



ASK Connection

Serving the Northern Virginia Area 703.621.4825

www.anovaseniorcare.com

1900 Campus Commons Dr. Suite 100 Reston, VA 20191

CAREGIVER PROFILE



Our caregivers are totally committed, highly qualified and carefully selected individuals who are personally and thoroughly screened, bonded and insured.

Most importantly our caregivers are dependable and extraordinarily caring of others. In addition to their previous experience, our caregivers receive training that includes a specialized curriculum exclusive to The Senior's Choice that results in them becoming Certified Companion Aides™. These highly qualified and trained caregivers are ready to help you and your loved ones with a variety of daily activities such as:

- Caring companionship
- Meal planning and preparation
- Incidental transportation
- Running errands
- Light housekeeping
- Medication reminders
- Assistance with bathing and grooming
- Assistance with bill paying
- Information and referral services

Our personalized and affordable services are available 7 days a week and can range from a few hours a day to 24 hour and live in care.

Welcome to the Spring 2010 Issue

Welcome to our Spring 2010 issue! Our Spring 2010 Caregiver of the Season is **Maria Rodriguez**. Maria is a caregiver with Anova Senior Kare, serving the Northern Virginia area.

Upon retirement from a local hospital, Maria came to work for us. She brought along many years of experience and a strong understanding of senior issues.

Last year I assigned her to a client who could be a "curmudgeon" (his words, not ours). However, after talking it over we understood that our client was very afraid of dying. He was also afraid to leave his wife who had early memory loss. Those fears led him to lash out at those he cared for. But he always knew he was safe unloading his burdens with Maria. Maria spent many hours talking to him about his faith and dying. Most mornings after attending mass she would bring back communion for him.

At the end, when our client was admitted to the hospital, the family called Maria to come up and be with

them. He and Maria had talked many times about what prayers he wanted said at the end. So Maria led the family in those prayers as he passed away peacefully surrounded by his family and Maria.

The ultimate recognition of her importance to the client's family came when they asked Maria and another of his caregivers be honorary pallbearers at his funeral.

What a tribute to their caring hearts. It's an honor and a pleasure to have Maria representing Anova Senior Kare in our community, because we always know that she is giving her all to her clients.

Best wishes,

Beverly Luce
Registered Nurse
President & CEO
Anova Senior Kare



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SENIOR HEALTH & LIFESTYLES

Brain Foods and Memory

All cells need nutrients to grow. So including brain foods in your diet gives your brain the building blocks it needs. More neurons and connections in your brain equals a stronger memory and a mind that simply works better.

1. Healthy Fats: Build Your Brain

The most important of the fats to supplement are the Omega-3 fatty acids. As your brain repairs itself and grows new neurons, it needs an abundant supply of Omega-3s.

The best sources of Omega-3 fats include cold-water fish such as salmon and albacore tuna. Other foods high in Omega-3 are flaxseed, canola and olive oils, walnuts, almonds and wheat germ.

2. Antioxidants: Protect Your Brain

Antioxidants help counteract the effects of free radicals which attack and break down our brain cells.

Good sources of antioxidants include tea (especially green tea), blueberries and other berries, red grapes, tomatoes, broccoli, garlic, spinach, carrots, whole grains, and soy.

3. High-Tyrosine Proteins:

Spark Your Brain

Your brain includes important chemicals called "neurotransmitters."

Neurotransmitters are the messengers that carry brain signals from one neuron to the next. Some components of neurotransmitters, such as tryptophan, can't be made within the body but must be consumed directly from your diet. Others, such as tyrosine, can be made by the body but require the right foods in your diet.

The best neurotransmitter-building foods for boosting alertness, energy, and concentration include seafood, meat, eggs, soy and dairy products. Eat the low-fat, low salt varieties.

4. Water: Hydrate Your Brain

As you probably know, most of your body is water. Being even slightly dehydrated decreases your mental energy and can impair your memory.

The minimum recommended water intake is 8 glasses a day.

