms (one or both), back, neck, jaw, stomach, shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort, breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

Article continues
on page 2

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. Some women having a heart attack describe upper back pressure that feels like squeezing or a rope being tied around them. Women may have other symptoms that are typically less associated with heart attack, such as: anxiety, shortness of breath, upset stomach, pain in the shoulder, back or arm or unusual tiredness and weakness.

To Prevent a Heart Attack

Heart disease can be mostly preventable. So be sure to:

- ✓ Schedule an appointment with your health care professional to learn your risk for heart disease.
- ✓ Quit smoking. Just one year after you quit, you'll cut your risk of coronary heart disease by 50%.
- ✓ Aim for at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity *aerobic activity* (such as brisk walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (such as jogging), or a combination of both. Try to spread your activity throughout the week. It's also good to include moderate- to high-intensity *muscle strengthening activity*, such as resistance or weight training, at least twice a week.
- ✓ Include fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, low-fat or fat-free dairy, nuts and seeds in your diet. Limit processed foods, added sugars, sodium and alcohol.

Remember

Act fast — symptoms can be subtle, but deadly. Don't wait. **Call 911 if you suspect a heart attack.**

Heart Attack Symptoms in Women | American Heart Association

NOTE: Snow Shoveling and Heart Attack Risk in Men

Snow shoveling is a **well-known trigger for heart attacks**, particularly in **men over age 45** who have **underlying heart conditions** or risk factors like **high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, or a sedentary lifestyle**.

The risk is heightened because:

- ➔ **Cold weather** causes blood vessels to constrict, raising blood pressure.
- ➔ **Sudden physical exertion** from heavy lifting can strain the heart.
- ➔ **Early morning shoveling** (when many people begin) is especially risky, as heart attack rates are naturally higher in the morning.

This combination puts significant stress on the cardiovascular system, making **snow shoveling a dangerous activity for at-risk individuals**.

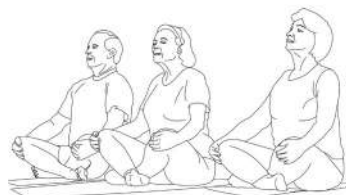
Taking Care of Yourself— Yoga and the Heart

Yoga's combination of stretching, gentle activity, breathing, and mindfulness may have special benefits for people with cardiovascular disease.

Getting into the various postures during a yoga session gently exercises the muscles. Anything that works your muscles is good for your heart and blood vessels. Activity also helps muscles become more sensitive to insulin, which is important for controlling blood sugar.

The deep-breathing exercises help slow the breathing rate. Taking fewer, but deeper breaths, each minute temporarily lowers blood pressure and calms the sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for generating stress hormones.

People with heart disease often have other health concerns that limit flexibility, such as arthritis. Find a class with a qualified yoga instructor who can meet your health needs and limitations.



Live Life Laughing!

I'm thinking next year I'll quit smoking...

What about drinking?



Inspiration

If you haven't any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.

—Bob Hope

Memory Care

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is one of the most significant risk factors for both heart disease and dementia. When blood pressure remains elevated, it places stress on the arteries, causing damage to small blood vessels in your brain. Over time, this can impair cognitive function and increases the risk of dementia.

National Caregiver Month!



Caregiving in The Comfort of Home®

Our Purpose

To provide caregivers with critical information enabling them to do their job with confidence, pride, and competence.

Ordering Info

From the publishers of

*Caregiving in
The Comfort of Home®*

Caregiver Series

available from...

CareTrust Publications LLC

PO Box 10283, Portland, OR 97296

newsletters@comfortofhome.com

or www.comfortofhome.com

Comments and suggestions welcome.

©2025 CareTrust Publications LLC.

All rights reserved. Reproduction of any component of this publication is forbidden without a license from the publisher.

Some content in this publication is excerpted from *The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series*. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented or the reader's misunderstanding of the text.

