

CLASSES

Unless otherwise noted, classes cost \$5.

Brain Attack – Take a Stand Against Strokes

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, however there have been significant advances in treatment approaches. An Overlake Stroke Coordinator will discuss the risk factors, detection and treatment of strokes and offer ideas on how to reduce your risk of a stroke. Classes are free and advance registration is required by calling 425-556-2314.

When: Wednesday, May 20,
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Where: Redmond Senior Center,
8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.

I Can't Take Another Step

Many people accept foot pain as a fact of life, but many foot problems can either be prevented or helped through proper care. A podiatrist will discuss problems that can be encountered and discuss treatment options available. Classes are free and advance registration is required by calling 425-556-2314.

When: Wednesday, June 17,
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Where: Same as above.

Avoiding Adverse Medication Effects As You Age

As we get older, we become more vulnerable to medication-related problems and adverse reactions. At the same time, as we age we are often taking more medications. Dr. Chitra Fernando, MD, of Bellevue Senior Health Center will offer important information to help

CALENDAR

Spring 2009

SUPPORT GROUPS

you understand prescription medications and avoid potential problems. Registration required by calling 425-688-5800.

When: Thursday, June 25, 2 - 3:30 p.m.
Where: Bellevue Community College, North Campus, 10700 Northup Way, Bellevue (corner of 108th Avenue NE. and Northup Way)

Keeping Your Balance and Avoiding Falls

Twenty-five percent of people 65 to 74 who live independently experience at least one fall, with 85 percent of people over 65 fracturing their hips. An Overlake therapist will discuss risk factors related to falling and provide solutions to create a safer independent environment. Cost is \$6 to Bellevue residents and \$7 to non-residents. Advance registration required by calling 425-452-7681 and mentioning class # 40419.

When: Monday, June 22, 1 - 2:30 pm
Where: North Bellevue Community Center,
4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue.

Diet Tips to Help Your Bones – Preventing Osteoporosis

The majority of adults consume less calcium than needed. Overlake Dietitian Peggy Swistak, RD explains how to eat right to maintain the level of calcium that your bones require. No registration is required and class is free for YMCA members. For more information, call 425-746-9900.

When: Wednesday, June 24,
11:30 - 12:30 p.m.

Where: Bellevue YMCA,
14230 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Group, 1st Thursday each month, 3-4:30 pm, Community Center at Mercer View. Call 206-230-0166.

Alzheimer's Family Support Group, meets the 3rd Monday each month, 3-4:30 pm, EADS - Bellevue Center. Call 425-688-5800.

Bereavement Support Group, 2nd and 4th Mondays each month, 7-8:30 pm, Overlake Cancer Resource Center. Call 425-688-5986.

Caregivers of Older Adults Support Group, 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 3-4:30 pm, Overlake Senior Health Center. Call 425-688-5807.

Caregivers Support Group, 2nd and 4th Mondays, 10 - 11:30am, Northshore Senior Center. Call 425-486-4564.

Caregivers Support Group, 3rd Thursdays, 1 - 2pm, Sno-Valley Senior Center. Call 425-333-4152.

Family Caregiver Support Group, 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 3-4:30 pm, Bellevue Senior Health Center. Call 425-688-5807.

Family Caregiver Support Group, 2nd Tuesdays, 3-4:30 pm, Mercer Island Senior Health Center. Call 425-688-5637.

Low Vision Support Group, 4th Thursday, 1:30 pm, Community Center at Mercer View. Call 206-230-0166.

Parkinson's Caregivers Group, 2nd Thursdays 1:30pm, Community Center at Mercer View. Call 206-230-0166.

Parkinson's Group, 1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month, 2:00 pm, Community Center at Mercer View. Call 206-230-0166.

Parkinson's Support Group, 2nd Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30am, Northshore Senior Center. Call 425-486-4564.

Stroke Support Group, for stroke survivors and caregivers meets the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Mondays each month, 1-2:30 pm, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church. Call 425-746-8396.

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Senior Care

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DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE POST

care SHARING

Spring 2009

Resources for Family Caregivers of Older Adults

Supporters include: Home Instead Senior Care, Philips Lifeline, Overlake Terrace, Sonja Potter Senior Care Auxiliary.

Editor: Alison Nesmith

For your free subscription to the Caresharing newsletter call Overlake Hospital Senior Care at 425-688-5800 or email seniorcare@overlakehospital.org.



Having a paid home helper can expand activities and social interactions.

A closer look at in-home help

Hiring an in-home caregiver can be a tough decision to make, but often brings unexpected practical and emotional rewards.

For many of us, our homes are where our lives are - all of our personal belongings, history, and possessions are contained there. How can we invite outsiders into our private sanctuaries to perform personal and sometimes very intimate tasks?

Here at Overlake Hospital Senior Care, we work with many caregivers (of spouses or parents) who struggle to meet their own needs as well as the needs of the loved one they are caring for. These caregivers may need help with anything from personal care and transfers to meals and chores

around the house. Yet despite the challenges they face, they cannot conceive of hiring someone to help in the home. They tell us:

- I can't afford it.
- Our family has always been very private – we would never allow a stranger in the house to help.
- I've heard too many horror stories of paid helpers who stole things; it's out of the question for us.

Deeper questions

While these are clearly valid concerns, by learning about your options, troubleshooting specific issues, identifying resources and understanding the process, you can access help in a way that is appropriate for your family. As caregivers delve deeper into the issue of in-home care, they often realize that their initial concerns mask more profound conflicts and questions such as:

- If I have a paid home helper to do the work I am currently doing, how will my identity change?

