

How to Be Safe Seniors

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

Next Meeting: Dec 18 th

Time: 9:30 am

Topic: Legal Issues &
Aging

Speaker: Babette Bach,
Elder Law Attorney

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

Today's seniors are more healthy and active than ever before, but during this holiday season it is more important than ever to pay attention to issues of safety risks. The state of the economy has left some people desperate and willing prey on the vulnerability of others. Unfortunately, older adults who may be suffering themselves can fall victim to crime. When you have memory impairments or if you are the caregiver of someone who is memory impaired it is important to be diligent about safety concerns. Everyone should be extra careful during this time of the year. Extra precautions should be taken if you plan to go away over the holidays. The following are some simple safety tips that are often forgotten:

- Lock your doors and windows. Never open your door automatically. Install and use a peephole.
- Don't leave notes on the door when going out.
- Leave lights on when going out at night; use a timer to turn lights on and off when you are away for an extended period.
- Notify neighbors and the police when going away on a trip. When you are away remember to cancel deliveries such as newspapers and arrange for someone - a neighbor's child, perhaps - to mow the lawn if need be. Arrange for your mail to be held by the Post Office, or ask a neighbor to collect it for you and stop newspaper deliveries while you are away
- Ask for proper identification from delivery persons or strangers that come to your door.
- Never let a stranger into your home.
- Don't hesitate to report crime or suspicious activities.

Using some of these common safety tips could help to keep you safe during the holiday. It is always better to be extra careful than to be in harm's way.

The staff of the SMH Memory Disorder Clinic wish you a safe and healthy Holiday Season.

THE MEMORY DISORDER CLINIC

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Coping with Holidays

Holidays are bittersweet for many AD caregivers. The happy memories of the past contrast with the difficulties of the present, and extra demands on time and energy can seem overwhelming. Finding a balance between rest and activity can help.

Keep or adapt family traditions that are important to you. Include the person with memory problems as much as possible. Recognize the things will be different, and have realistic expectations about what you can do. Encourage friends and family to visit. Limit the number of visitors at one time, and try to schedule visits during the time of day when the person is at their best. Avoid crowds, changes in routines, and strange surroundings that may cause confusion or agitation.

Do your best to enjoy yourself. Try to find time for the holiday things you like to do, even if it means asking a friend or family member to spend time with the memory impaired person while you are out.

At larger gatherings such as weddings or family reunions, try to have a space available where your loved one can rest, be by themselves, or spend some time with a smaller number of people, if needed.

What is an Advance Directive?

An advanced directive is a method of setting out your future medical treatment preferences while you are capable of making decisions so that they will be known should you become incapable of making such decisions. You retain the right to make your treatment decisions as long as you are capable of doing so.

Copies of your advanced directive should be provided to your physician, attorney, family members, healthcare surrogate and your caregivers.

Caregiver Depression

As a result of the demanding and emotional stressors associated with caregiving, caregivers tend to suffer clinical depression and anxiety more often than the general population. As a caregiver, you should be aware of the signs of depression and talk to your doctor if you have symptoms. Providing the best possible care for your loved one requires that you remain healthy and strong.

People experience depression in different ways; the type and degree of symptoms vary by individual and can change over time. The following symptoms, if experienced for more than two consecutive weeks, may indicate depression:

- A change in eating habits resulting in unwanted weight gain or loss
- A change in sleep patterns- too much sleep or not enough; feeling tired all the time
- A loss of interest in people and/or activities that once brought you pleasure
- Becoming easily agitated or angered
- Feeling that nothing you do is good enough
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Ongoing physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders and chronic pain

If you think you or someone you know might have depression, seek help quickly. The longer treatment is delayed, the more difficult depression is to treat. Remember that depression is not caused by personal weakness, laziness or lack of will power. It is a medical illness that can be treated. Talk to your primary care physician right away for a treatment plan.

Support groups are available to help you learn effective problem solving and coping strategies needed for caregiving. Call the Alzheimers Association (941/365-8883) for information.

Community Events

The CARE Program

Self - Care for the Caregiver
Wednesday December 10, 2008
Lunch 12-1pm at Caregiver Resource Center

Program 1-5pm at Rubin Center for Healthy
Aging Senior Friendship Center-
Sarasota Campus

Call for reservations 941-556-3268



Festival of Wreaths

Now through Dec. 12th 8am-4:30pm-View and bid on beautiful wreaths donated by our friends in the community. Winning bids will be announced at a wine & cheese reception from 5-7 p.m. Dec. 12th Senior Friendship Center 1888 Brother Geenen Way Sarasota. You bring home a wreath for the holidays and proceeds will support The Friendship Center!

Companion Cards

Companion cards are now available through the Alzheimer's Association. The card is a discreet way to let people you are with, know about the difficulties your loved one may have with communication or behavior. These cards are provided at no cost to you. Contact the Alzheimer's Association at 941/365-8883 for details.

The Memory Clinic Staff
Wish you and yours a Happy
Holiday Season!



Time to update our Mailing List

Please contact our office by **December 10, 2008**, if you would like to remain on our newsletter mailing list.

There are 3 ways to contact us:

1. Calling our office at **941/917-7197**.
2. Complete and mail the reply portion on back page of newsletter to our office :
Memory Clinic
5880 Rand Blvd., #205
Sarasota, FL 34238
3. Email: Amy-sapanero@smh.com

This helps us keep mailing and printing costs under control. And as always you can receive our newsletter electronically. Just provide us with your email address.

FREE Memory Screenings

1st Wednesday of the month, 1-3 pm Senior Friendship Center, 2350 Scenic Drive, **Venice**

2nd Monday of the month, 2-4 pm Senior Friendship Center, Caregiver Resource Center 1820 Brother Geenen Way, **Sarasota**

For appointments call 941/917-7197

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

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