



A decision as important as *life* itself.™

SUPPORT GROUP

Support Group for persons with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Early stages of Alzheimer's disease and Memory Loss and their families.

Next meeting:

June 15, 2006 9:30 a.m.

Speaker:

American Red Cross

Topic:

Disaster Preparedness

Location: Senior Friendship Center-Center for Healthy Aging, 1900 Brother Geenen Way, Sarasota

THE MEMORY DISORDER CLINIC

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Sponsored by Sarasota Memorial

Hospital and State of Florida

Department of Elder Affairs

Recommendations for Medication Management

In the United States, there are more than 32 million seniors who are responsible for managing their own medications. It is estimated that one in five of these seniors are not taking their medications properly, whether it be from a lack of understanding the directions or forgetting to take the medication or forgetting they already took them and taking them again.

Seniors should understand what their medications are, why the medications are to be taken, how they should be taken and what the benefits and side effects can be expected when taking those medications. Consider the following recommendations below to aid in your medication management.

- ❖ Use the same pharmacy when possible. The pharmacy will have a record of all of your prescriptions and help coordinate and compare medications when you see more than one doctor.
- ❖ Look at the pills when you pick them up. If they do not look the same as the last batch, ask why.
- ❖ If the pills are generic, find out if your doctor approved a generic substitute.
- ❖ Keep pills their original bottle. Use an organizer with separate compartments for each day of the week, and maybe even several compartments for each day (morning, noon, night) and set it up weekly. Get help weekly if needed..
- ❖ Read the directions – should pills be taken on an empty stomach? A full stomach? In the morning? Before bedtime?
- ❖ Ask for directions to be printed in larger print if it is difficult to read.
- ❖ Be sure at least one other person (family or friend) knows what medications you take and how you take them.
- ❖ Before ‘cutting’ pills, ask your doctor or pharmacist if this is safe for the specific medications you are taking.
- ❖ Always take medications exactly as prescribed. If this is a problem, talk with you doctor about changing your routine. Do not decide to change the dosage of your medication on your own. Never discontinue a medication without consulting your physician.

Art Projects for the Memory Impaired

Keeping a loved one busy with safe activities can be rewarding for the caregiver as well. Art therapists report that some memory impaired individuals seem to come out of their shell during art projects. Others, otherwise unable to communicate appear to be more relaxed and exhibit less behavioral problems when in a group setting, participating in art projects.

Painting and sculpting are activities most individuals with dementia, Alzheimer's or memory loss can accomplish with little trouble. Caregivers should use non toxic supplies to ensure the safety in case of accidental ingestion.

Very simple art supplies can be home made as a therapeutic activity. Clay for instance can be made with water, salt and cornstarch. Mix 1 cup water and 1 cup cornstarch together. The mixing can be done by the memory impaired person. The caregiver can measure the ingredients. Items must be heated in a saucepan over a medium heat until thick. Add 1 cup of salt and stir together until the mixture forms a firm ball. Remove from stove. The clay can be used immediately or you can store it in a sealed plastic bag.

The clay can be flattened or rolled into various shapes. The designs should air dry for several days until rock hard. After the clay has hardened it can be painted and decorated.

Paint can be mixed just as easily using 1 cup cornstarch, 2 cups water and 1/4 cup food coloring. All ingredients are non toxic. Combine the cornstarch and water in a saucepan. Stir over medium heat until thick. Remove from the stove and add food coloring. Beat until the paint reaches a smooth consistency. Add more water if too thick. The paint can be stored in the refrigerator. For multiple colors you will need separate batches. Paint away and enjoy a safe fun activity!

Time to Update Hurricane Supplies

- Water** - 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days
- Food** - Enough for 3 to 7 days
 - non-perishable packaged or canned food
 - non-electric can opener
 - cooking tools, fuel, matches, charcoal
 - paper plates, plastic utensils
- Blankets & Pillows, Clothing** - seasonal rain gear, sturdy shoes
- Medications, Prescription Drugs & over the counter medicine**
- First Aid Kit** – pre made kits are available
- Toiletries, Hand Sanitizer, Moisture wipes**
- Flashlight, Radio** (Battery operated and NOAA weather radio)
- Batteries** –various sizes; cell phone batteries
- Cash** (including small bills) - Banks and ATMs may not be available for extended time
- Games:** Deck of cards, dice, books or other Activities to keep busy
- Important documents** - Insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, Medicare and insurance cards, etc.
- Fuel** for your vehicles

Though having supplies on hand is a good precaution, having a PLAN is even more important. A shelter is not the best place for anyone who is ill or memory impaired. Listen to your local officials and evacuate if ordered. Have a plan regarding where you can go outside the area. Keep in contact with friends or family if you leave your home. Most importantly, don't panic and remember that the season is only a few months long. Enjoy the summer and remember why you live in Florida. Have a safe hurricane season.

News Flash!

The Johnnie Byrd Alzheimer's Research Institute is now accepting research candidates!

Please contact Lorelei Lindeanux-Balazs for details at 941-917-7197

What's on your mind?

Q: I've noticed that my mother is having some minor problems with memory loss. How do I know when or if I need to have her evaluated?

A: First, it is important to understand that it is normal for memory to change as we age. Problems like occasionally having trouble finding a word or remembering a name, are normal. However if these things begin to interfere with participating in regular activities or they appear to be getting worse over time, it is time to start asking questions.

Start by talking to her primary care physician about the memory loss. There are several factors that might be contributing to memory loss such as medication, stress, depression, illness, thyroid conditions etc. The cause of her memory loss might be something very treatable. If simple causes are ruled out, it can be helpful to establish a base line. This can be done with her primary care physician, a neuropsychologist or by a Memory Disorder Clinic. Free screenings are available in Sarasota.

Tips for Healthy Aging

Don't smoke or use tobacco

Limit how much alcohol you drink

Eat right

Maintain a healthy weight, loose weight if needed

Exercise

Don't sunbathe or use tanning booths

Practice safe sex

Control your cholesterol level

Control high blood pressure

Ask your doctor about other cancer screenings

See your doctor regularly

Have a yearly physical

Stay active

Live life and LAUGH a lot.

Older Adults Are Valuable...

We have silver in our hair.

We have gold in our teeth.

We have stones in our kidneys.

We have lead in our feet and

We are loaded with natural gas.

Alzheimer's Basic Caregiver Course

Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.

Sarasota: 1st Friday of the month at 2:00 pm.
1230 S. Tuttle Avenue.

Bradenton: 1st Wednesday of the month at
10:00am College Park Club 5612 26th St. West

Bradenton: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am
Alterra Clare Bridge 6101 Pointe West Blvd.

For Further information call the Alzheimer's
Association at 365-8883.

**Seminar: June 19th 1:30 pm at Arden Courts
presented by the Roskamp Institute. Topics
will include promising current research. Free
Daycare is provided. RSVP to 925-3900**

Free Memory Screenings

The Memory Disorder Clinic offers free
memory screenings at The Senior Friendship
Centers on the 2nd Monday of every month in
Sarasota and on the 1st Wednesday of every
month in Venice. Call (941) 917-7197 to
schedule an appointment.

**Due to increased demand an additional
screening location has been added.**

Location: 1921 Waldemere Street

When: Friday Afternoons by appointment only

Please call 917-7197 for details.

Sarasota Memorial Hospital

Memory Disorder Clinic

Administrative Office Location

1700 S. Tamiami Trail

Sarasota, FL 34239

(941) 917-7197

www.sarasotageriatrics.com

Clinic Locations

1921 Waldemere Street

Suite 403, Sarasota

929 S. Tamiami Trail

Suite 203. Osprey