

**UK Elder Care**  
***IN THE KNOW***  
**E-Newsletter**  
**August 2008**



**A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR**

For those of you attending CARE Group meetings, we welcome you to a Fall Kick-off! For the kick-off, please invite a colleague or friend at work who has caregiving responsibilities. This will be an excellent opportunity for your colleague to get to know about meetings and the support available. For August meetings, we will provide light snacks. Registration is recommended in advance by calling 323-4600. The schedule for CARE Groups is below in the events section of the newsletter.



**NEWS HIGHLIGHTS**

**Alzheimer's Disease Supersedes Diabetes as Sixth Leading Cause of Death in the United States**

Alzheimer's disease is now the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics. The CDC estimates that 72,914 Americans died of Alzheimer's disease in 2006. With an unprecedented historic population shift of 78 million aging baby boomers in the country and this disease poised to strike 10 million boomers - it is clear this escalating epidemic must be addressed now.

Today, as many as 5.2 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. The Alzheimer's Association's 2008 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report revealed one out of eight baby boomers will develop this disease that currently has no effective disease-modifying treatments to halt or delay its progression. Experts predict by 2010, there will be almost a half million new cases of Alzheimer's disease each year; and by 2050, there will be almost a million new cases each year.

Researchers are closing the gap in developing accurate ways to diagnose and treat Alzheimer's. Although there are several promising drugs currently in Phase III clinical trials, insufficient research funds are committed to research focused on Alzheimer's disease treatment and prevention. This situation is further compounded by the fact that for the past five years the NIH budget has been essentially flat. The personal and economic impact of Alzheimer's is so large that no one entity can solve the problem alone. It will require all levels of government and the private sector working together to

diminish the human and economic cost. It must begin with accelerating research.

The CDC also reported that while deaths from Alzheimer's disease were on the rise, other chronic conditions were on the decline. Between 2005 and 2006, the largest decline in age-adjusted death rates occurred for influenza/pneumonia (12.8 percent), and also included chronic lower respiratory diseases (6.5 percent), stroke (6.4 percent), heart disease (5.5 percent) diabetes (5.3 percent), hypertension (5 percent), chronic liver disease (3.3 percent) and cancer (1.6 percent).

Source: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

The report, "Deaths: Preliminary Data for 2006" is available at [www.cdc.gov/nchs](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs).

### **Older People May Need Less Sleep, Study Finds**

Along with all the other changes that come with age, healthy older people also lose some capacity for sleep, according to a new report published online in *Current Biology*, a Cell Press publication. When asked to stay in bed for 16 hours in the dark each day for several days, younger people get an average of 9 hours of shuteye compared to 7.5 for older people, the researchers report.

"The most parsimonious explanation for our results is that older people need less sleep," said Elizabeth Klerman of Brigham and Women's Hospital & Harvard Medical School. "It's also possible that they sleep less even when given the opportunity for more sleep because of age-related changes in the ability to fall asleep and remain asleep," she added, noting that the new results apply only to healthy individuals taking no medication and having no medical conditions or sleep disorders.

The study also found that most healthy people and young people in particular, don't get as much sleep as they need.

The idea that sleep changes markedly across the life span isn't new. In fact, insomnia is a common complaint among older people. But whether age-related changes in sleep were due to changes in social factors, circadian rhythms, or shifts in an internal "set point" for sleep need or the ability to sleep had remained unresolved.

Given the same amount of time in bed, older people take longer to fall asleep and sleep for less time than younger people do, they found. When required to remain in bed for 16 hours a day, older people slept 1.5 hours less on average than younger people, they showed. That age-related decline in sleep included an even split between rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, which is associated with dreaming, and non-REM sleep, they found.

Younger subjects slept for many more hours during the study than their usual self-selected sleep times. Given the evidence that insufficient sleep is associated with increased risk of accidents, errors, and metabolic changes similar to diabetes, Klerman emphasized that younger people should sleep more.

The findings may also influence treatment for insomnia in older people, Klerman said.

"If older people believe that they need more sleep than they can achieve even when they spend extra time in bed, then they may complain of insomnia: being awake when wanting to be asleep. They may start using medications needlessly. If they are tired during the day, they should consider evaluation for a sleep disorder that may be interfering with their ability to obtain good sleep at night."

