

SUPPORT GROUP

**Mild Cognitive Impairment
Education & Support Group
for Families affected by MCI**

**No meeting
for June!**

**Next meeting:
July 19, 2007
Time: 9:30am
Location: Senior
Friendship Center**

**THE MEMORY DISORDER
CLINIC**

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Sponsored by Sarasota Memorial
Hospital and State of Florida
Department of Elder Affairs

Bathroom Safety for a Memory Impaired Person

Many accidents happen in bathrooms, so it important to check the safety of the bathroom for things that could lead to accidents. The bathroom poses many dangers. It is a place where there are dangers from slips and falls, burns, cuts, poisoning, electrocution and drowning.

One of the most common bathroom accidents is falls. Bathroom floors often become wet and slippery. Throw rugs can become trip hazards. Check walls for hooks that might be hit during a fall.

Use the following safety tips to make your bathroom as safe as possible for your loved one with memory impairments.

- Cover all sharp edges with rubber cushioning.
- Install night lights to make night time bathroom visits safer.
- Remove locks on bathroom doors as a person with severe memory impairments may have difficulty operating the unlocking mechanism.
- Using non-skid bathroom mats inside and outside of tub or shower are always a good idea.
- Remove throw rugs that could be trip hazards
- Consider installing grab bars to aide with getting in and out of shower.
- Consider using faucets that mix hot and cold water or paint hot water knob red to remind the memory impaired person that it is hot.
- Consider using a shampoo/conditioner blend to avoid confusion for the memory impaired person while showering. Too many choices could become confusing.
- Remove all electrical equipment from the bathroom that could get wet and cause a shock.
- Keep a whistle in the bathroom which can be used if someone needs help.

The appropriateness of the tips listed above vary as to the level of memory impairment your loved one may be experiencing at the present time but keep them in mind for the future.

Dementia Bathing Tips

- Lay out wash cloth and towel ahead of time to ensure you will not need to leave the person unattended.
- Make sure to have soap, shampoo ready to use.
- Don't rush the person.
- Don't allow them to get a chill.
- Find ways to give the person an illusion of control.
- Touch skin very gently because an older person's skin is very sensitive.
- Use the same habits the person always had such as, shower or bath.
- A shower chair is a necessity to allow the person to rest if needed.
- Acknowledge their need for privacy by looking away as much as possible.
- Start by washing safe areas such as the face or arms.
- Lay our clean clothes ahead of time.

Q & A

Question: My mom is 82 and she seems to be increasingly confused within the last month. She has hypertension which is controlled by blood pressure medication. She is in the process of moving to a new apartment so perhaps her confusion is stemming from the move and all the details involved in moving. However, I'm wondering if her hypertension could also be causing her to have reduced mental awareness (i.e. less blood flow to the brain). The stress of moving certainly seems to be elevating her blood pressure. Is there any research to support this?

Answer: List the things that you have noticed and go with your mother to her doctor. Increasing confusion in an older person can be due to medicines, worsening of chronic diseases, and new medical problems. Hypertension is generally not a cause of mental symptoms itself unless blood pressures are very, very high in a condition called "malignant hypertension". In this condition, the diastolic blood pressure (or bottom number) is over 120.

However, one common reason for increased confusion with change or stress, is a slow moving, chronic problem with memory. Diseases like Alzheimer's disease often are present for years before there is enough trouble to attract attention. The problem in early Alzheimer's disease is in the making of new memories. A move requires many new things be learned quickly. Minor difficulty in making memories would suddenly become very noticeable during a move.

News Flash!

The Johnnie Byrd Alzheimer's Research Institute is now beginning its second year of research in Sarasota County. Ongoing participants will now be scheduled for their second year evaluation. We have had a great year meeting and working with many incredible people who volunteered for this important study. We thank all of those who have volunteered to be part of this first year. Your time and energy given to this project will help us learn about the care and treatment of mild cognitive impairment.

The Byrd Institute is still open to interested parties who wish to be involved in this five year research project. This project aims to watch people's memory over a five year period. Memory tests are administered, MRI's are completed and specific blood tests are done. All of the Sarasota research is done here in Sarasota. Participants **do not** need to travel to the Institute in Tampa. The Tampa team from the Byrd Institute travels here. Any new interested persons can contact Lorelei Lindenaux-Balazs MA; LMHC at 941-917-7197.

The Byrd Institute developing a research newsletter specifically aimed to our research participants. This newsletter would keep all those participating in touch with the Byrd Institute on an ongoing basis, not just the one time research meeting each year. The Byrd Institute will mail this newsletter out to all our research participants.

Memory Clinic NEW Location

Our office has moved to the Institute for Advanced Medicine at 5880 Rand Blvd, Suite 205 in Sarasota. Exit 205 off of I - 75. Many of you may have heard about the new Healthplex building which houses the Institute for Advanced Medicine, the Memory Clinic, Radiology, Laboratory, Cardiac Rehabilitation and other SMH departments. Memory Disorder Clinic patients can now choose to have much of their testing completed at this same location. The building has plenty of parking. It is hoped that this will make visiting the Memory Disorder Clinic easier for all of our patients and families.

How to Join a Clinical Trial

“To take part in a trial is a great gift to society,” says William Thies, vice president of medical and scientific relations for the Alzheimer’s Association.

To find out about clinical trials and studies in your area, call 1-800-438-4380 for the government’s Alzheimer’s Disease Education and Referral Center, which can help you locate studies and also answer questions about them. Information is available in English and in Spanish. Listen to the prompts to choose which area meets your specific inquiry.

You may go online to www.nia.nih.gov. At this site you can navigate around to see the current trials that are open for enrollment.

The Alzheimer’s Association offers information on trails and on the disease at www.alz.org

You may also call Lorelei Lindenaux Balazs MA, LMHC at Sarasota Memorial Hospitals Memory Clinic 941-917-7197 for details of research being done in conjunction with the Byrd Institute locally here in Sarasota.

Alzheimer’s Association presents: A Basic Caregiver (ABC) Course

The Alzheimer’s Basic Caregiver Course is designed for family members and home companions who care for someone with dementia/memory loss. The class is free of charge. Classes are held on the first Friday of every month at 2:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m. in Sarasota at Harmony Pavilion , 2600 Courtland Street, Sarasota, 34237 Phone: 952-9070. Classes are also held in Bradenton call 365-8883 for information and reservations.

Comedy Corner

**Don’t let aging get you down it
is too hard to get back up.**

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.

**We have consolidated our offices
of the
Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Memory Disorder Clinic
to one location at the
Institute for Advanced Medicine
5880 Rand Blvd., # 205
Sarasota, FL 34238
(941) 917-7197**

**Located just 1/2 mile from I-75 on the
south side of Clark Road.**

www.sarasotageriatrics.com