

# Caregiver Headlines

## How to Make the Most of a Visit

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### Special points of interest:

- Ways to make a meaningful visit with your loved one.
- Opportunity to dispose of your old refrigerator.
- Recognize your bad habits and learn how to improve them.
- Facts you need to know about Vitamin D.

Even if you speak with your loved one by phone every day, you can't fully understand their situation and needs until you see them face to face, in their own environment. Make the most of your visits to assess their situation, address their needs and spend enjoyable time with them.

Here are a few ideas for things you should do when you visit an aging loved one for a holiday or weekend trip:

- **If your loved one is friendly with the neighbors, pay a quick visit to them.** Ask if they have noticed any changes in their behavior or comings and goings. Ask if they will watch out for your loved one. You may also need to give them your phone numbers and ask them to call in the event of an emergency or if your loved one appears to need help.
- **Take a moment to notice your loved ones appearance.** Are they

still doing their hair, showering, wearing clean and appropriate clothing?

#### **Check out their house.**

Are they still able to keep it clean or is their shower covered in mold and/or kitchen counter piled with dirty dishes? **Also look for potential hazards**—slippery, cluttered floors; frayed electrical cords; dimly lit stairwell floors; unsecured throw rugs, etc.

- **Look in the fridge and cabinets to make sure your loved one is eating regularly and has ample amount of nutritious foods** in their cabinets. **Also, check to make sure no unopened mail is sitting around** without having ever been opened.
- For longer visits to a loved one's town, you might want to **accompany them to the doctor or speak to their lawyer or financial advisor about future arrangements.**

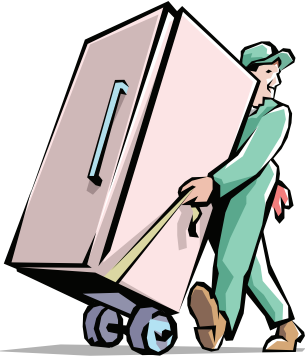
- **Use the time**



**(especially if it's a family gathering) to communicate with your siblings/relatives about any caregiving issues at hand.** If you are super ambitious, try to delegate some upcoming caregiving responsibilities (perhaps you can have a short family meeting and put together a calendar for the next year—i.e., who does what, when you will be getting some respite, etc.).

Most importantly, actually take a moment to spend *quality* time with your loved one. Sometimes when we visit, we are so busy or the visit is so short (especially during holidays) that we don't take the time to make a meaningful visit.

## Don't Need That Old Fridge Anymore?



If you are like many people, when you bought your most recent refrigerator or freezer, you moved your old one to the basement or garage as a backup.

Do you know that if your secondary fridge or freezer was made before 1993, you may be spending \$100 a year in electricity costs to keep it running?

If you no longer need that

backup, in addition to saving electricity costs, you can earn a \$35 rebate and have your old appliance hauled away for free. Ameren Illinois Utilities is offering the rebate and recycling service through its Refrigerator & Freezer Recycling Program.

To qualify for the program, you must have a secondary refrigerator or freezer in working (cooling) condition manu-

factured before 1993 that is 10-27 cubic feet in size. There is a limit of two refrigerators/freezers per customer, per program year. Although there is no rebate offered, you may also have any working window unit air conditioners picked up at the same time.

More information available by calling, toll-free 1-866-899-9088 or visit [www.actonenergy.com](http://www.actonenergy.com).

## Bad Habits to Avoid

A habit is a constant, often unconscious inclination to perform some act, acquired through its frequent repetition. If the habit is objectionable, we call it a "bad habit." It's possible to control your habits and make a positive change in as little as 30 days. Focus on one habit at a time.

Bad caregiving habits often lead to increased stress and sometimes, even to elder abuse. Elder abuse often starts as psychological abuse. If a caregiver doesn't properly deal with his/her stress, they may start to wreak havoc by means of threats, fear, humiliation, manipulation, or other bad conduct. This may also

include harassment, criticizing, insults, or denigration.