Source: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/116172.php>

## **Bone Scans, Osteoporosis Drugs Little Used in Nursing Homes**

Researchers are finding that more could be done to prevent fractures in nursing home residents. In the United Kingdom, research suggests that routine scanning of residents upon admission to nursing homes would cut morbidity, reduce the cost of care and give residents a better quality of life. The lead researcher of one study stated that residents go untested and untreated because they are "old and expected to die." However, he notes that residents live long enough to benefit from treatment if those at risk are identified through bone density scans. At the same time, research based on data from residents admitted to a New Jersey nursing home after having sustained a bone fracture found that only 11.5% were prescribed a medication for osteoporosis - despite the fact that guidelines recommend drug therapy beyond vitamin D and calcium for nursing home residents at risk of fractures. In an article in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, the researchers write, "There is considerable room for improvement in the use of osteoporosis (drug therapy) in this high-risk nursing home population."

Source: [www.healthcarerepublic.com](http://www.healthcarerepublic.com), May 30, 2008; *Reuters*, June 5, 2008



## **UPCOMING EVENTS ON CAMPUS & IN THE COMMUNITY**

- **CARE Group Fall Kick-Off** August 7 in 220 Scovell Hall, Suite 1; August 14<sup>th</sup> C110 UK Hospital; and August 21<sup>st</sup> in Peterson Service Building, Room 379. All meetings are from Noon – 1 p.m. RSVP recommended by calling 323-4600. Please invite a colleague or friend to the kick-off and enjoy light refreshments.
- **Elder Care & Work: Finding the Balance** presentation scheduled Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup> 11 – Noon in the UK Hospital, H31 B. Seating is limited; please register through NetLearning or by calling 7-9226. Each participant will receive a FREE copy of John Paul Marosy's book "Elder Care: A Six Step Guide to Balancing Work and Family."
- **Health & Wellness Events:** Walking Wednesday's each week you can meet at the corner of Rose and Washington at 12:10; Farmer's Market bus rides has begun every Tuesday. Chair massage August 19<sup>th</sup> 11 – 3 p.m. in W.T. Young Library, Gallery Room. Visit [www.uky.edu/HR/Wellness](http://www.uky.edu/HR/Wellness) to learn about other services and scheduled events and to RSVP.
- **Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Training** is Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. This program is for those who have a friend or family member who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. Local and statewide experts in aging and Alzheimer's care will present on Alzheimer's disease,

caregiving basics, legal decisions, and how to care for the caregiver. Registration is \$10 and includes lunch. Registration is required: call 1-800-272-3900



## **CAREGIVER SURVIVAL GUIDE**

### **Tips and Techniques for Dealing with Stress**

Change is an expected part of our daily lives. Dealing with it so that YOU control IT rather than vice versa is an important and positive force in controlling your life. Try a few of these tips.

1. Accept what you cannot change. Take a tip from AA. Change what you can, if it bothers you. But, if you cannot change it, learn to live with it.
2. Face up to your problems. Sort them out, and see which ones are real and which are simply imagined. Deal with them as they are, and not what you think they are.
3. Deal with one problem at a time. Sort out your priorities, and deal with them in the order of their importance to you.
4. Be flexible. Give in once and a while. If you do, others will too.
5. Don't hold all of your worries inside yourself – talk it out. Frequently we swallow our unhappiness (along with candy, cake, ice cream, etc.) because we can't let the problems out. Talk to someone. A burden shared is much less of a burden.
6. Work off Stress. Physical outlets for stress help your body fight off many of the negative results of stress.
7. Get enough rest/relaxation/sleep. Give your body a chance to recover from day to day. Lack of sleep and reset will only make matters worse for you.
8. Avoid “self medication.” A “spoonful of sugar” may make the “medicine go down,” but it does your body no good. Sugar, alcohol, nicotine, and ice cream may all feel good going down, but they make matters worse – from the inside. They add to your body's physical stresses, thus making dealing with external stresses much harder.
9. “Take time to smell the roses.” Have some fun. Relax.
10. Think about and do something for others. A little altruism never hurt. It even makes people feel better about themselves.
11. Be the “captain of your ship.” If you are not happy with your life, think about what's wrong or missing, and then plan the necessary actions to change it to coincide with your needs and desires for your life.

12. Work on your relationships with those who share your life. Don't hold back your feelings. Share them with your family and friends and co-workers. It can help to decrease tensions.

Source: [www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com)



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