SAFETY TIPS— Change What You Can

Start modifying all of the risk factors that you can (weight, activity, smoking, blood pressure). Implement a diet, exercise, and weight-loss program approved by the doctor.

Medication Be sure to **fill the prescription on time (to avoid running out)** and be diligent that the person in your care takes medicine *exactly* as directed. **DO NOT** stop taking any prescribed medication without the approval of the doctor.

Cholesterol and Salt Consumption Because **cholesterol is a major factor in coronary artery disease**, it is important to get it checked for you and the person in your care. The typical American diet is very high in sodium. Even if no salt is added during cooking, most people still consume too much sodium because most processed foods are high in sodium. When an individual consumes too much sodium, extra fluid builds up in the body, which causes the heart to work harder.

NEXT ISSUE...DIABETES - AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Caregiver Assistance News

“ C A R I N G F O R Y O U ... C A R I N G F O R O T H E R S ”

Q U I C K Q U I Z

Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, remains the leading cause of death in the U.S. despite improvements in prevention, detection, and treatment. Answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Warning signs of a heart attack can be both sudden and intense or they can start out with mild aches and pains and develop slowly.
T F
2. Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car.
T F
3. The signs of heart attack in women may not be obvious and can be confusing.
T F
4. Snow shoveling is a well-known trigger for heart attacks, particularly in men over age 45 who have underlying heart conditions or risk factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, or a sedentary lifestyle.
T F
5. High blood pressure, or hypertension, is one of the most significant risk factors for *both* heart disease and dementia.
T F
6. Just one year after you quit smoking, you'll cut your risk of coronary heart disease by 50%.
T F
7. *Anything* that works your muscles is good for your heart and blood vessels.
T F
8. Yoga's combination of stretching, gentle activity, breathing, and mindfulness may have *special* benefits for people with cardiovascular disease.
T F
9. Cold weather does not cause blood vessels to constrict, raising blood pressure.
T F
10. Taking fewer, but deeper breaths, each minute temporarily lowers blood pressure and calms the sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for generating stress hormones.
T F

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Date **Time** **Topic** **A LEADING VOICE FOR CAREGIVERS**

All sessions are available on your choice of Zoom or telephone only!

Wednesday November 5	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Ask Dr. Tam Questions with Tam Cummings, PhD <i>What kind of questions do you have about dementia? As a caregiver, how do you survive the journey? Dr. Tam Cummings will cover quick stress relief tips and answer any questions you have about dementia.** Sponsored by VITAS Healthcare**</i>
Tuesday November 11	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Desafíos en el manejo de la demencia con el Dr. Nestor H. Praderio <i>Recibir un diagnóstico de demencia puede ser abrumador. Participe en una valiosa charla con el Dr. Praderio sobre cómo enfrentar los retos médicos y conductuales de la demencia incluyendo tipos y crisis de comportamiento. Aprenda estrategias prácticas para apoyar mejor a su ser querido.</i>
Tuesday November 18	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Caregiving and the Holidays: From Stress to Success! with Paula Hill <i>Stop dreading the holiday season and learn to make it manageable, meaningful, and even joyful! The holidays often amplify the stress, resentment, and fatigue family caregivers already face, forcing a collision between unrealistic expectations and the reality of care needs. Join our webinar, "Caregiving and the Holidays: From Stress to Success!", to gain actionable strategies for navigating this challenging time. You will learn how to redefine traditions, set clear boundaries with family, implement a proactive communication plan, and secure the respite you need to prevent burnout—ensuring you focus on meaningful connection instead of simply surviving the season. **Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection**</i>
Wednesday November 19	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Dear Lucy: Toileting, Incontinence and Dementia, what you need to know with Lucy Barylak, MSW <i>As people age, especially those living with dementia, changes in brain function can make using the toilet more difficult. Incontinence and accidents may become more frequent as the condition progresses, which can be distressing for both the individual and their caregiver. Join Dear Lucy as she explores why these changes occur and offers practical, compassionate strategies for caregivers to manage this sensitive issue with dignity and care.</i>

2025 Caregivers Summit



Empowering Caregivers to Thrive

Sponsored by: WellMed Charitable Foundation
and AACOG-Area Agency on Aging

November 6, 2025

9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. CT

Online and in person

Nursing and Social Work CEUs available.

