**Active Living with Arthritis Podcast #9**

Being a Caregiver: Caring for Someone *and* Managing Your Arthritis

**Key Points and References**

**Transfers**

- May be done multiple times during the day, so it’s important to use good body mechanics:
  - Your body and their body are in the best positions to ensure safety for both parties
- **Stand-Pivot transfer: Bed to chair**
  - Bring the chair as close to the care receiver as possible to reduce distance traveled
  - Bring the bed higher or chair lower, if possible, so that the surface you are transferring to is lower than the surface you are transferring from
  - Have the care recipient scoot to the edge of the bed
  - Be sure the care recipient has their feet close together
  - Squat down at the knees and hips while keeping the back straight
  - Place your feet outside their feet
  - Have the care recipient lean forward and put arms around your shoulders (not neck)
  - Have the care recipient place his or her head on the side closest to the chair so they can see where they are going
  - Slowly lean back until the care recipient comes off the bed and you find your balance point
    - You don’t need to lift the person to a standing position, you’re just getting them high enough to move to a chair
    - Let the weight of your body do most of the work
  - Once you find the balance point, pivot to turn the care recipient to the chair and gently let them down into it
  - The more you practice, the easier it will become!
- **Slide-board transfer: bed to chair**
  - Body mechanics are very similar to stand-pivot transfer
Instead of finding a balance point, you are helping them scoot across the board
  - The board does a lot of the work, so it can be easier to perform, especially for people with back pain
  - Slide-boards are relatively inexpensive ($20-$40), but the assistance and protection it provides are well worth the cost

Managing Household Chores
- Break up household tasks throughout the week, instead of doing them all at once
- Write out a schedule for each day of the week, including breaks, and stick to it
- Take breaks BEFORE you notice your stiffness or pain flaring up—by then you will have already overdone it
- A hand-truck or platform is a great tool to help you transport heavy loads, like laundry, from room to room
- Tips for Laundry
  - Use a hand-truck or platform if possible
  - Sit while folding, ironing and putting clothes on hangers, then stand to put them away all at once
    - This reduces the amount of times you need to bend over and stand up
- Tips for Washing Dishes
  - Wash dishes by hand
  - Wash dishes while sitting on a stool if prolonged standing is painful
  - Wash dishes right after they are used
  - Use lighter dishware (plastic, paper)
- Consider using a cleaning company for heavy cleaning

Managing Errands
- Break these tasks up – you don’t need to do them all at once
- Ask friends or family to help you
- Check to see if your city has accessible public transportation
This greatly reduces the amount of work you need to do when going somewhere with your care receiver

- Many services, like medications and groceries, can be delivered right to your door

Caring for Someone Who Needs Constant Supervision

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule so you are well-rested
- Find a way to take breaks
  - Are there any tasks that the care receiver can do by themselves? (naps, lunch with a friend, puzzle, movie)

Take Care of YOU

- You must take care of yourself first before you can be in a good position to care for someone else
- It is important for you to be strong and physically active
  - This makes it easier to manage your arthritis symptoms as well as your caregiving activities
- Self-management is key: you know your symptoms best
  - See how activities you do during the day (like exercise, sleep, caregiving activities) affect your arthritis symptoms (like pain, stiffness, and fatigue)
    - Determine when is the best time to take your medications
  - Take your medications regularly
- Find time to exercise
- Take breaks!

Online Resources

Self-Management and Additional Info

- Arthritis self-management: http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk/LivingwithArthritis
• Finding Accessible Transportation: http://www.accessable.com/tips/para.html
• General Caregiver Information: http://www.arthritis.org/caregiver-general.php
• Self-care for Caregivers: http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=847

Equipment
• Cart for transporting loads in the home: http://www.target.com/p/heavy-duty-flat-folding-cart/-/A-10155305#prodSlot=dlp_medium_1_1&term=carts%20for%20home

YouTube Series for Caregiver Education Training (presented by Kevin Lockette, PT)
  ○ Video: Injury Prevention for Caregivers Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7gNbCWbNEM&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhECE_LC7Zg&index=5
○ Video: Injury Prevention for Caregivers Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsHIG3IUrUQ
○ Video: Injury Prevention for Caregivers Part 3: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Shtl0-Y4e7c&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhiEce_LC7Zg&index=3
○ Video: Caregiver Safety: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k16og3ne704&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhiEce_LC7Zg&index=12
○ Video: stand-pivot transfer from chair to bed: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhCyF8MHehg&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhiEce_LC7Zg&index=13&feature=plcp
○ Video: Bed Mobility for Caregivers: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cKqfTIgMCQ
○ Video: Bed Transfers: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHBZiFdIaAl
○ Video: Sitting to Standing: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xG7rTR94bU
○ Video: Correcting Slipping in a Chair: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7CKp9iw3es
○ Video: Spotting the Care Recipient: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_BdgpsU-h8
○ Video: Transfer Training and Mobility Skills for Caregivers: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4983-1pDtY&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhiEce_LC7Zg&index=27

References


