

What is a Family Caregiver?

If you are caring for a loved one who is ill or disabled, you are a family caregiver.

Eighty per cent of all caregiving is actually done by family members, not social service agencies, nursing homes or government programs.

Family caregivers are responsible for a wide range of emotional, financial, nursing, social, homemaking and other services, including the safety of their loved one, on a regular basis.

Family caregivers are responsible for someone else, whether that means providing 24-hour care for someone who can't dress, feed or go to the bathroom, or it means a little extra help for mom or dad when they need help cutting the lawn or understanding complex paperwork. There are also at least 10 million family members in the US caring for loved ones with special needs who are younger than 18 years of age.

Family Caregiving can go on for a few years or for a lifetime. It often feels like a very lonely, isolating experience, but... you are not alone!

Polk County Family Caregivers, Inc. provides an opportunity for family caregivers to visit with others who are facing the same concerns and obtain first-hand information, resources and reinforcement that will help in the task of being better prepared to be a family caregiver.

Why not join us?



About Us

Polk County Family Caregivers, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy, information and support to family members caring for their loved ones.

Polk County Family Caregivers, Inc. has been in operation for 11 years and has 300 active members. If you would like to join, please contact us for membership information.

Polk County Family Caregivers, Inc. will be offering caregiver education workshops in Fort Meade, Lake Wales, Winter Haven, Bartow, Haines City, Lakeland/Mulberry, Poinciana and other cities throughout this year. If you would like further details, please contact us.



Polk County Family Caregivers, Inc.
...A Voice of Advocacy for Family Caregivers

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Fall Prevention for Family Caregivers



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www.mypcfc.org

A Fall Prevention Checklist

Outside safety

- ✓Paint the edges of outdoor steps and any steps that are especially narrow or are higher or lower than the rest.
- ✓Paint outside stairs with a mixture of sand and paint for better traction.
- ✓Keep outdoor walkways clear and well lit.
- ✓Clear dead leaves, weeds and debris from around entrances and sidewalks.

Make your home safe

- ✓Remove all extraneous clutter in your house, such as papers, books, clothes and shoes.
- ✓Keep telephone and electrical cords out of pathways.
- ✓Tack rugs and glue and vinyl flooring so they lie flat.
- ✓Remove or replace rugs or runners that tend to slip, or attach non-slip backing.
- ✓Ensure that carpets are firmly attached to the stairs.
- ✓Do not stand on a chair to reach things.
- ✓Store frequently used objects where you can reach them easily.

Keep a well-lit home

- ✓Have a lamp or light switch that you can easily reach without getting out of bed.
- ✓Use night lights in the bedroom, bathroom and hall ways.
- ✓Keep a flashlight handy.
- ✓Have light switches at both ends of stairs and halls.
- ✓Install handrails on both sides of stairs.

Tips for a safer bath

- ✓Add grab bars in shower, tub and toilet areas.
- ✓Use non-slip adhesive strips or a mat in shower or tub.
- ✓Consider sitting on a bench or stool in the shower.
- ✓Consider using an elevated toilet seat.

Use care walking

- ✓Use helping devices such as canes, as directed by your healthcare provider.
- ✓Wear non-slip, low-heeled shoes or slippers that fit snugly and support well.
- ✓Avoid walking around in stocking feet.

Things to review

- ✓Some drugs, including over the counter drugs and combinations of drugs, can make you drowsy, dizzy and unsteady. Check out drugs with your healthcare provider.
- ✓Discuss safe amounts of alcohol intake with your physician.
- ✓Have your hearing and eyesight tested. Inner ear problems can affect balance. Vision problems make it difficult to see potential hazards, as does poor lighting.
- ✓If you feel dizzy or light headed, sit down or stay seated until your head clears. Stand up slowly to avoid unsteadiness.

And don't forget....

- ✓Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling.
- ✓Exercise is one of the most important ways to reduce your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Exercises that improve balance and coordination (like Tai Chi) are the most helpful.
- ✓Ask your doctor or health care worker about the best type of exercise program for you.