Family caregivers and professionals are invited
to join us at this exciting event at **no cost**.



Barry Jacobs, PsyD

Julia Mayer, PsyD

Authors of
*The AARP Caregiver
Answer Book*



Deidre Edwards, RN

Author of
*Toolkit for Caregiver
Emotions*

In-Person Location:

Brookdale Trinity Towers

101 N. Upper Broadway

Corpus Christi, Texas 78401

Spanish-Language Caregivers Summit:

November 13, 2025, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m. CT.

For assistance call 1-866-390-6491.



Registration

1-866-390-6491 or
scan QR code

How to join:

- **Smart device**
(phone, computer or tablet)
- **Call-in only**
- **In-person location** Please visit
www.caregiversos.org for locations



Free Medicare Open Enrollment & Advance Directives Clinic

**Is Your Prescription Drug Plan or
Advantage Plan the Right Plan for You?**

Would You Like Assistance With Advance Directives?

Date: Friday November 7, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Location: Area Agency on Aging
2910 Leopard St.
Corpus Christi, TX 78408**



What to Bring For Medicare Comparisons:

- Valid ID or Driver's License
- Medicare Card
- Current Insurance Card
- List of Current Medications (including dosage) or All Medications for Review



**For more information about this FREE EVENT,
call the Area Agency on Aging of the Coastal Bend at:
361-883-3935 or 1-800-252-9240**

Caring For Those Who Care – National Family Caregivers Month

Caregivers provide regular care and assistance to family members and loved ones with a health problem or disability.

1 Introduction

In 1997, President Clinton signed the first National Family Caregivers Month Presidential Proclamation. Since then, every President has followed suit by issuing an annual proclamation to recognize and honor caregivers in November.

This year, the focus is on caregiving in crisis. While dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, caregivers have an extra burden to add to their already overwhelming job of caring for someone with chronic or terminal illness, as well as other health problems. There are several ways to manage caregiving safely and consistently during the global pandemic, and when things get back to normal. We have gathered some tips to help.

2 Seek Support

Caregiving can be exhausting, and it is essential that the caregiver find the right support. Some ways to find groups include:

- Social work department of hospital
- Voluntary organizations that deal with the patient's specific condition
- Area agencies on aging

3 Take Care of Yourself

Caregivers must pay attention to physical and emotional symptoms that can affect their own health and well-being. Create balance with the following suggestions:

- Get exercise
- Get regular checkups
- Take a break

4 Get Organized

Getting organized goes a long way when it comes to caring for a loved one. Some examples include:

- Make a medication list
- Keep a journal of the patient's day-to-day status
- Use a planner to organize doctor appointments
- Prepare questions and concerns before any medical appointments or exams

Did you know?

1 in 5 adults are acting as caregivers.

Click [here](#) for information on caregiving and to learn more about Caregiver Awareness Month.

References:

<https://caregiveraction.org/resources/10-tips-family-caregivers>

<https://www.cancerhealth.com/basics/health-basics/caregiver-resources>

<https://www.apa.org/pi/about/publications/caregivers/faq/cdc-factsheet.pdf>

10 Tips for Family Caregivers to Balance Caregiving and Self-Care



You pour your heart into caring for someone you love—but who's caring for you? Being a family caregiver often feels like putting everyone else's needs first while your own take a backseat. Taking care of yourself isn't selfish; it's essential.

These ten practical tips will help you weave self-care into your daily routine, making caregiving more manageable while ensuring you stay healthy, energized, and resilient for the long haul.

ACCESS ONLINE

www.caregiveraction.org/10-tips-family-caregivers/

1 Seek support from other caregivers. **You are not alone!**



2 **Take care of your own health** so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.



