

“The Circle of Safety”
Adult Care Awareness Advisor
News and Tips to Make Your Life Easier, Safer and Happier!
For Friends and Clients of PCALIC, LLC

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What Happens When an Elderly Resident Takes a Medication?

After a pill (tablet or capsule) is swallowed it goes into the stomach where it is broken down into small particles. Medication then passes through the stomach and intestines and goes into the bloodstream. The blood carries the medication to the part of the body it is intended to act. Later the medication is removed from the body.

The kidneys and liver are the organs that remove most medications from the body. Certain diseases may affect the kidney (examples – high blood pressure or diabetes may damage the kidneys). Certain medications may prevent other medications or the kidney itself from removing medications properly.

Changes that occur in the kidneys with aging:

If the kidneys slow down, the removal of some medications slows down. . .
If a resident continues to take the same dose of medication, medication blood levels may become higher, because the medication is not removed as fast as it should.
Due to kidneys not properly functioning, high blood levels of medications then may cause side effects. If you know a drug is going to be cleared from the body by the kidneys, carefully watch for side effects.

Changes that occur with the liver with aging:

The liver is important in breaking down many medications.

Medications that are removed from the kidneys are often needed to be broken down by the liver before the kidneys can filter and remove them from the body. Liver disease caused by things such as chronic drinking of alcohol can affect the way medications are broken down. Certain medications may also prevent other medications from being broken down in the liver properly; if you know a drug is broken down by the liver, carefully watch for side effects.

5 Key ways to Reduce Fall Risk

Falls are the number one cause of facility-incurred injuries. One in every three people age 65 and older fall each year. It is important for you as care providers to implement procedures that help reduce the number of falls and exposure to falls. Highlighted below are 5 keys to reducing your exposure to falls:

1. Implement Family Intervention Discussion Agreement
2. Complete a Physician Notification of the resident's condition for fall risks and forward to the physician of the resident
3. Place employees on alert of any resident at risk of falls
4. Have residents that are at risk wear a star or special pendant that alerts others this resident is at risk for falls
5. Form a safety committee that acts as a “watchdog” for exposures that may lead to falls or ideas that may reduce fall exposures.

Key Safety Tips

1. Keep your car keys on your night table.

Most car keys have a panic alert button, and more than likely your car is in range of your bedroom, pressing the panic button will cause the alarm and the headlights to go off. This will get some attention.

2. Carrying Car Keys In Parking When walking

If you have physical car keys, carry them in your hand when walking is a smart idea. This reduces the amount of time it takes to get into your car and to start it. Also your car keys can serve as a weapon in case of emergency.



3. Outdoor Key Box

Keep your spare keys in a safe place. Think about putting your spare keys in a Outdoor Safety Key Box. You need a code to get into the box.

4. Change Your Locks

If you lose your house keys, one of the first things you'll want to do is to have the locks changed. After all you have no idea where they might end up. Even if your keys are returned by an apparently good Samaritan, you can never be sure that they weren't copied first.

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Employee Management and Training

Best Practices for Managing Confidential Client and Customer Information Employee Management and Training. The success of your information security plan depends largely on the employees who implement it:

- Check references and do background checks before hiring employees who will have access to confidential information.
- Ask every new employee to sign an agreement to follow your company's confidentiality and security standards for handling customer information.
- Limit access to customer information to employees who have a business reason to see it. For example, give employees who respond to customer inquiries access to confidential files, but only to the extent they need it to do their jobs.
- Control access to sensitive information by requiring employees to use "strong" passwords that must be changed on a regular basis. (Tough-to-crack passwords require the use of at least six characters, upper- and lower-case letters, and a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols.)
- Use password-activated screen savers to lock employee computers after a period of inactivity.
- Develop policies for appropriate use and protection of laptops, PDAs, cell phones, or other mobile devices. For example, make sure employees store these devices in a secure place when not in use. Also, consider that customer information in encrypted files will be better protected in case of theft of such a device.

Train employees to take basic steps to maintain the security, confidentiality, and integrity of customer information, including:

- Locking rooms and file cabinets where records are kept
- Not sharing or openly posting employee passwords in work areas
- Encrypting sensitive customer information when it is transmitted electronically via public networks
- Referring calls or other requests for customer information to designated individuals who have been trained in how your company safeguards personal data
- Reporting suspicious attempts to obtain customer information to designated personnel
- Regularly remind all employees of your company's policy—and the legal requirement to keep customer information secure and confidential. For example, consider posting reminders about their responsibility for security in areas where customer information is stored, like file rooms.
- Develop policies for employees who telecommute. For example, consider whether or how employees should be allowed to keep or access customer data at home. Also, require employees who use personal computers to store or access customer data to use protections against viruses, spyware, and other unauthorized intrusions.
- Impose disciplinary measures for security policy violations.
- Prevent terminated employees from accessing customer information by immediately deactivating their passwords and user names and taking other appropriate measures.

"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."
~ Maya Angelou

5 Ways to cut Energy Costs!

A new trend in America is going green, and even if you're not going green it's always nice to save money, right? A way you can save some money is by cutting your energy costs at home or at your Non-Profit Organization. Here are a few tips to help you out:

1. Consider adding solar panels. This may be a pricier choice at first but it will cost less in the long run.
2. Check to see if the air from outside is seeping inside your house, by sealing those crevices you can save.
3. Unplug all electronics when not in use, even though it is not being used, your energy bill is going up.

