

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter

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Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program



## Caring for Loved Ones with Dementia

June 20, 2012

Chat Topic:

### Building Self-Esteem

Every month, you will have the opportunity to chat on-line with a trained counselor. These live chats are held from 12:15-12:45 PM & 6:00-6:30 PM CST.

Come Join Us!

June 2012

At A Glance

National Hunger  
Awareness Month  
June 1st—30th

Visit  
[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)  
for more information

Myasthenia Gravis  
Awareness Month  
June 1st—30th

Visit [www.myasthenia.org](http://www.myasthenia.org)  
for more information



### Dementia care supports quality of life in patients

It is not a situation hoped for, but one many people will have to tackle. As loved ones age and mental capacities fade, how do you handle proper care and ensure a high quality of life? Luckily, as numbers grow and research proliferates, our knowledge and understanding of dementia increases as well. Information about how to provide a happy, rewarding and loving life for these patients is now widely available.

### A Condition on the Rise

In a report titled “Dementia: a public health priority” released by Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in April 2012, it estimated that 35.6 million people have dementia worldwide, a number expected to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.

This growth represents a huge potential burden on both medical systems and the families of patients, because patients often live for many years after onset begins. In the report, ADI and WHO urge the participation of these key publics in the development of laws, policies and services that will surely grow relating to dementia.

The report encourages active participation and self-education, saying “With appropriate support, many can and should be enabled to continue to engage and contribute within society and have a good quality of life.” By building a base of respect and love, these patients are able to thrive and enjoy their remaining years.

### Emotional Health: Creating an Environment of Respect

According to the Alzheimer’s Society, one of the first and most important steps in caring for a loved one with dementia is understanding their world and ensuring an environment of respect. This time of mental decline can leave a patient feeling vulnerable and lost, but proper support can help maintain their individuality, happiness and self-esteem.

Steps to go about this include:

- **Make the patient feel valued** (both as they are in their current situation and for past accomplishments). Making an effort to listen and spend time with the patient can encourage these feelings.
- **Be courteous and take care not to talk down to the patient.** It is not uncommon for people to talk about dementia patients as if they were not there. This practice can bruise already damaged self-confidence.
- **Respect their privacy.** Be sensitive when help is required in intimate situations, and maintain normal practices like knocking before entering the patient’s room.
- **Support high self-esteem.** Take note of and applaud the patient’s interests, skills and individuality.
- **Encourage emotional release.** Though memories may fade, feelings remain and it is important the patient is allowed to express emotions. Offer support and don’t belittle concerns, even if they seem small.
- **Create the power to choose.** By offering simple choices, the patient can still be an active participant in decisions. Try to discuss issues concerning them and as often as possible, allow the patient to choose.

*Continued on page 2*

Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks at:

1 (866) 327-2400

[eap@deeroaks.com](mailto:eap@deeroaks.com)

[www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com)

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## Continued: Caring for Loved Ones with Dementia

- **Maintain respect by assisting the patient in tasks, rather than just completing everything for them.** Encourage up-keep in appearance and compliment their looks. Do not correct every mistake made, and allow them to complete tasks in their own manner.

It is also important to remember that every dementia patient is a unique individual. People react to this disease in different ways, so take time to recognize and respect your loved one's distinct personality, needs and emotions.

### Physical Health: Keeping Patients Active, Fit and Safe

Along with emotional health, the Alzheimer's Society stresses the importance of keeping up the physical health of the patient, saying, "The better they feel, the better life will be for them and those around them."

There are many factors involved in maintaining patient health, so a good first step is to schedule regular check-ups with their doctor to ensure all bases are covered. Regular exercise is essential for supporting mobility, independence, circulation and relaxation. Try to help the patient find a method they enjoy - this could be anything from gardening, dancing, walking or seated exercise. It is also crucial to ensure a healthy diet that delivers important nutrients, vitamins and energy. Patients who forget to eat might need to be accompanied to meals, and finger foods are a good option for those struggling with knives and forks.

Tackling the issues of drinking and smoking can be tricky - it is recommended you discuss this with the patient's doctor. Both of these habits can increase confusion and pose increased health risks to the patients. However, care should be taken to balance the risk of danger with respect for the patient's autonomy.