3 **Accept offers of help** and suggest specific things people can do to help you.



4 Learn how to **communicate effectively with doctors.**



5 Caregiving is hard work so **take respite breaks often.**



6 **Watch for signs of depression.** Don't delay getting professional help when you need it.



7 Be open to new **technologies** that can make the job easier.



8 **Organize medical information** so it's up to date and easy to find.



9 Make sure **legal documents** are in order.



10 **Acknowledge yourself** for rising to meet one of the most demanding responsibilities there is.



Scan the QR Code to access this info online





engAGED

The National Resource Center
for Engaging Older Adults



Connecting You to Community Services

Staying OK

Tips for Supporting Your Social Connections and Emotional Wellness



The ebbs and flows of the COVID-19 pandemic have been hard for many of us. The pandemic changed the way we interact with others, often resulting in feelings of disconnection or isolation. The good news is that there are many ways we can stay connected and engaged with others—which can help us all stay encouraged and cope when times are tough.

What Is Social Engagement?

Being socially engaged simply means connecting with others! There are many ways to stay socially engaged, including volunteering or working, taking art or wellness classes, and participating in social activities such as group meals, book clubs and more. All of these activities can take place in person, over the phone, on platforms like Zoom and Facebook or on public access television. Engaging with others in ways that feel safe can help you maintain connections with your community.



Social Engagement Tips and Tools

The COVID-19 pandemic led many of us to change our routines and cut back on in-person interactions. Following the tips below can help us engage our minds and bodies—and stay connected to our communities.

Maintain social connections

Connect with family and friends near and far over the telephone, through social media, on porch visits and walks, or through letter writing and emails. Share book, meal or television recommendations, reminisce about past experiences or plan fun activities for the future. Finding regular times to stay in touch with a friend can turn into events that you both can look forward to.

Staying socially engaged is related to better physical, emotional and mental health and well-being. For older adults, social engagement and strong social connections can likely decrease risk of disability¹ and depression² and even increase a person's lifespan.³ Being socially engaged also enables you to share your knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom with others.

If you're looking for ways to stay connected to others, read on to discover tips and resources to support your social and emotional well-being!

1 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21300745/>

2 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34912487/>

3 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20668659/>

Stay Physically and Mentally Active

Reach out to neighbors and friends to plan group walking dates or participate in fitness classes to establish regular ways to connect with others. Activities like drawing, journaling, writing a poem or short story, painting and knitting allow for creative expression and are another great conversation starter with friends and family. Inviting neighbors and friends over for games such as cards, puzzles or checkers are other ways to stay connected with others—on your porch, backyard or inside your home! Invite others to join you in visiting museums or attending cultural events virtually or in person.

Build Purpose and Contribute to Your Community

Contributing your time and skills to support others through volunteering can benefit both communities and volunteers. Research shows that volunteering for as little as two hours each week can lead to improved mental, emotional and physical health, and helps us feel engaged and purpose-driven. You can volunteer by delivering meals or providing transportation to other older adults safely. Other volunteer opportunities include mentoring, serving on local boards or participating in a friendly caller program.

Build Intergenerational Connections

Connect with younger adults or children to share your experiences and perspectives with other generations and build your community. Volunteering at schools or with youth organizations, mentoring college students, or offering cooking, music or other lessons are a few examples of community building activities you may find interesting and fulfilling.

Find Social Engagement Opportunities Near You

Local organizations such as Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs offer a variety of social engagement opportunities in communities across the country. Contact the Eldercare Locator, a federally funded public service for older adults, caregivers and others, to get connected to AAAs and tribal aging programs or other organizations that offer engagement opportunities in your community. You can reach the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116, Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm ET or online at eldercare.acl.gov.



Need More Support?

