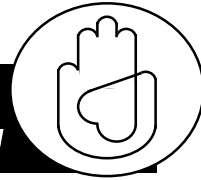


# ELDERCARE UPDATE



Partnership for Eldercare Partnering: with your company to help you with the needs of your aging loved ones  
FALL 2006

## Caregiving During the Holidays: Tips on Planning Ahead

The holiday season is filled with expectations and media messages telling us how to enjoy ourselves. However, they rarely depict the reality and stress of those families caring for an older relative.

As any skilled baseball player will tell you, the key is to ANTICIPATE and cover all the bases. The same is true for successful caregiving. In this guide we hope to help you ANTICIPATE and cover your bases in order to minimize stress.

### PLANNING FOR CARE

If you are the care giver to an older relative or spouse, this is not the time to be shy. ASK for help.

Make sure, in advance, that your paid caregivers are willing to work on the holidays. It may cost a bit more, but be well worth it.

As a long distance caregiver who will be unable to spend the holidays with a loved one, discuss this with them, be honest with your own feelings and empathize with theirs. Alert their clergyman, a neighbor or friend. Order in food. Send flowers. **DON'T FORGET TO CALL!!!!**

If your older relative has dementia and exhibits inappropriate behaviors, you may be faced with an extremely difficult decision: **DO YOU INCLUDE THEM?** Consider the following:

- Make a list of pros and cons
- How do other family members feel?
- How would the older person benefit from being there (i.e. seeing grandchildren)
- Look back. If your loved one had the choice, would they feel uncomfortable about their current condition and prefer to be remembered as they were in the past?

If you decide to include them, be sure to have a "quiet" room where he or she can go if they become anxious or overwhelmed.

If they will not be attending, plan a small, intimate celebration at another time and don't forget to bring leftovers!

**DON'T FEEL GUILTY!!!!**

### FOOD

Can't imagine having the time to prepare the family's traditional meals? Don't pressure yourself to do it

alone...ask others to share in the cooking, or, start a new tradition and have a potluck dinner. **Remember to alert the cooks of any special dietary needs!**

### MEDICATIONS

Make sure all prescriptions have been refilled in advance. Your local 24 hour pharmacy may not be open for the holidays.

### TRAVEL

Prepare a list of your relative's doctors and phone numbers.

Pack all medications along with a printout of each from your pharmacy.

Keep a bag with a change of clothing and personal hygiene items easily accessible.

By air:

- Make arrangements in advance for special assistance, especially for a wheelchair, walker, oxygen, etc.
- Request airline staff supervision
- Reserve aisle seats that maximize legroom

Life brings changes and while you may not be able to celebrate exactly as you did in the past, each holiday season is special and can be enjoyed in its own way.

Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season!

*For further tips on how to deal with YOUR holiday stressors, or any other eldercare issues, please call our experienced eldercare experts at **Partnership for Eldercare** at **1-800-94-ELDER** (outside New York City) or **212-442-3113** (in New York City). Or send an e-mail to [rgolub@aging.nyc.gov](mailto:rgolub@aging.nyc.gov)*

## Partnership for Eldercare

*Our experienced counselors can help you with:*

Assisted Living Facilities	Home Care
Senior Housing	Medicare
Nursing Homes	Medigap Insurance
Elder Law Referrals	Alzheimer's Disease
Long Distance Caregiving	Mental Health Services
Medicaid	Long Term Care Insurance
	Caregiver Stress

visit us on the web at:

[www.partnershipforeldercare.org](http://www.partnershipforeldercare.org)