5. Vitamins & Minerals: Brain Building Blocks

Certain vitamins and minerals are also

important building blocks for your brain. The most important for brain function are Vitamins C, B12, and B6. Some important minerals for brain building include Iron (especially for women) and Calcium. Deficiencies of either of these have been shown to impair learning.

An easy way to get your most important vitamins and minerals is to simply take a multivitamin each day.

Make sure you always take your vitamins with food and not on an empty stomach. Not only will you avoid a stomach ache, but vitamins and minerals need to combine with food in your digestive system or they will be to a large degree wasted. It is also recommended that you purchase high quality supplements; they have much better absorption than the typical "grocery store" supplements.

6. Fiber: Regulate Your Fuel Supply

Fiber is a surprising brain aid, but an important one. That is because fiber helps slow the absorption of sugar from your diet. Your brain operates 100% on sugar. But sugar must be delivered in a very steady stream and in the proper amount or your brain gets overwhelmed. Eating enough fiber slows your digestion and

results in the sugar in your food being delivered into your bloodstream gradually.

Foods containing healthy amounts of fiber include dried fruits (such as raisins, dates, prunes, and apricots), vegetables (such as green peas, broccoli, and spinach), peas and beans (such as black-eyed peas, lima beans, and kidney beans), nuts and seeds (such as flaxseed and almonds), whole fruit (such as apples with the skin, oranges, avocados, kiwi, and pears), and whole wheat grains (such as barley, brown rice, and the various whole wheat pastas and cereals).

So there you have it. To keep your brain healthy and your memory at its best, simply start eating foods from all of these groups on a regular basis.

Slowly replace the high-sugar, high-fat foods in your diet with these healthy brain foods. Drink plenty of fresh, clean water. Consider supplements of vitamins, fish oil and perhaps a fiber supplement as well. Not only will your brain and memory benefit, but your body will, too. I guarantee you will notice a difference!

Reprinted and abridged from article by Douglas Jobs from: http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Brain_Foods_and_Memory.html



ROTATING TOPIC:

Understanding Hoarding

A man had been married to his wife for over 50 years. She was a compulsive hoarder. They had separate rooms in their home. His was meticulously clean; hers was absolutely jam-packed with junk. He took care of his wife when her health went into decline. As she was dying, her last words were not something like "I love you," instead, her last words were "please don't touch my stuff."

Hoarding is defined as the acquisition of, and inability to discard items, even though they appear to others to have no value. People with compulsive hoarding

syndrome have immense difficulty throwing things away, even items of little or no value such as old newspapers, bits of string, worn-out clothes, and junk mail.

A person who is a compulsive hoarder has a variety of thoughts going through his or her mind. Items may be perceived to have sentimental value, and "If I throw it away, I am throwing away part of myself." Hoarders have a difficult time making decisions, so they will save an item to avoid making the "bad choice" of getting rid of it. Hoarders may feel responsible for those around them, so they will save items "just in case I or my

(Hoarding, continued on page 3)

Disaster Preparedness For Seniors

In light of the Haiti tragedy, it is important to remind every individual to prepare for a disaster and put plans in place. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan, you can be better prepared for any situation. Seniors have certain specific issues to consider.

- Consider how a disaster might affect your individual needs.
- Identify all resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if they are limited or not available.
- Get an emergency supply kit.
- Identify the shelter nearest to your home.
- Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for you (and your pets); consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you in an emergency.
- Consider electronic payments for federal benefit recipients. Keep in mind a disaster can disrupt mail service for days or even weeks. For those who depend on the mail for their Social Security benefits, a difficult situation can become worse if they are evacuated or lose their mail service. Switching to electronic payments is one simple, significant way people can protect themselves financially before disaster strikes

Create a Support Network

- If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster talk to family, friends and others who will be part of your personal support network.

(Hoarding, continued from page 2)

loved ones need them."

Hoarders also have control issues. They may feel that the moment they throw something away, they are no longer in control, and what happens to this item is in the hands of others. Hoarders are also afraid of forgetting what something looked like, or its content, and fear that "once the item is gone, it's gone forever." There is also a fear of "letting go." For example, a hoarder may fear that once she has thrown something away, that part of her life, no matter how insignificant, is gone forever.