If you have concerns about your mental health beyond pandemic fatigue, such as depression, anxiety or other mental health concerns, consider:

- **Contacting your primary care physician.** Call your health insurance provider to find in-network providers if you do not currently have a primary care physician. Have questions about your Medicare coverage? Connect to your local Area Agency on Aging (eldercare.acl.gov) or State Health Insurance Program (www.shiphelp.org). If you don't have health insurance, you can find a local community health center by visiting: findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov.
- **Connecting to a mental health or behavioral health professional.** Contact your insurance plan to find in-network mental health or behavioral health providers or search for a mental health or behavioral health professional in your community through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration behavioral health treatment services locator at: findtreatment.samhsa.gov.
- **Calling a friend or family member.** Tell a friend or family member how you've been feeling. They may also be able to help you find a provider who can help.
- **Reaching out to a faith leader.** If you have a faith or spiritual leader, they can also help connect you to local mental health resources in your community.

If you're in an emergency situation related to your mental health or feel like you are a threat to yourself or others, head to your local hospital emergency room or dial 911 for help.

CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT

Are you a family caregiver? While caregiving is rewarding in so many ways, it can also be an isolating experience, impacting social and emotional wellness. Staying connected to others positively impacts well-being, especially during difficult times. The Eldercare Locator can also connect you to family caregiver support programs, which are another way to connect with others, including caregivers who are facing similar issues.



Resources

Finding Resources and Support

Many Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) offer friendly caller or telephone reassurance programs where AAA staff and volunteers make regular phone calls to older adults in the community. Some AAAs have pen pal programs that pair older adults with students and volunteers to build new friendships through letter writing. AAAs also offer nutrition services, including meals served in group settings such as senior centers or faith-based locations. Participating in these activities is a win-win: you can receive a healthy meal and connect with others.

To get connected to the AAA in your area, visit the Eldercare Locator at eldercare.acl.gov or call (800) 677-1116.

You can also contact the Institute on Aging's Friendship Line at (800) 971-0016 or the AARP Friendly Voice call line, (888) 281-0145 (English) or (888) 497-4108 (Spanish), to speak with trained volunteers who can lend a friendly ear.

If you or someone you know needs emotional support or is experiencing suicidal thoughts, call the 24/7 **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** at 988 or visit www.988lifeline.org. For those with a mental health or substance abuse concern, contact the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** national helpline at (800) 662-HELP (4357) to connect with a trained counselor. The **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) HelpLine** at (800) 950-NAMI (6264) is staffed by volunteers who will answer questions, offer support and provide next steps.



Published By

engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults

engagingolderadults.org

engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults is a national effort to increase the social engagement of older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers by expanding and enhancing the Aging Network's capacity to offer social engagement. engAGED is funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, administered by USAging and guided by a Project Advisory Committee with representatives from national organizations and resource centers.

engAGED

**The National Resource Center
for Engaging Older Adults**

Eldercare Locator

(800) 677-1116 (Monday–Friday, 9:00 am–8:00 pm ET)

eldercare.acl.gov

Launched in 1992, the Eldercare Locator is the only national information and referral resource to provide support to consumers across the spectrum of issues affecting older Americans. The Locator was established and is funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is administered by USAging.



Connecting You to Community Services

USAging

usaging.org

USAging is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities throughout the United States live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities.

USAging

Leaders in Aging Well at Home

This project #90EECC0002 is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$450,000 (or 74 percent) funded by ACL/HHS and \$161,554 (or 26 percent) funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Modifying Your Home for Healthy Aging



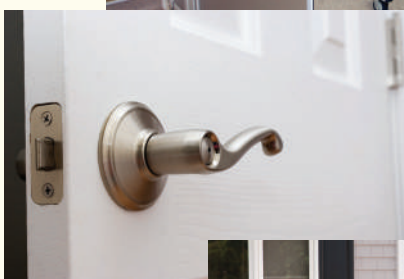
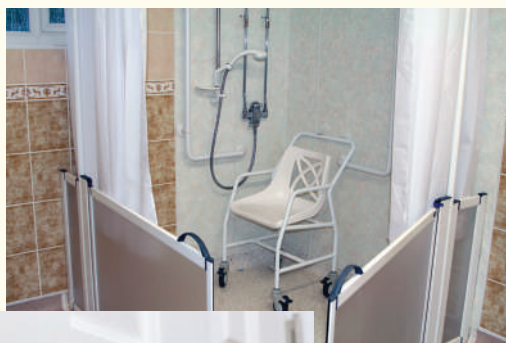
Connecting You to Community Services