### Don't Forget to Care for Yourself

When a loved one is diagnosed with a difficult disease like dementia, it is often all too common that the caregiver devotes all their energy and concerns for the patient and forgets about their own well-being.

The Alzheimer's Society recommends making sure that you schedule time for yourself - at least daily time to go to the gym or read a book, weekly time to socialize and pamper yourself and regular weekends or vacations away from everyday life caring for the patient. Take time to reward and congratulate yourself for your devotion and care.

Recognize when you need a little love and support of your own, and don't be afraid to seek it out. The Alzheimer's Society has a hotline devoted to caregiver support, and many online forums can be a quick and easy way to reach out to others experiencing similar challenges.

Along with emotions, the finances of the caregiver can often become strained as a loved one requires more and more care. Be sure to use all of the governmental and legal resources and benefits available to ensure the best possible management of both your finances and the estate of the patient.

Remember - taking time for yourself is not just good for you - it is good for your loved one with dementia. Making sure you are healthy, happy and energized means you are better equipped to care for the patient as they cope with this disease.

Source: 1800Therapist; <http://www.1-800-therapist.com/feature-article/dementia-care-supports-quality-life-patients>

## Matters of the Heart

### Quinoa



Quinoa is a highly nutritious food from South America that was once considered "the gold of the Incas."

Quinoa is higher in amino acids and protein and can be easily substituted for almost any grain, as it is gluten-free. Rich in proteins, iron, calcium, potassium and copper, it helps prevent type 2 diabetes, childhood asthma, heart diseases, gallstones and migraines.

**Quinoa can help reduce cholesterol:** In a 2010 study conducted in the Netherlands, rats bred to have high cholesterol were fed quinoa. These rats were also fed a high fructose diet that should further increase their harmful cholesterol (LDL) levels. After quinoa was introduced to the diet, the detrimental effects of the cholesterol and fructose began to reverse and cholesterol levels were returning to normal.

**Quinoa's high magnesium content promotes cardiovascular health:** Magnesium has been the subject of many studies for its role in preventing hypertension through its ability to relax the small muscles that clamp down on our blood vessels. Recent research has also shown that a deficiency in magnesium actually increases the hormone (angiotensin II) that is responsible for increasing blood pressure, so magnesium has a two-fold effect on our heart health.

The grain can also be prepared in the same way as boiled rice. Boil 2 cups of water to prepare 1 cup of quinoa and cook it for 15 minutes. Keep it aside to let it absorb water. The size of the seed will increase significantly, with a tender and springy texture. Add salt and black pepper, as per taste.

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## Eat Mindfully at Your Favorite Haunts

### *Weight management and lower obesity risk are possible even if you eat out a lot*

Avoiding restaurants because of your diet? A new study says you may not have to if you make smart, "mindful" choices. Dr. Gayle Timmerman, PhD, RN, led a study from the University of Texas at Austin that found a group of women who said they eat out frequently reduced their daily calories by 297 after participating in a mindful eating program. For the study 35 healthy women between the ages of 40 and 59 enrolled in a six-week program called Mindful Restaurant Eating, which aimed to help them learn how to reduce their calories and fat intake while eating out. The women identified themselves as eating out regularly, and the program's goal was to prevent the women from gaining weight, not to help them lose weight.

At the start of the study, 69 percent of the participants said they were not dieting with the intent to lose weight. However, the women did lose an average of 3.7 pounds as they succeeded in eating fewer calories and less fat. They also learned how to manage their weight better while eating out and manage their diets better overall, according to the study. "Based on what we learned from this study, for those individuals who eat out frequently, developing the skills needed to eat out without gaining weight from the excess calories typically consumed at restaurants may be essential to long-term health," Timmerman said. Based on the participants' three reports to the researchers during the study, they did not change how frequently they ate out during the study compared to their usual habits.

Eve Pearson, a registered and licensed dietitian who owns Nutriworks Comprehensive Nutrition Consulting, said quantity usually makes a bigger difference than what a person eats when they're trying to eat smart at restaurants. "Many people who dine out frequently go on a health kick and decide to eat salads or sandwiches because they think they're healthier when in reality a salad or sandwich can be just as bad as a Double Cheeseburger when it comes to fat grams and calories," said Pearson, who was not involved with this study.