- Write down and share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your support network.
- Make sure everyone knows how you plan to evacuate your home or workplace and where you will go in case of a disaster.
- Make sure that someone in your local network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Teach those who will help you how to use any lifesaving equipment, administer medicine in case of an emergency.
- Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your network.

Additional Supplies and Documents:

Medications and Medical Supplies

If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need to make it on your own for at least a week, maybe longer.

- Make a list of prescription medicines including dosage, treatment and allergy information.
- Talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you need to prepare.
- If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers and incorporate them into

Hoarding also creates safety issues. Excessive clutter causes fire and tripping/fall hazards. People have trapped themselves in homes and apartments, and floors have collapsed due to the weight of hoarded materials.

Hoarding also creates a stress for family members, who may feel embarrassed, frustrated, or resentful of the hoarding behavior. They are ashamed of the clutter, but are forced to live amidst chaos. Family members often resort to "self-help" methods by attempting to clean or organize without the consent of the hoarder, which leads to arguments and fights.

your personal support network.

- Consider other personal needs such as eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries, and oxygen.



Emergency Documents

Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, medical records, wills, deeds, social security number, charge and bank accounts information and tax records.

- Have copies of your medical insurance and Medicare cards readily available.
- Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices or other life-sustaining devices. Include operating information and instructions.
- Make sure that a friend or family member has copies of these documents.
- Include the names and contact information of your support network, as well as your medical providers.
- If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information notes the best way to communicate with you.
- Keep these documents in a water proof container for quick and easy access.

Reprinted from:

<http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/seniors.html>

Compulsive hoarding is considered to be a form of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). There are two forms of treatment: medications and behavioral techniques. People working with compulsive hoarders should encourage them to find a psychiatrist or therapist who is experienced in the treatment of OCD who can prescribe appropriate medications and help teach the person to gradually begin to discard items.

By Geoff Bernhardt, Elder Law Attorney

Reprinted from:

www.theseniorresourcenetwork.com



SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

Caregiving Stages: Stage 5

Over the past several issues we have run this series showing the challenges facing family caregivers at six different stages in the caregiving process. This issue we profile stage 5.

Stage 5: The Transitioning Caregiver

My Role Is Changing

Who are you?

You've been a caregiver over a period of several years and have recently made a decision about your role as caregiver. Or, your care recipient's condition has taken a turn for the worse and you know his/her time is very limited.

As a result, you've changed your role—or are just about to.

Your Keyword: Allow

- Allow time to mourn and grieve;
- Allow remembrances to remain;
- Allow reflections of your experiences.

Your Purpose:

To walk with your care recipient during his/her last months and weeks, implementing his/ her decisions about

end-of-life care that you both discussed during Stage 1. This stage is about loving and feeling good about the shared journey. As you both feel the journey end, this is also a time to mourn and grieve. As you mourn, you might find yourself questioning what will be the next chapter in your life. You've been a caregiver for so long, how can you possibly do anything else?

As a "transitioning caregiver", what can you do?

1. Allow yourself time to mourn and grief.

A nursing home placement may have been as painful a loss as a death. Both experiences are tremendous losses—and need to be respected with time to process, and then heal, the emotions.

2. Remember your care recipient.

You don't have to give away clothes or remove pictures—until you want to. When family and friends seem hesitant to talk about your care recipient (they worry they will upset you), assure them that sharing memories, laughs and stories brings you great comfort.

3. Reflect back on your caregiving responsibilities and decisions with pride.

Find comfort in knowing that you did the best you could. You did your best, which is the very best you can hope to do.

4. Review your journal.

How are you different today than you were on the day you first started writing in your journal? How will you use this experience to enhance your future relationships?

*Excerpted from www.caregiving.com:
The Caregiving Years, Six Stages to a Meaningful Journey, a handbook for family caregivers by Denise M. Brown.*