1 (800) 677-1116
eldercare.acl.gov



Research shows that most older adults want to live in their homes and communities for as long as possible.¹ Aging at home brings with it many benefits—both to older adults and the communities in which they live. A longtime home is a place of comfort and memories—and can be a source of connections to family members, neighbors, friends, places of worship, community groups, familiar shops and health providers.

However, most homes were not built to support the mobility, sensory and cognitive changes that often accompany aging. As one ages, everyday tasks such as climbing the stairs, standing up in the shower, getting in and out of the bathtub, and reaching objects in kitchen cabinets or other places in the home can become more difficult.



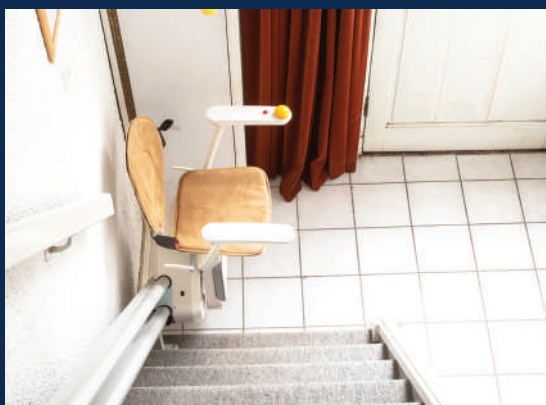
¹. <https://www.aarp.org/research/topics/community/info-2018/2018-home-community-preference.html>

What are Home Modifications?

Home modifications help make homes better suited to meet the changing needs of the people who live in them—and can help prevent falls, maximize independence and support caregiving. Home modifications range from the simple—clearing clutter off the floor, improving lighting or removing rugs to help prevent falls—to more complex—installing a stair lift or renovating a bathroom to make it accessible for someone with mobility limitations. Making these and other home modifications can help older adults continue to perform daily tasks such as cooking, using the toilet and bathing.

It is important to note that home modifications do not include repairing a roof or making other structural changes, but some homes may need repairs before they can be modified to meet the needs of the older adults who live in them. For example, a leaky pipe will need to be fixed before a bathtub or shower can be made accessible.

Many older adults who need to modify their homes to meet their changing needs do not know where to turn for advice or assistance—or even what modifications their homes may need. Fortunately, the **Eldercare Locator**, a public service of the U.S. Administration for Community Living, connects older adults and caregivers across the country to Area Agencies on Aging and other local resources that can help ensure their homes meet their evolving needs.



Types of Home Modifications

- Installing grab bars near the toilet, in the shower and/or bathtub
- Installing handheld shower heads and/or shower seats
- Removing or securing rugs to the floor
- Adding high-contrast non-skid tape to stairs
- Adding handrails to both sides of staircases
- Installing non-skid flooring or low-pile carpet
- Improving lighting throughout the home
- Installing ramps or no-step entries to assist individuals using wheelchairs, walkers, or canes
- Widening the width of doorways and/or hallways to accommodate assistive devices
- Installing variable height countertops in the kitchen that allow an individual to sit or stand while cooking

The above list is just a sampling of the modifications that can help older adults continue living in their homes as they age. It is important to understand that home modification is a process that starts with identifying what modifications are desired or needed by the individuals living in the home.