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INSIDE: Free walking program • Conference June 1
Spring calendar:
Combatting stroke • Keep your balance • Happy feet • Support groups

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- Will I still be needed?
- Will I still be valued by my spouse/parent?
- How will my role as caregiver change?
- Will the paid home helper take over everything – take away my control?
- Will they judge me?
- Am I being selfish to leave my spouse/parent in the hands of a stranger?
- I feel guilty, maybe I’m not a good spouse/child - I feel I should be doing the caregiving myself.
- An outsider won’t know how to take care of my spouse/parent like I do.
- I’m so overwhelmed, I don’t know where to start.

Although people may have difficulty grappling with these unsettling feelings, time and again, Senior Care staff has seen relationships between family members improve when an outside caregiver comes into the home.

Reciprocity keeps a relationship alive

One Bellevue family, for example, hired a companion – four hours a day, twice a week – to take their father (who has dementia) to the senior center for lunch and an activity. The companion ensured that their father was safe and able to participate in activities that enhanced his well-being. Meanwhile, their mother

had eight hours a week to meet her own needs, whether this was lunch with friends, gardening, or finally doing the spring cleaning.

An added benefit that the family hadn’t anticipated was that the time away from each other

Do you need more help?

Caregiving literature is full of stories of caregivers who take so much responsibility upon themselves that they compromise their own physical and/or mental health. But you don’t need to be visibly ill to be suffering negative effects from caregiving. If you are experiencing any of the following signs, however subtle or profound, now may be the perfect time for you to seek assistance:

- *Resentment towards patient*
- *Resentment towards other family members who are not helping as much as you*
- *Loss of sense of self and/or control over own life*
- *Depression*
- *Loss of reciprocal relationship with patient; diminished quality of relationship with patient*

For further information on how to take stock of your situation and find and hire in-home help, see the article “Hiring caregiving services” (opposite page).

brought the husband and wife closer together. The father’s world widened because he had a new friend (the companion) and someone different to share activities with. The mother re-energized herself during her hours away from caregiving duties. At the end of the

day, both husband and wife had new stories and experiences to share with each other.

Many caregivers tell us that in-home help gives them renewed vigor for friends and projects they had abandoned. Another unexpected benefit they may appreciate is the opportunity to define for themselves what their role as caregiver will be. People commonly get thrust into the job of caregiver: They become caught up in a myriad of day-to-day chores, from making and attending doctor’s appointments to fixing meals and helping with dressing and personal care. The opportunity to simply enjoy being with the loved can get lost in a haze of mundane tasks. By having a home helper, caregivers can choose the tasks that have most meaning to them, while delegating other responsibilities to the hired assistant. The in-home helper carves out space for family members to spend time with their loved one without worrying about the next chore that has to be accomplished.

In the end, a relationship that becomes all about dependency will not thrive and is generally not pleasurable or rewarding for either party. Having a home helper allows the family caregiver time to BE with his or her loved one, instead of always having to DO for that person.

Information for this article was compiled by Joan Luster, MSW, Resource Coordinator for Overlake Hospital Senior Care.

Event opportunity

Challenges in Caregiving: Giving Care, Taking Care

Date: Monday, June 1, 2009
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Tukwila Community Center, Tukwila

If you’re caring for a family member, you’ll learn lots of practical caregiving skills and strategies at this full-day conference sponsored by Aging & Disability Services, Elderhealth

Get going!



You’re invited to “**Walk for Life**” three mornings a week at Bellevue Square Mall. This popular exercise program offers a safe, flat, indoor marked course; the chance to meet up with friends; and an expert staff that is on site to provide information, advice and monitoring.

When: Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, 8 to 9:30 a.m.
Where: Bellevue Square Mall, enter at Skybridge 4.
Cost: FREE.

Walk for Life requires no registration. For more information, call Overlake Senior Care at **425-688-5800**.



Northwest and numerous other community organizations. Topics include:

- Dealing with difficult behaviors of people with dementia
- How to reduce care-giving stress
- How to find the help you need
- Legal and financial planning

Pre-registration is required and space is limited, so call **800-422-3263** or **360-725-2544** as soon as possible to receive a full brochure and registration form for this informative, skill-building event.

Hiring caregiving services

Eastside families can choose from an array of private agencies that offer all types of caregiving services including:

- Errands & chores
- Personal care
- Medication monitoring
- Bathing assistance
- Dressing
- Transferring
- Toileting
- Pet care
- Conversation and companionship
- Letter-writing
- Walking and exercise
- Games and interaction

Visit Senior Care on-line

Come to www.overlakehospital.org/programs and obtain:

- *details on classes, support groups and all kinds of resources*
- *recent newsletters*
- *fact-filled guides*
- *key links to helpful information for caregivers and elders*

Most agencies employ their own staff and you sign a contract with the company to have an employee come to your home. Other agencies will recruit and screen applicants for you and then you can interview and hire the candidate. Agencies generally require that you hire their employees for a minimum number of hours, and hourly charges vary. Companion fees, for example, range from \$22 - \$28 per hour. Generally health insurance and Medicare **do not cover** these services, although long term care insurance often does pay these costs.

Overlake Hospital Senior Care has several publications that can start you on the path to finding the best services: the “CareSharing Directory of Respite Care Services” lists various agencies; “How to Hire Helpers” and “Options for Hiring Household Help,” explain the process and answer some common questions. Call Senior Care – 425-688-5800 – to request your copies.

If you would like additional help in deciding what will work best for your family, contact Senior Care’s case managers Joan Luster, MSW or Lynn Shapley, RN. They can help you navigate your way in assessing your situation and finding a paid caregiver, companion or other service to meet your needs. **To make an appointment to talk with Joan or Lynn please call 425-688-5800.**