

February 2018

Boomers, Elders, and More E-Newsletter

200 Appleton Place
Nashville, TN 37212

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/child-family-center/>

Message from the Coordinator

It's February, and love is in the air. With Valentine's Day coming up, take some time to shower yourself with love. As a family caregiver, your focus is normally on another person, often causing you to forget to do anything special for yourself. So this month take some time to treat yourself; give yourself a little love. Caregivers that pause to reflect on and appreciate the happy moments will stay more focused and calm during the difficult times according to researchers at Georgetown University Medical School in Washington, D.C., so take a mental snapshot of a sweet moment of joy when caregiving, and pull it from your memory when you need to calm and compose yourself. I know at times you may feel you are being selfish when you take time away for yourself, but in fact, you're not! Taking time out to care for yourself is vital, because let's face it, you can't love or care for others, if you don't care for yourself.



Happy Valentine's Day!

This Valentine's Day, take a break from your daily duties, and do something nice to pamper yourself. Ask a family member to help with your daily duties, perhaps they can help with laundry, watch your loved one for a couple of hours, or run errands, etc. Give some time to yourself: read a book, take a relaxing bath, get a manicure, or treat yourself to some time by yourself. After all, you deserve it.

Remember, "It's not selfish to love yourself, take care of yourself, and to make your happiness a priority from time to time. It's necessary." ~ Mandy Hale

If you need information or resources to assist you in your caregiving role, contact Denisha Morris, Family Services Coordinator, at denisha.m.morris@vanderbilt.edu or 936-1990

Division of Administration
Child & Family Center

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Reducing Hip Fractures in U.S. Senior Citizens Would Cost \$2 billion

Most U.S. senior citizens over age 80 suffer with the steady loss of bone due to osteoporosis, contributing to an estimated 2 million bone fractures each year. A new study finds that routine bisphosphonate drug treatment of women over 65 who sustain a distal radius (wrist) fracture - one of the most common fractures associated with osteoporosis - could significantly reduce the risk for additional fractures, primarily hip fractures, but at an estimated cost of more than \$2 billion annually.

The lifetime cost of a hip fracture is estimated at \$81,300, of which approximately 44 percent of the costs are associated with nursing facility expenses. Hip fractures cause an estimated 300,000 unplanned hospital admissions in the U.S. each year, according to this new study presented this week at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).

Bisphosphonates, a drug known to increase bone mass and prevent fractures, has been associated with atypical femur fractures in a small, but significant number of patients.

Researchers reviewed existing literature and Medicare data to determine distal radius fracture incidence and age-specific hip fracture rates after distal radius fracture with and without bisphosphonate treatment. A model was then created to determine future fracture rates with and without treatment, and related costs.

The model predicted 357,656 lifetime hip fractures following distal radius fracture in all females age 65 and older in the U.S. If these patients received regular bisphosphonate treatment following a distal radius fracture, the number of hip fractures would drop to 262,767 over the lifetime of these patients; however, an estimated 19,464 patients would suffer an atypical femur fracture as a result of the treatment.



The cost of routine bisphosphonate treatment, including the cost for treating associated atypical femur fractures, comes to a lifetime total of \$19.5 billion, or approximately \$205,534 per avoided hip fracture.

"Our study suggests that routine universal utilization of bisphosphonates in elderly women after distal radius fracture would not be economically advantageous despite the cost savings associated with reduction of the hip fracture burden in that population," said lead study author, Suneel B. Bhat, MD, an orthopaedic surgery resident at the Rothman Institute in Philadelphia, Pa.

The study authors also hypothesize that the cost of bisphosphonates would need to drop to \$70 per patient each year, from the current average annual wholesale cost of \$1,485 per patient, to make the treatment affordable to every patient age 65 and older following a wrist fracture. In addition, selecting patients at lower risk for atypical femur fractures for treatment may reduce the number of bisphosphonate-related fracture.

For more information about his article visit: [http://seniorjournal.com/NEWS/Health/2015/20150404 Reducing-hip-fractures-in-U.S.-senior-citizens-would-cost-\\$2-billion.htm](http://seniorjournal.com/NEWS/Health/2015/20150404 Reducing-hip-fractures-in-U.S.-senior-citizens-would-cost-$2-billion.htm)

Nip Depression in the Bud

By: Mary Damiano

While caregivers are defined as the people taking care of those needing help, they sometimes overlook the fact that caregiving responsibilities can take a toll on their own health.