It is important to be aware of any signs that you may be heading in the wrong direction.

Some signs include:

- Trying to do too much and not accomplishing goals
- Improper or no planning
- Negative self-talk
- Having poor hygiene
- Emotional eating and drinking; poor diet
- Too much caffeine
- No time off
- Sleep deprivation
- Can't or won't delegate

- Time management problems
- Difficulty making decisions

Take an honest inventory of yourself. Make it a point to correct those bad habits. Habits are a matter of self-control. When you break bad habits, you will be much more successful.

Here are some ways to reduce stress which will, in turn, help alleviate bad habits:

- Be honest about your bad habits and stress level
- Give your loved one a hug every day
- Do something nice for yourself each week
- Remember to breathe deeply

- Take a 20 minute brisk walk or exercise in some way
- Find a good listener and vent your frustrations
- Listen to your favorite music to relax
- Choose to be happy
- Relax with a cup of tea
- Be assertive with a smile
- Keep a journal
- Try aromatherapy; spritz some lavender on your pillow
- Before you go to bed each night, review your day and let go of the bad stuff
- Count your blessings

—Source

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



# Library Resource Hours

**Fayette County: Evans Public Library**  
 521 5th Street  
 Vandalia, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

**Next Visits: April 7**  
 May 5  
 June 2

**Marion County: Bryan-Bennett Library**  
 315 S. Maple Street  
 Salem, IL

1:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

**Next Visits: April 21**  
 May 19  
 June 16

**Effingham County: Helen Matthes Library**  
 100 Market Street  
 Effingham, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

**Next Visits: April 2**  
 May 7  
 June 4

**Clay County: Flora Public Library**  
 216 N. Main Street  
 Flora, IL

1:30 p.m. — 3:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

**Next Visits: April 28**  
 May 26  
 June 23

**Jefferson County: CE Brehm Memorial Library**  
 100 S. 7th Street  
 Mt. Vernon, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

**Next Visits: April 14**  
 May 12  
 June 9

**Remember...**  
 Please call at least one day in advance to schedule your appointment with the Caregiver Advisor during Library Resource Hours toll-free at 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062.





# Caregiver Resource & Support Meetings

(All Sites Are Accessible)

## Fayette County & Surrounding Area

**April 7**

May 5  
June 2

**3:00 — 4:00 p.m.**

**First United Methodist Church**

127 N. 4th Street  
Vandalia, IL

Meets in Library

## Marion County & Surrounding Area

**April 21**

May 19  
June 16

**4:00 — 5:00 p.m.**

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church**

512 W. Main Street  
Salem, IL

Meets in Basement  
(Wheelchair Lift Available)

## Effingham County & Surrounding Area

**April 20**

May 18  
June 15

**3:30 — 4:30 p.m.**

**Heartland Human Services**

1200 N. 4th Street  
Effingham, IL

Meets in Room 119

## Clay County & Surrounding Area

**April 28—Louisville**

May 26—Flora  
June 23—Louisville

**3:30 — 4:30 p.m.**

**Flora Public Library**

216 N. Main Street  
Flora, IL

Meets in Fellowship Hall

## Jefferson County & Surrounding Area

**April 14**

May 12  
June 9

**3:00 — 4:00 p.m.**

**Addus Evergreen Club**

108 N. 3rd Street  
Mt. Vernon, IL

Meets in North Room

If you would like to attend a meeting but need respite, please contact the Caregiver Advisor toll-free at 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062 so that an in-home worker can be arranged.

**If bad weather, call the Caregiver Advisor or the Support Group site to learn if the group is meeting.**

# Vitamin D Deficiency



**“Studies have shown that Vitamin D is found to protect your body against cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes.”**

Vitamin D is necessary for good skeletal health and structure. It is essential for your body to be able to absorb calcium and phosphorus and for prevention of osteoporosis. If you are deficient in Vitamin D, your body is not able to use the calcium you have and you are at risk for osteoporosis.

