

NATIONAL

Family Caregivers

November 2024

MONTH



You are not alone.
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

- Non-Verbal Signs That Your Loved One is in Pain
- Event: Upcoming 8 Week Virtual Tai Chi Course
- Caring For The Caregiver:
"It's Okay to ..."
- Step #1 - Healthy Aging - Eating Well
- Event: November 7th - Thursday
Dementia Caregiver Support Group
- Event: November 20th - Wednesday
Dementia Education
- Resources

"We're all just walking each other home."

- Ram Dass

Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Basehor Community Library:

Meets in person and by Zoom on the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm

Join us in this safe supportive environment for caregivers.

Co-Leaders: Dr. Maritza Buenaver, Geriatric Psychiatrist

and Cathy Grigsby, MS, caregiver support specialists,

will guide us as we share our experiences. Anyone is welcome to join us.

National Family Caregivers Month

Caring for your loved one is demanding and heroic.

Caregivers can run into difficulty in recognizing queues that their loved one is in pain.

Some non-verbal signs of pain can include:

Facial Expressions (frowning, grimacing, rapid blinking). **Movements** (Tense or rigid posture, fidgeting-pacing-rocking, decreased movement). **Noises** (sighing, moaning).

Activity Levels (not eating, sleeping too much or too little, wandering).

Mental State (Confusion, crying, irritability). **Personality** (aggressiveness, resisting care, becoming withdrawn, inappropriate disruptive behavior).

Upcoming Event: 8 Week Tai Chi Course Strength and Balance

Our upcoming **Virtual Tai Chi** for Arthritis and Fall Prevention is an 8-week course for improving strength and balance. Studies have shown that this program can reduce falls by up to 49%. We've talked about offering it more as an occasional stress relief program.

Tai chi movements are slow, smooth and continuous, helping to strengthen muscles and testing balance. Slow and smooth movements calm the mind, helping to reduce falls resulting from sudden movements that lead to significant blood pressure drop, especially people taking medication that can cause change of blood pressure.

Caring For The Caregiver

Family caregivers provide care and assistance to family members with limitations due to illness, injury, or disability. Their work is often unseen, undervalued, and unpaid. Caregivers have a tough job of finding time for self-care.

"It's Okay!" - Here are a few tips to help you recharge:

Practice Self-Compassion: *It's okay to pat yourself on the back, you're doing your best.*

Seriously Consider Respite Care: *It's okay to check into short-term assistance. This allows you to take a break from caregiving and recharge your mind, emotions, and body.*

Prioritize Your Own Health: *You can only give what you have to give. It's okay to focus on keeping yourself recharged for your own health and for your loved one as well.*

**If you are interested
in more information
about the Free Upcoming
Virtual Tai Chi Course,
send an email to:**

vaCaregiverEducation@gmail.com

**Include "Tai Chi Course"
in the subject line.**

NOVEMBER EVENT: Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, November 7th—Basehor Community Library

1400 158th St., Basehor, KS—6:30 p.m—7:30 p.m.

*In a safe and welcoming environment, the Dementia Caregiver Support Group gives caregivers the opportunity to ask questions and share their experiences with others in similar circumstances. **The support group will be led by:***

**Co-Leaders: Dr. Maritza Buenaver, Geriatric Psychiatrist and Cathy Grigsby, MS
caregiver support specialists.**

This month, we'll touch on Step 1—"Eat Well" - Eating well is typically referred to as a traditional healthy diet plan. While a healthy diet plan is a great starting point, equally important are the atmosphere and conditions surrounding meals which are important for a healthier and more enjoyable experience. As the caregiver, don't wait until later. Be sure to include Your meal preferences now as well in order to maintain Your healthy eating needs.

This aids in proper digestion and lowers stress for yourself and your loved one!

Part of "Eating Well" is making mealtimes calm and comfortable:

During the middle stages of Alzheimer's, distractions, too many choices, and changes in perception, taste and smell can make eating more difficult. The following tips can help:

- **Limit distractions.** Serve meals in quiet surroundings.
- **Keep the table setting simple.** Avoid patterned plates, tablecloths and placemats that might confuse the person. Using color to contrast plates against a tablecloth or placemat can make it easier for the person to distinguish the food from the plate or table.
- **Distinguish food from the plate.** Changes in visual and spatial abilities may make it tough for someone with dementia to distinguish food from the plate or the plate from the table. It can help to use white plates or bowls with a contrasting color place mat.
- **Check the food temperature.** A person living with dementia might not be able to tell if something is too hot to eat or drink. Always test the temperature.
- **Offer one food item at a time.** The person may be unable to decide among the foods on their plate. Serve only one or two items at a time.
- **Allow plenty of time to eat.** Keep in mind that it can take an hour or more for the person to finish.
- **Eat together.** Give the person the opportunity to eat with others. Keeping mealtimes social can encourage the person to eat.

Keep in mind the person may not remember if they ate. If they do not remember eating, consider serving "several breakfasts" —juice, then toast, followed by cereal.

NOVEMBER EVENT: Dementia Education

Dr. Maritza Buenaver is Inviting You to Join Us for this Free Event!

(Sessions are held Every Other Month on the third Wednesday of the month)

Wednesday, November 20th, 6:30 p.m—7:30 p.m.

Basehor Community Library

1400 158th St., Basehor, KS

Space is limited, please call the library to register, 913-724-2828.

This program will be led by Dr. Maritza Buenaver, Geriatric Psychiatrist specializing in dementia education. The goal of this program is to help erase the stigma and misunderstanding of dementia by encouraging conversations about the disease, while advancing education and training that leads to compassionate care for individuals. This program will offer insight for people working with the public and for those working in health care. Space is limited, call the Basehor Library to register.

Resources



A JOURNEY THROUGH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE "VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE"

Find out what everyone is raving about!

"Enlightening" "Eye-Opening" "Empowering" "Informative"

Free Distance Learning Experience Through Zoom..

(Alzheimer's/Dementia/Lewy Body/Parkinson's)

Experience a journey through their eyes.

(A must for caregivers, families, doctors/fellows/residents/staff.)

Free Virtual Reality Distance Learning is made possible

by Dr. Maritza Buenaver's Iowa-GWEP/HRSA Grant.



**It's easy to schedule a
Virtual Reality Session.**

***Just email your preferred
VR Session date and time to:***

vaCaregiverEducation@gmail.com

***Also, ask about our other
Virtual Reality Experiences including:
Vision/Hearing Loss and End-of-Life.***

- **Dr. Maritza Buenaver—Dementia Education, Next Session: November 20, 2024**
• **> Dementia Education Sessions are held Every Other Month on the Third Wednesday of that month, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at the Basehor Library**
- **Dementia Caregiver Support Group, Monthly, First Thursday, Basehor Library**
- **www.Facebook.com—Basehor Library—Dementia Caregiver Support Group**
- **www.LeavenworthCounty.gov—Council on Aging**
- **www.VA.gov/eastern-kansas-health-care/health-services/caregiver-support/**
- **www.ALZ.org—Alzheimer's Association**
- **www.TeepaSnow.com—A Dementia-Care Education Specialist**
- **www.mountosb.org/ministries/keeler-womens-center/ (913-906-8990) Free Services in Kansas City, KS**

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