



# CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

## Traveling Tips for Caregiving on the Go

It's summer, the traditional time of year to escape our routines and make new memories. Just because your loved one needs care doesn't necessarily mean you have to skip the road trip. By thoroughly thinking through the trip, anticipating needs and developing plans, you and your loved one may be able to go on that vacation after all.

"You'll need a more detailed plan, thinking through every element," said CPAAA Caregiver Coordinator Rhonda Custard. "Think of this extensive planning as an investment instead of a hindrance."

Consider starting with a day trip as a practice session before taking overnight trips.

"Go step-by-step with what you need to get through the day: medications, hydration, breaks, meals, entertainment. Do you need a small cooler and ice pack to keep some medications refrigerated? Maybe a shade for the passenger window and a small pillow for a nap? And plan extra time for more stops," Custard said.

Here are some other tips from the Family Caregiver Alliance and the Alzheimer's Association:

- In addition to ensuring prescriptions are filled, make a list of the medications and dosages,

doctors' names and contact information, emergency contacts, insurance details, and copies of legal documents such as power of attorney, advanced directives, living will, etc.

- Write out an itinerary including every destination. Share with family and emergency contacts. Involve your loved one in the planning, but don't overwhelm them with too many details.
- Be aware of hospitals in the area you'll be visiting.
- Help with packing, and make sure your loved one has input. Don't forget that favorite pillow and throw!
- Keep a bag with you with itinerary, change of

Continued on Page 2



### Caregiving On the Go

Continued from Page 1

clothing, medications, water, snacks and activities.

- Keep activities simple, and don't overdo. If your loved one gets agitated in the afternoon, take your tours in the morning.
- Have a back-up plan, and be flexible at all times.
- Keep as close as possible to your regular routine for meals, naps and bedtime.
- Bring familiar items to focus attention and pass the time, such as favorite music through headphones or a movie on a tablet. Use your strategies to reduce anxiety if your loved one becomes agitated. Bring a favorite stuffed animal or fidget sleeve, for example, for people with dementia.
- Wearable identification is a good idea. A bracelet or necklace is less likely to be lost than a cell phone.
- Keep the schedule light for your first evening.



- Place your loved one's toiletries in the bathroom, and place clothing in the top drawer for a sense of familiarity.
- Bring a nightlight.

“You as the caregiver must feel comfortable and confident, so be sure to monitor your stress levels and take care of your needs,” Custard said. “By having a solid plan before you leave, you're setting the stage for a meaningful time making new memories with your loved one.”

## ***Monthly Caregiver Support Group***

Do you care for a loved one over the age of 60? Do you sometimes feel alone, exhausted or frustrated? Spending time with other caregivers can be a way to find support, be heard and learn new ways to cope.

Join us on the third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m., virtually or in-person.

Contact **Jessica Huber** at **855-200-2372** or **JHuber@CPAAA.Org**.

Central Plains Area Agency on Aging serves Butler, Harvey and Sedgwick counties.

# Rhonda Cares for Caregivers

By Rhonda L. Custard – Caregiver Coordinator

Please remember to take care of yourself and loved one by following these tips:

**Stay Cool** by wearing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing, use sunscreen, and be mindful of indoor and outdoor activity.

**Stay Hydrated** by drinking plenty of fluids despite your activity level.

**Warning:** If your doctor limits the amount you drink or has you on water pills, ask how much you should drink while the weather is hot.

**Stay away from very sugary or alcoholic drinks** – these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

**Replace** salt and minerals, and keep your pets hydrated.

## Stay Informed

Check for updates: Follow your local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.

Know the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses and how to treat them.

Monitor people at high risk: infants and young children, people 65 years and older, overweight, people who overexert during work or exercise, and people who are physically ill, have heart disease, high blood pressure or take certain medications (for depression, insomnia or poor circulation, for example).

## Heat Exhaustion

## Heat Stroke

### ACT FAST

- Move to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing
- Sip cool water
- Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve

Dizziness

Thirst

Heavy Sweating

Nausea

Weakness



Confusion

Dizziness

Becomes Unconscious

### ACT FAST

## CALL 911

- Move person to a cooler area
- Loosen clothing and remove extra layers
- Cool with water or ice

Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.

Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.



Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!



## JOIN US FOR CAREGIVER CHAT ON FACEBOOK



As a caregiver, you play a vital role in helping older adults maintain their health and independence. Caregiving can be immensely rewarding but often caregivers are faced with multiple challenges.

Caregiver Chat provides a network of support!

Each Friday, Central Plains Area Agency on Aging's caregiver expert provides information, tips and videos using Facebook as an easily accessible online support system. "Caregivers Caring for One Another" is a private Facebook group for caregivers to receive support from each other. Please request to join the group, and share!

**W W W . C P A A A . O R G**  
**J O I N U S O N**  
**F A C E B O O K & Y O U T U B E**



**CENTRAL PLAINS AREA  
AGENCY ON AGING  
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WICHITA, KS 67202**

## MISSION STATEMENT

Assisting older adults, caregivers and individuals with disabilities to achieve improved health and greater independence.

## VISION STATEMENT

We envision a community that empowers and supports individuals to live and age with dignity and choice.

Central Plains Area Agency on Aging is mandated to advocate for older adults in the community along with current and future policies impacting them. We are dedicated to being a leader in the aging field and work with a network of providers to offer services that meet the needs of the community while planning for current and future needs. CPAAA has been serving seniors, caregivers and adults with disabilities for nearly 50 years.

**INFORMATION AND OPTIONS COUNSELING**

**1-855-200-2372**