Vitamin D is very important for other parts of your body as well. Studies have shown that Vitamin D is found to protect your body against cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes.

So how can you protect yourself and make sure that you are sufficient in Vitamin D? Be proactive and take care of your body. Make sure you are eating foods that have adequate levels of Vitamin D and calcium in your diet on a daily basis. If you feel like you do not eat a balanced diet and don't get these resources, then you may consider a supplement on a daily

basis. However, if you are concerned that you may be inadequate in Vitamin D, there are blood tests that you can have performed to evaluate your Vitamin D level. Ask your primary care provider to have this test done if you are concerned. If you are currently being treated for osteoporosis, you may also want to consider discussing this test with your primary care provider.

Vitamin D can be found in sunlight and certain foods. Spending approximately 20 minutes in the sunlight a day can be beneficial for Vitamin D therapy. However, this is hard for many since you must expose most all of your skin-extremities/face until it begins to turn pink and during the wintertime months, the sun does not transmit the same intensity of UVB light. Therefore, adequate food intake is strongly encouraged to increase and/or maintain Vitamin D levels in the

body.

## Here are some food sources that are high in Vitamin D:

- Fish oil, cod liver
- Fish—herring; Atlantic raw Salmon; sockeye drained solid with the bone; Salmon pink, canned solid with bone; halibut, greenland raw
- Milk or orange juice with Vitamin D fortified and calcium
- Cereals fortified with Vitamin D

## Here are some food sources high in calcium:

- Milk
- Yogurt
- Beans
- Turnip greens
- Cheese
- Tofu
- Nuts

—Source  
Jill Cash, M.S.N., A.P.R.N.,  
N., Certified Family Nurse  
Practitioner

## Parkinson's Awareness Month

For more than a decade, April has been designated as Parkinson's Awareness Month. Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder that affects nearly one million

people in the U.S. Although promising research is being conducted, there is currently no cure for or definitive cause of Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's groups nationwide are taking this opportunity to raise greater awareness about Parkinson's and to recommend themselves to finding a cure.

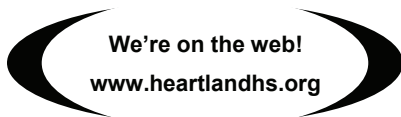
To learn more or to find a support group in your area that may know of local activities, please call toll-free 1-800-457-6676 or email [info@pdf.org](mailto:info@pdf.org).



## HEARTLAND Human Services

1200 North Fourth Street  
P.O. Box 1047  
Effingham, IL 62401

Phone: 1.888.560.8805 x 1062  
Fax: 217.342.6716  
Email: [dbone@heartlandhs.org](mailto:dbone@heartlandhs.org)



# A n n o u n c e m e n t s

### April 10 — Blood Drive

2:00 p.m. — 6:00 p.m.  
GreenTree Assisted Living, Mt. Vernon, IL

### April 16 — 7th Annual Symposium for Family Caregivers in Effingham

- ⇒ Registration Deadline: **April 13**
- ⇒ See flyer for details

### April 18 — Parkinson Disease Awareness (**FREE** and Open to the Public)

9:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.  
Wedberg Conference Center, Memorial Medical Center  
1st & Miller Streets, Springfield, IL

- ⇒ To register, call Leslie Randolph at 217.545.1903

### April 21 — Health Fair

1:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.  
GreenTree Assisted Living, Mt. Vernon, IL

### April 21 — Strategies to Promote Successful Communication (**FREE** Audio Conference)

12:00 p.m. — 1:30 p.m.

- ⇒ Focuses on the common communication challenges faced by individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- ⇒ To register, call the Alzheimer's Association at 217.726.5184.

### April 29 — 6th Annual Conference on Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders:

#### *A Journey Through the Mind*

8:00 a.m. — 4:15 p.m.  
John A. Logan College  
700 Logan College Road  
Carterville, IL

- ⇒ To register or for more information, call the Alzheimer's Association at 217.726.5184.

—Heartland Human Services will be **closed** on **April 10th** due to Good Friday.—