

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

Services

- Senior Friendship Centers
- Home Delivered Meals
- Nutrition Education
- Summer Senior Picnics
- Nutrition Counseling
- Caregiver Support
- NY Connects
- Continuing Care
- Case Management
- Nursing Home Information
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- Information, Referral & Advocacy
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- Volunteer Opportunities
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- A Matter of Balance
- Successful Aging presentations
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Caregiver Services

Dutchess County
Office for the Aging

(845) 486-2555

email: ofa@dutchessny.gov



www.dutchessny.gov/aging

Dutchess County Office for the Aging

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Caregiver Services

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging Family Caregiver Support Program offers and funds a variety of services designed to assist caregivers. These services are described below along with a phone number for each program for more information.

- **Caregiver Training and Support**

Monthly workshops in such areas as practical tips, stress management, coping skills, legal issues for caregivers and a monthly support group are available. Call MidHudson Regional Licensed Home Care of Westchester Medical Center for information at (845) 483-5551.

- **In-Home Contact and Support**

Including friendly visiting, telephone reassurance, shopping assistance and respite. Call Friends of Seniors: (845) 485-1277.

- **Adult Day Care**

Call the Office for the Aging: (845) 486-2555

- **Overnight Respite**

Call the Office for the Aging: (845) 486-2555

- **Case Management**

Call the Office for the Aging: (845) 486-2555

- **Personal Emergency Response Systems**

Call the Office for the Aging: (845) 486-2555

- **Home Care**

Homemaking, personal care and housekeeper services may be available. Call the Office for the Aging: (845) 486-2555

- **Services for Grandparents**

- **Raising Grandchildren**

A support group meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at St. Mary's Chapel on Bedford Ave. in Fishkill. Workshops, case assistance, counseling and a directory of services are available from Cornell Cooperative Extension: (845) 677-8223.

- **Minor Home Modifications**

Call Rebuilding Together Dutchess County for information: (845) 454-7310

- **Support Group and Counseling for Alzheimer's Caregivers**

Call the Alzheimer's Association for more information: (845) 471-2655

- **Case Assistance for Caregivers**

Available through the Office for the Aging, and through the Alzheimer's Association: (845) 471-2655.



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10 Tips For Caregivers

1. **Talk with Other Caregivers**

Join a support group. Sharing with others who are in a similar situation can help and give you new ideas for coping. Discussing the stresses involved with caregiving can provide relief. Talking with friends and relatives can also be helpful, or a counselor can also provide assistance.

2. **Make Time for Yourself**

Taking time off from caregiving is essential and can help avoid burnout. Be sure to ask for and accept help from friends and neighbors who can stay with your patient. Develop a list of ways that they can help and have it ready when they offer. Then you can schedule time for yourself when you will not have to be worrying about your patient's care. Take an exercise class; go shopping; take in a show! Don't feel guilty about having fun. You probably need more of a break than you realize. Contact the Dutchess County Office for the Aging to learn about available options including home care and respite. Many of these options are listed on the front page of this brochure.

3. **Get Training**

Attend a Caregiver training class. You'll learn the proper methods of hands-on care and also about other issues related to effective caregiving.

4. **Get Enough Rest**

Often, when we don't get sufficient rest, things that once seemed manageable may suddenly become unbearable. If you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to continue to be a caregiver. See your doctor regularly, get screened for stress and depression and get plenty of rest. You are needed.

If you are able to, get your care recipient on a sleep schedule; it may help you to get the rest you need. If possible, sleep in a different room from the person for whom you are caring.

Try using a monitor so you'll know if the person wakes up or needs you.

5. **Watch Your Diet**

Eat regular, healthy meals with plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains and protein. Without an adequate diet, we can quickly wear down. Avoid eating too much sugar, fat, and salt and drinks with caffeine. Try to avoid alcohol. While alcohol and drugs may seem like they help stress, they will wear you down in the long run.

6. **Exercise**

Even a few minutes per day of exercise can help to reduce stress. Walking is an easy way to get needed exercise, and can give you a social outlet if you go with friends. If you aren't able to leave your caregiving duties, you can exercise in the house by stretching, walking or jogging in place. If you're caring for someone who should get exercise, try doing it together.

7. **Keep a Sense of Humor**

Laughter can release chemicals in your body which will help you feel better. Try to find humor in difficult situations. It can help to relieve stress. Spend time with friends who like to have fun and can make you laugh.

8. **Be Flexible**

If your job and caregiving responsibilities conflict, talk to your supervisor about flex-time or other ways to rearrange your schedule to allow time for caregiving. Try to let go of some activities or duties if you can.

(continued on next page)

10 Tips For Caregivers

9. **Become Informed**

Talk to a professional health care worker about your loved one's illness or disease. Search online for more in-depth information.

Make your home safe for your loved one. Be aware of fire hazards such as stoves, matches, lighters, and cigarettes. Watch for loose rugs, cluttered pathways and inadequate lighting. Adjust the water heater temperature to prevent burns and install bathroom grab bars.

Learn how to set limits without feeling guilty. Don't allow yourself to be manipulated.

10. **Learn About Your Options**

In-home care options include personal care, homemaker, Meals on Wheels, transportation, emergency response system and hospice. Many caregivers hire their own workers privately or pay an agency directly to provide care. Your loved one can receive help with bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting, and light housekeeping. NY CONNECTS ((845) 475-3511) can evaluate the situation to determine the level of care needed and help arrange for services.

Out-of-home options include adult day care services, assisted living facilities, residential care facilities, retirement housing and nursing home care.

Evaluate in writing both your short-term and long-term needs as a caregiver. Start by listing those things you might need help with now and in the future. For example, a short-term need might be to move your mother's bed downstairs. A long-term need might be transportation to get your mother to a doctor once a month.

Next, make a list of all the informal supports (family, friends and neighbors) and how each person can help. Repeat this process for formal supports such as home care agencies and transportation services. It is important to set a time frame for any action that needs to be taken. Having a plan and implementing it will greatly reduce your stress as a caregiver.

Other Resources for Caregivers

AARP
www.aarp.org

Alzheimer's Association
www.alz.org/hudsonvalley

Eldercare Locator
www.eldercare.gov

Family Caregiver Alliance
www.caregiver.org

National Alliance for Caregiving
www.caregiving.org

National Association of Geriatric Care Managers
www.caremanager.org

Parkinson's Disease Information
www.pdf.org
www.parkinson.org
www.midhudsonparkinsons.org

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