4. Buy appliances with the "Energy Star" sticker.
5. When leaving your house for work or leaving your office, turn down the thermostat a few notches.



By following these five tips, you will have a less expensive energy bill so that you can spend money on more important things, like a nice big screen television, a day at the spa, or even a vacation!

How Animals Benefit Your Health

Cats, dogs, and other animals may be cute and fun, but studies have shown that animals may do much more than generate "aww" responses wherever they go. Researchers have found that owning a pet or being around animals can have a number of health benefits:

1) Pets can assist with depression and emotional health or mental health issues.

Loneliness and isolation can make depression and other mental health issues worse, but some patients with emotional disorders or mental health issues have a hard time feeling accepted by others. Pets provide a non-judgmental form of companionship as well as physical interaction, which has been shown to help many patients. Some people find that their overall outlook improves when they spend time talking to and interacting with animals. Others find that the symptoms of their disorders improve with pet ownership. For people with anxiety disorders, for example, pets can be soothing and comforting. In some cases, pets also encourage people to head out and meet others, helping to ease loneliness and social anxieties.

2) Being around animals can help lower blood pressure and help prevent heart disease.

Stress is a major factor in creating high blood pressure problems and heart disease. However, studies by the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have shown that being around pets can reduce blood pressure, can lower pulse rates, and can reduce muscle tension. Studies have also shown that pet owners have lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels than those without pets, meaning that they may have better cardiovascular health. The many heart-health benefits may be because pets encourage regular activity and exercise. It may also be because being around animals reduces stress.

3) Being around pets can boost the immune system.

By reducing stress levels and by encouraging play and laughter, spending time with animals can improve your overall health and immune system. If you think that pets can trigger allergies, you may be interested to learn that researchers have found that children who grow up with pets have lower instances of allergies than children who don't grow up interacting with animals.

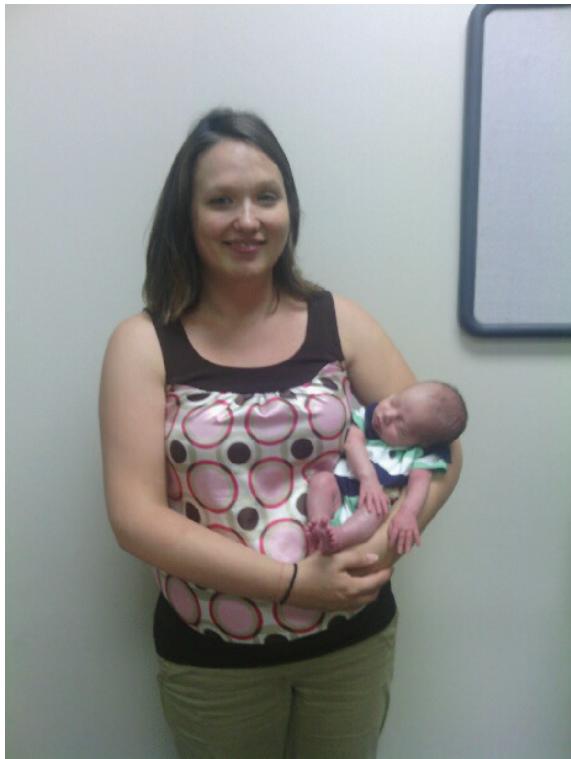
Of course, owning a pet isn't just about what you get out of it; it's important to make sure you have the lifestyle needed to take care of an animal. If you do, however, you may find that owning a pet is more rewarding than you imagined.

Stress Management

It is very important to learn how to manage your stress:

1. Don't minimize your problems. Become aware of what your stressors are and your emotional and physical reaction to those stressors. Don't ignore them.
2. Recognize what you can change. Can you change your stressors by avoiding or eliminating them completely? Can you reduce their intensity by managing them over a period of time instead of on a daily or weekly basis?
3. Reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress. The stress reaction is triggered by your perception of physical and emotional danger. Are you viewing your stressor in an exaggerated way? Work at adopting more moderate views and try to see the stress as something you can cope with rather than something that overpowers you. Put the situation in perspective.
4. Learn to moderate your physical reaction to stress and build your physical reserves. Brisk exercise is an amazing way of lowering your stress symptoms. Getting enough sleep on a consistent basis will also help reduce your overreaction to stressful situations. Relaxation techniques can reduce muscle tension, for example, slow, deep breathing will help to bring your heart rate down and respiration back to normal.
5. Plan something rewarding for the end of your stressful day. It doesn't have to be big; it could be a relaxing bath or half an hour with a good book. Put aside work, housekeeping or family concerns for a brief period before bedtime and allow yourself to fully relax. Don't spend this time planning tomorrow's schedule or doing chores you didn't get around to during the day.

Congratulations to our Marketing Director Kathi Fuhrman
on her new bundle of joy!



Arie Michael Fuhrman, 5 pounds 5 oz, 19 inches long



To succeed... You need to find something to hold on to, something to motivate you, something to inspire you.
~ Tony Dorsett



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