

Caring for Health

Resources for friends and family

Care for you
so you can
care for them

Humana Guidance Centers offer support for caregivers

Humana wants to inspire health in the communities we serve. That's why Humana Guidance Centers offer a wide range of services that are available to everyone at no cost at locations throughout the U.S. You don't need to be a Humana member to visit a Guidance Center or take part in any of the following services:

- Fitness classes
- Health and wellness seminars
- Social activities, cooking demonstrations and nutrition classes
- Customer support and information about Humana plans
- Sales agents to help you or your loved one consider healthcare choices and purchase Humana plans

Go to **Humana.com/guidancecenter** to view the locations and dates for classes. Guidance Centers are not available in all areas.

Presentations in Guidance Centers are for informational purposes only and do not replace treatment or advice from a healthcare professional. If you have questions, please talk with your doctor.



As a family or friend caring for a loved one, you may be interested in two upcoming programs Humana Guidance Centers will offer. You'll want to check the calendars of Guidance Centers in your area to make sure of dates and times:

August 2015: Normal aging versus dementia

A common question from those caring for others and seniors alike, is whether their loved one's or their own forgetfulness, confusion, etc. is normal aging or an early sign of dementia. This seminar will help explain what to expect from normal aging versus what signs might indicate dementia. Tips for caring for someone with dementia will also be discussed.

November 2015: Caregiver classes

There will be a series of presentations covering the legal aspects of caregiving and advance planning such as the differences in legal documents like power of attorney (POA), wills and trusts or advance directives. Check our website **Humana.com/guidancecenter** closer to November for more information.

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Make sure you're taking time to rest

Good sleep is important for good health

It can be easy to overlook your own needs when you're caring for someone else. One of the first things you may overlook is getting a full night's sleep. If you're not rested, it can lead to things like forgetfulness which can cause issues for yourself and your loved one. When you're helping to care for another, you may face many different challenges during the day, so it's important to take care of yourself. Sleeping well at night can help keep you alert during the day, learn and remember things and can help keep you from getting sick. When you don't sleep well, your body can get stressed. Even worse, long-term sleep loss can increase your risk of serious diseases like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity and stroke. It can be difficult to take care of someone else if you're not taking care of yourself!

You may experience some of the following if you don't get enough sleep regularly:

- Confusion
- Daytime sleepiness
- Depression
- Irritability
- Memory problems
- Poor concentration

Take care of yourself by making sure you're getting a good night's sleep

Talk to your doctor

You'll want to talk to your doctor about these signs, any other sleep problems you may be having, and what your sleep habits are like. Asking your doctor about your sleeping habits can help him or her understand if you may need to go to a sleep specialist to see if you have a sleep disorder like sleep apnea or insomnia, which may require therapies like a PAP machine or prescription sleep medicine. Going over your prescriptions and any over-the-counter (OTC) medicines you may take with your doctor may help you find out if they could have a bad effect on your sleep.

Tips for better sleep

There are things you can try to take control of your sleep. Better sleep habits can help you get to less-drowsy mornings:

- Don't watch TV an hour before bedtime or use smartphones or tablets in bed. Try reading a relaxing book instead.
- Get darker window treatments or consider wearing soft eyeshades.
- Choose a comfortable mattress and use your bed only for sleep. Keep your pillow clean to reduce allergy-causing dust and spores.

Helping communicate after a cancer diagnosis

If you're caring for someone who's recently diagnosed with cancer, you may see them feeling overwhelmed and confused. Below are some scenarios they may face and ways you can help them.

Talking to their physician

We all know the feeling of walking into the doctor's office and forgetting what we wanted to ask. Help prevent this by writing down any questions ahead of time. Doctors may offer an overwhelming amount of information. Try to go with them to appointments, bring a notebook to write things down and make sure they are able to ask all their questions without feeling rushed. Go over your notes together afterwards.

Questions to ask

- What are treatment options?
- Are there side effects?
- How to best prepare for treatment?
- How many treatments will they need?
- If surgery is needed, how long will they be in the hospital?
- What is the recovery period like?
- What medications will they be on?
- If this treatment doesn't work, what's next?
- What lifestyle changes could be made to help this be as smooth and effective as possible?

Friends and family

Telling people you have cancer is not easy. Help the person you're caring for feel empowered to tell people at their own pace and comfort level.

People may feel the need to tell them stories or make healthcare suggestions. Make sure they know that they don't have to take any advice or listen to stories that make them uncomfortable. Try to create safe spaces where they don't feel the need to cater to others through their illness.

Support groups

Find local support groups of current and former cancer patients. These will be full of people who have been through the same situation who can be sympathetic and encouraging, as well as offer ideas on how to stay positive in spite of a challenging diagnosis.

Search online to find a group, or ask a doctor or clinic for recommendations. Places of worship may have support groups, and online support groups are becoming an option for patients who don't feel well enough to travel, or live too far away from a group to attend. Remind the patient that they aren't committed to the first group they visit, and they should keep trying until they find one that works for them.

Sources: "Doctor, Can We Talk?": Tips for Communicating With Your Health Care Team." CancerCare, accessed February 14, 2014. www.cancercare.org/publications/53-doctor_can_we_talk_tips_for_communicating_with_your_health_care_team

"Talking With Friends and Relatives About Your Cancer." American Cancer Society, May 30, 2013, accessed February 14, 2014. www.cancer.org/treatment/understandingyourdiagnosis/talkingaboutcancer/talking-with-friends-and-relatives-about-your-cancer



Humana is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in a Humana plan depends on contract renewal.



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We want to hear from you!

Email us at **Family_Friends@humana.com** and let us know what topics about caring for loved ones or friends you'd like to see addressed in this newsletter.



Humana hero: Scott Menne

Scott Menne is a son, husband, father, soccer coach, Humana associate and a caregiver. He's been with Humana for ten years and works as a consultant in provider analytics to look at data to make sure the doctors in Humana's provider network are efficient and work for the best outcomes.

Menne's experience as a caregiver began after his estranged father had emergency surgery in March 2014. "I didn't think I could do it," he said. Menne says he began managing his father's life: paying bills, taxes, doctor's appointments, cleaning the house. During his caregiver journey, Scott himself became ill.

"I let go of myself and things I needed and became what others needed." He now manages his father's care with his sister and wife as a team, each with unique roles. He cites communication and the ability to ask for help as one of the best ways for caregivers to manage. "I stretched myself beyond my normal comfort to play the role and it brings me comfort knowing I'm helping my dad," he said.