"As mentioned in the study, one must know how to make choices to reduce calorie intake, usually more specifically fat intake, when eating at restaurants," Pearson said. "Ordering smaller portions from the appetizer or side menu could be helpful. Drinking water can be extremely helpful as well to avoid liquid calories."

By the end of the program, the women appeared to have changed their eating habits at home too. The researchers calculated that only about 124 of the 297 fewer calories they were consuming each day would have come from restaurant meals. During the mindfulness program, participants were taught how to make the best choices at different types of restaurants, such as fast food, Italian or Mexican, for managing how many calories they ate. They were also taught how to handle common obstacles to avoiding extra calories while eating out. The program included classes during which participants set weekly goals and completed homework to practice the skills they learned during the meetings.

Finally, the program taught the women "mindful eating," during which they became more aware of the sight, smell and texture of the food they were eating so they could enjoy eating out while feeling satisfied with smaller portions. The class also used guided meditations to help the women increase their awareness of how hungry or full they felt.

*The study was funded by the North and Central Texas Clinical and Translational Science Initiative and the National Institute of Health. It appears in the January/February issue of the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. The authors did not state any financial conflicts of interest.*

Source: 1-800-Therapist; <http://www.1-800-therapist.com/news-article/weight-management-and-lower-obesity-risk-are-possible-even-if-you-eat-out-lot>



### *EAP Spotlight*

## Financial Resources



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## Seven Ways to Save on Sleep-Away Camp Supplies



Spending a week at summer camp can be a great experience for kids. In addition to having a lot of fun, campers can learn new skills, make friends, and gain independence. However, parents know that sending their kids to camp can be expensive. According to the American Camp Association, spending a week at camp costs an average of \$622 per child.

In addition to the cost of the camp, parents also consider the costs involved in fulfilling the camp packing list. Camp packing lists can be quite lengthy and will usually include things like clothing, toiletries, footwear, and bedding as well as items such as flashlights, water bottles, and notepads.

The items on my kids' camp packing list would cost several hundreds of dollars to buy new. Thankfully, there are many ways to reduce the cost of gearing up for camp. Here are seven:

1. **Pack grubby clothes.** We all know how dirty kids can get in a day, so just imagine how dirty their belongings will be after a week at camp! Convince your child that camp is a time to focus on function, not fashion.
2. **Shop at second-hand stores.** Many items on camp packing lists can be found at the local thrift shop. For example, a child's raincoat at my local Goodwill store costs less than \$4.
3. **Borrow from friends or neighbors.** Your kids are probably not the only ones going to camp. If the timing works out, ask other parents of campers if you can swap supplies. For example, their child can use your child's compass one week and your child can use their child's sleeping pad the next.
4. **Rent costly supplies.** Some camp supplies can be purchased cheaply, but probably shouldn't be. For example, if your camper will be spending the night in the great outdoors, he or she may need more than a flimsy sleeping bag from the discount chain. In this case, contact your local sporting goods store to see if it is cost effective to rent what they need for the week.
5. **Plan to reuse items.** Some supplies can be used year after year, but only if they don't get lost. Make sure things get back home by marking everything clearly with your camper's name.
6. **Don't go overboard.** Don't assume that more is better. If the list says to bring three pairs of pants, don't overload the bag with more. One of the great things about camp is that kids learn to do things for themselves—including carrying their own bags!
7. **Remember that some things are priceless.** Do not send your child with any item that can't be replaced. While it may be hard to ask your child to leave behind a cherished necklace or favorite stuffed animal, it would be much harder for them to lose it at camp.

Finally, look for other ways to save. Consider carpooling with other families to cut the cost of transportation to camp. And don't forget to ask the camp if they offer any discounts. For example, many camps offer sibling discounts or discounts if you sign up for multiple sessions.

Summer camp should be a good experience for both the camper and his or her parents. So before you run to the nearest sporting goods store to stock up on supplies, remember that your kids will always remember the good times they had, but probably not the fact that they got a new flashlight.

*Kim McGrigg, June 21, 2011*

### About Money Management International

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