Determining What Home Modifications Are Right for You

To help older adults and their caregivers determine which modifications are right for them, the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology recommends using a checklist to help decide which modifications are most useful. In many cases, it can be helpful to work with an occupational therapist who can conduct a home assessment, evaluate a person's ability to carry out tasks, identify potential hazards and recommend modifications. Depending on age and income, older adults may qualify to have an aging or home care expert provide advice and recommend a housing professional (e.g., contractor, remodeler or handyperson) to make the changes. The Eldercare Locator can connect individuals seeking home modifications to local experts who can help with the home modification process.

Paying for Home Modifications

While some of the home modifications described in this brochure have little to no cost, others may be beyond a person's ability to pay. Fortunately, the Eldercare Locator can connect older adults and caregivers to public and private resources that can help pay for certain home modifications.

Tips for Finding a Home Modification Provider

The following suggestions can help older adults and caregivers find a provider to make home modifications:

- Contact the Eldercare Locator to find your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Center for Independent Living (CIL) or State Assistive Technology Act Program. These entities may provide or connect older adults and caregivers to home modification services, referrals and financial assistance for home modification services.
- Contact a Rebuilding Together affiliate near you. Many Rebuilding Together affiliates specialize in providing home modification services for older homeowners who may need financial assistance in making changes to their homes. To locate an affiliate near you, visit: www.rebuildingtogether.org/find-your-local-affiliate.
- Get recommendations from friends and family members who have had similar work done in their homes.

Tips for Working with a Home Modification Provider

- Be specific about the home modifications that you would like to have installed.
- Ask for a written agreement that contains details on the specific home modifications being made.
- If asked, provide only a small down payment and pay the remainder once the work has been completed to your expectations.
- Ensure that the provider is trained and has experience in making the needed home modifications by asking for references and checking reviews from the Better Business Bureau or other reputable sources.

For more tips, view *Home Improvement Scams: Tools to Reduce Your Risk*, an Eldercare Locator publication that is available online at eldercare.acl.gov.



Living at Home After Modification: What's Next?

Modifying homes to meet the changing needs of older adults is not necessarily a one-time event. As functionality changes over time, other modifications might be helpful. In such cases, another in-home assessment may need to be conducted.



Questions to Ask During a Home Modification Assessment

Whether an assessment is conducted by older adults and caregivers themselves, an occupational therapist, or other aging professional, the following basic questions should be asked to ensure that relevant factors are considered.

- Can you get into and out of the residence easily and safely?
- If the home has stairs, are there rails on both sides of the stairs?
- Do you need help standing up from a seated position?
- Is there enough lighting in hallways and other places in the home? Can you safely navigate the home during the night when it is dark?
- Are there rugs or other items on the floors that may cause a fall?
- Is there a need for supportive and safety features in the bathroom?

For a more detailed list of questions and links to other resources, visit https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Resources/Factsheets/Home_Modification_Resources.aspx



Connecting You to Community Services

Eldercare Locator

1 (800) 677-1116 (Monday–Friday, 9:00 am – 8:00 pm ET)
eldercare.acl.gov

Launched in 1991, the Eldercare Locator is the only national information and referral resource to provide support to consumers across the spectrum of issues affecting older Americans. The Locator was established and is funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is administered by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a).



The Eldercare Locator's website contains helpful information that can help older adults and caregivers determine which home modifications they need. **Preventing Falls at Home** is a brochure that provides information on recommended steps, such as annual vision exams, that can be taken to reduce the incidence of falls in the home. The **Caregiver Corner** of the Eldercare Locator's website contains a host of information on resources that can support caregivers as they help older adults stay safe in their homes.



advocacy | action | answers on aging

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) n4a.org

The mission of n4a is to build the capacity of Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American aging programs so they can better help older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology for lending its expertise to the development of this brochure.

The University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence www.homemods.org



The Fall Prevention Center of Excellence (FPCE), based at the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, promotes aging in place and independent living for persons of all ages and abilities. With support from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, it offers research, training, and technical assistance opportunities for the Aging Network. FPCE also serves as an information clearinghouse on home modification to equip professionals and consumers with a comprehensive inventory of resources such as a National Directory of Home Modification and Repair Resources.

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90EEIR0001, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.