

ELDER CARE UPDATES



**January
2006**

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Rochester Elder Care
Elder Care Management

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Don't Go It Alone In 2006!!

by Debra Benson

The benefits of support groups are priceless. The availability and variety of different support groups is really astounding. There is anything from Alzheimer's support groups to mothers of multiples obtainable right here in Rochester. "Well it's just one more appointment to get to, right?" No, there are many benefits of meeting with like minded people who are going through (or have been through) what you are going through. I have found a number of clinical studies that show people benefit from participating in support groups. *in a safe setting.*

There are varying ways of holding a support group, but generally people needing and/or offering support on a variety of issues meet in a safe setting. The group will most likely have a facilitator who is an expert in the field of whatever topic is being discussed. The purpose of the facilitator is not to dictate to the crowd or to chatter endlessly but to get the discussion going and to make sure everyone who wants a turn to talk gets one. The facilitator often shares valuable information and is looked upon as a resource to the participants.

"Why should I go?"

There are a plethora of reasons to be a part of a support group. The most obvious reason being to receive



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mutual support and meet others in a similar situation.

Other reasons include....

- Get up to date information regarding whatever topic is being discussed.
- Share coping skills and tips with others.
- Build new friendships.
- Assist in creating public awareness surrounding whatever disease or issue is on the table. For example, if you are in a breast cancer support group there may be a Breast Cancer Survivor Walk or other fundraiser you could participate in.
- Just knowing you are not alone is very powerful.

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"Excellent care for your loved one

. Peace of mind for you."

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For more information on support groups call:

Alzheimer's Association of Rochester, NY
(585) 760-5400

Mental Health Association of Rochester/Monroe County
(585) 325-3145

Winter Skin Tips

- Use moisturizer with zinc oxide and SPF 30 immediately following your bath or shower.
- Use a humidifier during the winter.
- Drink lots of H₂O; 6-8 glasses.
- Use liquid fabric softeners instead of dryer sheets. Dryer sheets have perfume and alcohol that will not be rinsed out.
- Make sure you have proper nutrition as the B vitamins, vitamin C, niacin and fatty acids play a big role in skin maintenance.
- Don't forget to take care of those lips; apply balm as needed.
- If you still suffer from dry, cracked or itchy skin see your doctor for help.



Don't Go It Alone...

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"So how do I start?"

- You have to take the first step by just showing up. Sounds simple, but many feel anxious or isolated as they may not know anyone. Try to attend the meeting twice before making a final decision about whether the meeting will meet your needs.
- Find out if there is a fee or a donation is required so you don't feel uncomfortable if the "hat" is passed.
- Find out who sponsors the group.
- Talk to people about whether or not the group has helped them.



Many folks are not comfortable or ready for a support group in the general sense. They have alternatives too.

- With the invention of the internet, many prefer to get their support on line through chat rooms or message boards. It does provide anonymity in the comfort of one's home, but this option is not for everyone as you cannot be sure of the qualifications of the facilitator.
- Visit your primary care doctor.
- Consider seeking professional help for one on one counseling.

Make this the New Year's resolution you keep!! Get the support and help you need in 2006.

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