

Family Caregiving

10K Per Day. When we read this, we usually think of the number of steps we try to walk each day. However, 10,000 per day is also the number of people in the United States turning 65. According to the AARP, this is going to continue until the 2030's. As our population continues to age, many of us will assume the role and face the challenges of being a family caregiver.

What is a family caregiver?

A family caregiver is someone who provides assistance to another person who requires help with daily living or medical tasks. This can include a loved one who is sick, aging, physically or mentally disabled.



Family Caregiving by the numbers.

44 Million	<i>The number of people in the United States providing care to a family member. (AARP, 2015)</i>
6%	<i>The number of caregivers that receive any sort of training. (Journal of American Geriatrics, 2017)</i>
5 Years	<i>The median number of years older adults need family caregiving help. (APA, 2017)</i>
13%	<i>The percentage of caregivers who report depression or anxiety. (JAGS, 2017)</i>
72%	<i>The percentage of caregivers who report being stressed from their caregiving responsibilities. (Statista, 2018)</i>

10 Tips for Family Caregivers (Caregiver Action Network)

1. Know that you are not alone! Seek help from agencies and other caregivers.
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. Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.
6. Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay getting professional help when you need it.
7. Caring is hard work so take respite breaks when you need it.
8. Organize medical information so it's up to date and easy to find.
9. Make sure legal documents are in order.
10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is.



Caregiving & Stress

According to the National Institute on Aging, caregivers themselves are at greater risk of depression and illness, especially if do not receive adequate support from family, friends and the community. One of the biggest hurdles is dealing with the difficult behaviors of the person they are caring for. Basic activities like bathing, eating, and dressing often become difficult for both the caregiver and the person needing care.

Special Tips for Family Caregivers of loved ones diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease

- Talk to the doctor about treatments that might alleviate or reduce the symptoms or address behavior problems.
- Contact the Alzheimer's Association for information about the disease, and many caregiving resources.
- Find a support group where you can share your feelings and concerns. You are not alone.
- Try to develop a daily routine, while being flexible and adapting that routine as needed.
- Consider using adult day care, and enlist other loved ones to help with the care.

For more information on Family Caregiving, please use the resources below:

- Family Caregiver Alliance — www.caregiver.org
- National Alliance for Caregiving—www.caregiving.org
- AARP—www.aarp.org
- Alzheimer's Association—www.alz.org



November— Seven Layer Casserole

Recipe adapted from Food & Nutrition Magazine

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup uncooked quinoa
- 1-1/4 cups water
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon black pepper, divided
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 cup diced yellow onion
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 2 cups peeled & thinly sliced sweet potatoes (1/8 inch thick)
- 8 ounces sliced cremini mushrooms (about 3 cups)
- 2 cups chopped fresh Swiss chard
- 5 ounces plain goat cheese

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F (177 °C).
2. Place quinoa and water in a 2-quart saucepan. Season with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
3. Place over medium heat and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to low.
4. In a 10-inch skillet, heat 1 teaspoon olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic, onions and thyme and sauté until onions are soft and lightly browned, about 5 minutes.
5. Season with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
6. Mist a 2-1/2 quart (or 9x13 inch) casserole dish with nonstick spray.
7. Layer sweet potatoes on the bottom of the casserole dish and season with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
8. Spread onions on top of potatoes and quinoa over the onions.
9. Place mushrooms on the quinoa and season with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
10. Layer chard on the mushrooms.
11. Sprinkle goat cheese on top, cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes.
12. Remove foil and bake another 15 minutes. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts

Total Servings - 7

Per 1.5 cup serving

Calories: 210/ Total Fat: 10g / Saturated Fat: 5g / Sodium: 380mg / Carbs: 21g / Fiber: 3g / Sugars: 2g /Protein: 10g

For more information, contact Be Well Solutions at (888) 935-7378 or info@bewellsolutions.com.

Prediabetes: Should You Be Tested?

Borderline diabetes is called prediabetes. It's present when blood sugar levels are moderately high, indicating a risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

Untreated, type 2 diabetes and persistent high blood sugar can cause crippling health problems, including kidney damage, nerve damage and arterial blockages, resulting in strokes, heart attacks, blindness and amputations.

Risk factors for prediabetes include:

- A family history of diabetes.
- Overweight or obese.
- Not exercising.
- Latino, Asian-, Native- or African-American ethnicity.
- Having diabetes during pregnancy.
- Smoking (smokers are 30% to 40% more likely to develop diabetes than nonsmokers).

Ask your health care provider about testing if you're age 45 or older or have any of the risk factors noted above. Prediabetes can be targeted and prevented by addressing those reversible lifestyle factors affecting your health, and sometimes with medication.

Two steps to dropping your prediabetes risk by half:

1. Lose 5% of your body weight (e.g., 10 pounds if you weigh 200).
2. Exercise moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Even if you can't get to your ideal weight, losing just 10 to 15 pounds can improve your body's use of insulin – the key to healthy blood sugar.



Breathe Easy

Take time to focus on your lungs. Just like your heart, joints and other parts of your body, your lungs age. They can become less flexible and lose strength, making breathing more difficult — especially if you develop lung disease.