In addition to physical ailments, caregivers are at risk for depression. Depression can strike anyone, at any age. Caregivers need to be especially aware of depression because of the great load they carry. Many caregivers work at a full-time job and take care of a family in addition to their caregiving responsibilities. They often sacrifice their own health, well-being and social life in order to do everything that needs to be done.

One way to stop depression before it strikes is to be aware of the warning signs. According to the Administration on Aging, here are some red flags that depression might be creeping in:

- Sad, discouraged mood
- Persistent pessimism about the present, future and the past
- Loss of interest in work, hobbies, social life and sex
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Lack of energy and feeling slowed down
- Restlessness and irritability
- Loss of appetite and loss of weight
- Disturbed sleep, especially early morning waking
- Depressive, gloomy or desolate dreams
- Suicidal thoughts

Below are some expert tips on what caregivers in particular can do to stop depression before it gets out of control: Talk regularly with family, friends, or mental health professionals—it is very important that you do not isolate yourself. Join a local support group, or find one online. Share your feelings so they don't build up and escalate into problems.



Set limits—this can be hard for caregivers, because they are used to taking on everything that needs to be done. It's okay to say no to taking on more than you can handle.

Eat nutritiously, exercise regularly and get enough sleep—this can be difficult because of the irregular schedules caregivers must keep. But think of it this way: your body and mind are machines, and they must be properly maintained in order to function at their best. Nutritious food, exercise and sleep are the things that fuel these machines. Just as you would not let your car run out of gas, don't let your body run out of its fuel.

Let go of unrealistic expectations—caregivers often have unrealistic expectations of themselves, and therefore push themselves to meet these goals. Accept the fact that you can't do everything. Ask for and accept help, from friends, family and local agencies. Whatever you do, don't be a martyr.

Keep a sense of humor—we all know that laughter is the best medicine, so go ahead and take a few spoonfuls daily. Relax with a funny movie or TV show. Put on a comedy tape to listen to while you do your chores. Find the humor in everyday things.

For more information about this article visit: <https://caregiver.com/articles/nip-depression/>

Flu Tips for Caregivers



When caring for people who have the flu:

- Avoid being face to face with the sick person. If possible, it is best to spend the least amount of time in close contact with a sick person.
- When holding sick children, place their chin on your shoulder so they will not cough in your face.
- Wash your hands often and the right way. Sing the “Happy Birthday” song two times or count slowly to 20 as you wash.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Make sure to wash your hands after touching the sick person. Wash after handling their tissues or laundry.

Tips to prevent dehydration

Give plenty of liquids at the first sign of flu. Sick people with the flu need to drink extra fluids to keep from getting dehydrated. Mild fluid loss can most often be treated at home. Yet, severe dehydration is VERY serious and must be treated in the hospital.

- If the sick person is not eating well, encourage them to drink liquids. Avoid alcohol or drinks with caffeine in them such as colas, tea, and coffee.
- Older adults and people with kidney problems should check with their doctor about safe amounts of liquid to drink when sick.
- Offer clear fluids such as water, broth, or sports drinks.
- Use a squeeze bottle or a straw for people too weak to drink from a cup. Or offer ice chips or frozen ice pops to suck on

Source: <https://caregiver.com/articles/flu-tips-caregivers/>

February's Upcoming Events

This month's Boomers, Elders, and More Lunchtime session will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2018 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. in Light Hall, Room 411. Join Barbara Moss as she presents information on the legal planning that we all need to do to answer questions such as:

- What are the steps we need to take to plan for the future?
- How can we document our wishes for end-of-life care?
- How does Medicare work?
- How will we pay for home care, assisted living, or nursing home care if we need it?

Vanderbilt Family Resource Center's Caregiver Support group will be held on Wednesday, February 14, 2018 from noon to 1 p.m. at Medical Center East, room 8380A. The caregiver support group is a time to share information and openly discuss your problems without judgment, to process your feelings, and to hear others talk about their expectations.

Daily Reminder..

