

Caring for Senior Citizens with Chronic Illness



Seniors face many challenges from aging. In addition to these obstacles, about 80 percent of seniors are coping with at least one chronic illness. Almost half of those over 60 years of age have at least two chronic conditions.

Dealing with a chronic condition is difficult for anyone, particularly a senior who may already be facing declines in health associated with aging. The chronic disease can affect every aspect of their life. And they may have to learn how to live with the loss of physical abilities, their independence, or their well-being.

The support of family and friends can provide tremendous relief to anyone coping with a chronic illness. If you know or provide care for a senior citizen struggling with health issues, try to be available when they need you as well as sympathetic toward their situation. Ask how they are doing and if there is anything you can do to help. Seniors with serious illnesses often experience anxiety, anger, and hopelessness. Sympathizing with their emotional state also provides emotional comfort for them.

If you provide care for a senior who wrestles with a chronic disease, it is very important that you know and understand their disease. This will help you provide the best care for them. Talk with their doctor, and go to the library or online to find more information about the illness. Check out the Project Mend Self-Management and Support Class at Polk Caregivers. You may also be able to find a disease management program, case manager through the hospital, their nursing rehabilitation or assisted living facility or a certified professional geriatric case manager in the community who can help you.