

# CARELINK

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## Tip of the Month

The holidays can be very depressing and overwhelming to some. To avoid this, be optimistic, encourage your loved one to enjoy the corny music, participate in social events and embrace the family. Although, set realistic expectations, your family may not be like your friends or the family on T.V. Avoid people and situations that cause stress, pamper yourself. Invite your loved one to social events or ask them to participate in charity events to help others. Try to forgive old wounds and grievances, concentrate on the future and a new year.

## **Inside this Issue**

- Live-In Care 2
- Sleep Well 3
- Brain Power 3



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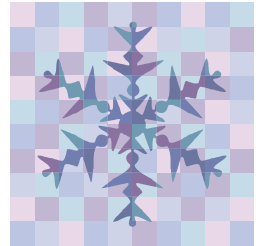
## *News From Custom*

### *Our Agency*

Custom Home Care, is a fully licensed home care agency with over 300 employees working in the Chicago land area. Our caregivers are honest, kind and devoted to caring for Seniors. Many of them have been working with Custom for years.

Custom tries hard to match the right Caregiver with the each Client, we assess every case individually.

Custom would love the opportunity to show you how much we care. Providing excellent care to our Senior population is our mission. Give us a call to discuss your needs.



### *Reminders*

*Home care expenses may be tax deductible, ask your tax accountant for further information. Custom does provide yearly statements upon request.*

## *Live-In Care*

### **Who needs live-in care?**

Seniors who live alone and need monitoring day and night may require 24 hour care.

These seniors may not only need assistance for bathing, meals and personal care but also for safety at night.

Frequently after a hospitalization, fall or other

traumatic event it is best to start with live-in care and re-evaluate the Senior's home care needs as their situation/health improves. It can also be helpful to have a caregiver report on how well a Senior is functioning day to day. Making an assessment on a Senior's function-

ing level requires more than just a brief assessment or few questions asked. Having a live-in Caregiver can assist family members in assessing whether or not a Senior is able to function independently at home. Senior's with dementia should always have full time supervi-



*Compassion is the basis of all morality.*

Who would want to be a live-in caregiver? Many of us have a hard time understanding this arrangement. Live-in Caregivers truly enjoy the company of Seniors. They like the companionship of Seniors and feel very comfortable with

## *Live-In Caregivers*

living in a Senior's home. They like routine and familiarity and usually dislike going from job to job. Many do not have children at home and are free to live independently. Live-in arrangements allow caregivers to save money on their liv-

ing expenses, transportation and meals. Live-in caregivers do need scheduled break times throughout the day and at least 6 hours uninterrupted sleep per night. If a Senior is up frequently at night, a live-in arrangement may not be an option.

## *Benefits of Live-In Care*

Live-in care can be very cost effective. Frequently a caregiver that works 12 hours a day will cost more than a live-in Caregiver. Many Caregivers dislike commuting back and forth to work and prefer to live-in with a client for 4 or 5 days per week, and enjoy their so-

cial life on days off. We do strongly recommend having 2 live-in caregivers split the week of live-in care. This allows them time off to relax, see family and friends, thus avoiding burnout. In addition, if one live-in caregiver becomes ill or takes a vacation, the

other can temporarily fill their vacancy, without adding someone new into the Senior's life. Seniors like routine and consistency and having two Caregivers working with a live-in client is the most effective way to provide continuity of care.



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# Sleep Well

Individuals with Alzheimer's or Dementia can have difficulty sleeping. The disease can cause disruption in sleep patterns which may lead to more frequent awakenings. These problems typically worsen as the disease progresses. Making some adjustment during the day may make a difference in the person's ability to fall asleep and stay asleep throughout the night.



## Some Tips:

- **Consult your physician.** Make sure depression, illness, RLS, sleep apnea are not contributing to the problem. Also discuss the use of sleep aids, and what time would be the best to give them.
- **Be consistent.** Stick to regular routines for waking, eating meals and bedtime.
- **Sunshine.** Open the shades in the morning to light up the room. Bright light can help stabilize the circadian rhythms, which influence the sleep-wake cycle.
- **Stay awake during the day.** Take walks, do other forms of activity to avoid frequent dozing.
- **Napping.** Make it short, in the morning or early afternoon and not in their bed.
- **Avoid stressful tasks.** If bathing is upsetting do this early in the day.
- **Limit fluids.** Limit fluid intake after dinner to avoid frequent urination at night. Also avoid caffeine, like coffee, soda and teas.
- **Be patient.** Try to remain calm around the person even if they are upset. Remain positive. Don't shout at them or argue.
- **Create a calm environment.** Keep the room as dark as possible at night (not pitch black, this can cause more confusion) with a nice temperature and no loud noises. Try soothing music. Put nightlights in the bathroom and keep the door open.
- **Safety measures.** Make sure the person is unable to wander at night. Have supervision at night if they live alone or if someone is living there with them a bell on the door. Avoid gates at the top of stairs, reduce clutter and keep doors locked.

## Brain Power Top Ten for Improving Your Mental Acuity

1. Treat your hypertension. Untreated hypertension can damage blood vessels in the brain.
2. Use it or lose it. Do the crosswords, read, play games, cards or other mental activities.
3. Maintain a healthy weight. Avoid obesity around the belt line.
4. Take a multivitamin daily. B-complex and folic acid are helpful. Check with your physician first.
5. Avoid over eating and excessive alcohol. Elevated cholesterol and triglycerides are bad for the brain.
6. Exercise on a regular basis. Avoid sitting on the couch all day.
7. Avoid excessive sedative type medications. Find a smart doctor and follow their advice.
8. Fix your depression and avoid others who are extremely depressed. Socially more with optimistic people, have some fun!
9. Practice yoga and meditation. Take time to pamper yourself and rejuvenate.
10. Get at least 7-8 hours of sleep at night.