5 ways to keep your lungs working well:

1. **Prevent infection.** Avoid exposure to cold and flu germs, which can cause serious respiratory infection. Get vaccinated annually against the flu; ask your health care provider if you also need a pneumonia vaccination.
2. **Exercise aerobically.** Nonstop workouts that moderately raise your heart rate (e.g., brisk walking, swimming, biking) can significantly aid your lung capacity.
3. **Breathe deep.** Most of the time we take shallow breaths. Deep breathing clears the lungs and provides a fuller oxygen exchange. As often as possible: Slowly breathe in (count 1 to 4) through your nose; then breathe out very slowly.
4. **Get regular health care.** During checkups, your provider can listen to your breathing and identify potential problems.
5. **Quit smoking.** Cigarette smoking destroys lung tissue, putting you at serious risk for lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

COPD symptoms include: increasing breathlessness due to emphysema, chronic bronchitis or persistent asthma attacks. Early screening can identify COPD before major loss of lung function occurs.

Lung cancer symptoms to watch for: chronic coughing and shortness of breath; repeated pneumonia or bronchitis; coughing up blood; pain in the chest, neck, shoulder and upper back. Learn more at lung.org/stop-smoking/.



November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month and COPD Awareness Month.



November 15 is the Great American Smokeout, a good time to set a quit date if you use tobacco.

Your health care provider and resources at the American Cancer Society can help: cancer.org.



November is American Diabetes Month.

November is Healthy Skin Month, a good time to remember some self-care tips. Lock in moisture by applying lotion or cream to damp skin after washing your face and taking a bath or shower. Need an easy, inexpensive way to care for very dry, rough, cracked skin? The American Academy of Dermatology recommends petroleum jelly for problem areas on feet, elbows and hands. Most important: Use sunscreen year round. Tell your health care provider about suspicious skin changes. Learn more at aad.org/public.



Holiday Dinner Tips

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Sharing meals with friends and family is a special part of the festive holiday season. Here are 5 ways to minimize kitchen time, as you maximize people time.



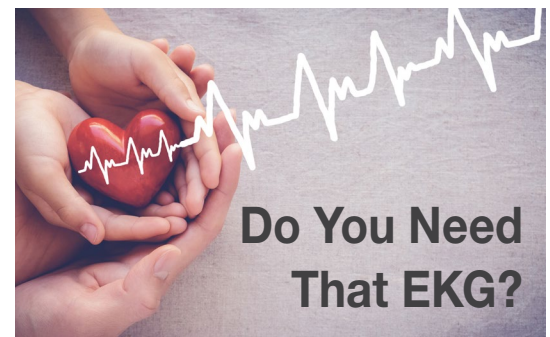
- 1. Don't do all of the work yourself.** Invite guests to bring a dish and share the work. Even if they don't cook, guests can help by creating a fruit platter, bringing beverages or buying dessert.
- 2. Forget about fancy.** Trying chicken cordon bleu for the first time when you have 20 guests coming is not a good idea. Make your tried-and-true, well-loved recipes that you can pull off with ease. And make as much as you can in advance.
- 3. Prepare salad before and refrigerate it.** For a lettuce-based salad, add dressing just before serving. For a grain-based salad (e.g., pasta or quinoa), dress it in advance so the flavors have a chance to blend.
- 4. If you have a dish that must be cooked and served immediately,** measure and prep all of your ingredients in advance.
- 5. Know about likes and dislikes before you plan your menu.** Vegetarian guests? Any food allergies or intolerances? Avoid last-minute cooking: When you invite guests, ask about preferences.

Gather the special people in your life and enjoy more socializing and less cooking.



Thanksgiving Day is also Family Health History Day, November 22.

Why not spend a few minutes with your family exchanging medical histories? Common diseases that often run in families include diabetes, heart attacks and cancer. Get started with **My Family Health Portrait** at familyhistory.hhs.gov.



An EKG (electrocardiogram) is a painless test that uses sensors placed on the skin over your chest. It can detect how long an electrical wave moves from one part of your heart to another, and whether the speed is normal, slow, too fast or irregular. EKGs can be performed at rest, while you exercise, or with a wearable device that records your heart's activity over days or weeks.

An EKG can help diagnose heart attacks, abnormal heart rhythms, heart failure and other cardiac problems. The test isn't always diagnostic by itself and can't be used to reliably predict your future heart health. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) doesn't recommend screening for heart disease with an EKG if you are at low risk for cardiovascular disorders.

Do you need an EKG if you have an intermediate or high risk for heart disease but have no symptoms and haven't been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease? The USPSTF states we can't know if the benefits of a screening EKG outweigh potential harms. Keep in mind that abnormal EKG findings sometimes lead to unnecessary invasive procedures and treatments.

Bottom line: Discuss whether you need EKG with your health care provider. Base your decision on your individual risk factors for heart disease: older age, male gender, smoking, high blood pressure, being overweight or obese, diabetes, high cholesterol and a personal or family history of heart disease.

Other reasons for having an EKG:

- You are preparing for surgery.
- You have possible heart-related symptoms such as chest pain, palpitations, breathing problems or unexplained fatigue.
- You have unusual heart sounds heard through a stethoscope.
- You take medications or have a device, such as a pacemaker, affecting your heart.

“Your positive action combined with positive thinking results in success.” — Shiv Khora



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