

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.accessible.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

- Wooden slide board: <http://www.healthykin.com/showproduct.aspx?ProductID=188&SEName=wooden-sliding-transfer-board&gclid=CKfB5Z3I2bMCFY-d4AodvGMAIw>
- Wooden slide board: http://www.activeforever.com/p-1172-maple-sliding-transfer-board.aspx?utm_source=froogle&utm_medium=csc&utm_content=A1318106&utm_campaign=mobility-aids&gclid=CKPtitq02bMCFYKK4Aod13gAVA
- Wooden slide board: <http://www.allegromedical.com/hospital-discharge-favorites-c5000/deluxe-oak-hardwood-transfer-board-p189172.html>
- 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
- Multipurpose cart: http://www.katom.com/304-BUSTC21BU.html?CID=Shopzilla&utm_source=Shopzilla&utm_medium=CSE&utm_campaign=CSE&zam=29342707&zmas=1&zmac=26&zmap=304-BUSTC21BU

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=ShtlO-Y4e7c&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhECe_LC7Zg&index=3
- Video: Caregiver Safety: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k16og3ne704&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhECe_LC7Zg&index=12
- Video: stand-pivot transfer from chair to bed: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhCyF8MHehg&list=UUxfkTwDiVs6_PhECe_LC7Zg&index=13&feature=plcp
- Video: Principles of Good Body Mechanics for Caregivers: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpiHP7qf40E>
- Video: Bed Mobility for Caregivers: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cKqfTIgMCQ>
- Video: Bed Transfers: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHBZiFdIpAl>
- Video: Sitting to Standing: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xG7rT-R94bU>
- 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_PhECe_LC7Zg&index=27

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