

# Caregiver Corner

... Ideas and information for people caring for others 778-2411

## MRI Might Find Early Alzheimer's

According to a new study, the brains of people in the very early stages of Alzheimer's disease might become hyperactive to compensate for disease-related deterioration. Researchers from the Cleveland Clinic tested 69 mentally healthy adults, two-thirds of whom were at risk for Alzheimer's disease because of family history or genetic markers. Functional MRI was used to monitor the participants' brains as they were asked if they recognized the names of famous celebrities and unfamiliar people. The brain activity of at-risk people was compared with that of those not at risk for Alzheimer's.

Investigators reported that even though this was a relatively easy and low-effort test, there was increased activation of certain parts of the brain in at-risk individuals. The findings are published in the current issue of *Neurology* suggest that this may reflect a compensatory brain response at the earliest stages of Alzheimer's disease.

### Contents

1. MRI Might Find Early Alzheimer's .....	1
2. Know the Facts About Alzheimer's .....	1
3. Caregiver Chat – Plan Ahead .....	1
4. Hope Dispensary of the Southern Tier .....	2
5. Tips for Dealing with Feelings of Guilt and Anger.....	2
6. About Dementia and Depression.....	2
7. How to Gain an Extra Hour! .....	3
8. Very Veggie Chili .....	3
9. Share Your Wisdom An Online Tip From a Caregiver .....	3
10. Powerful Tools Class for Caregivers Starting Soon.....	3
11. Resource Room Feature of the Month .....	4

Studies have shown if we can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by five years, we will reduce the incidence by 50 percent. If we can delay the onset by 10 years, Alzheimer's disease will virtually be eliminated because people will have passed away for some other reason.

*Adapted From US News & World Report  
Posted August 24, 2009*

## Know the 5 Facts About Alzheimer's

- One in six women and one in 10 men who live to age 55 will develop Alzheimer's in their lifetime.
- Every 71 seconds, someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.
- More than 43,800 Central NY residents have Alzheimer's.
- Alzheimer's disease is the sixth- leading cause of death in America.
- Alzheimer's is the leading public health crisis of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Alzheimer's disease affects everyone. Call 785-7852 to get involved.

## Caregiver Chat Helps You Plan Ahead Faith in Action ...Support for You and the One You Care For

Joanne Kays, Director of Faith and Action Volunteers, will be the speaker at the October Chat Group. Faith in Action is a program of the Broome County Council of Churches. This program is a network of volunteers from religious congregations.

Its purpose is to assist elders in need, and individuals living with disabilities and their families, in an effort to enable them to maintain their independence, dignity and quality of life. Volunteer caregivers assist with non-medical tasks. They can relieve a family caregiver while he or she gets out of the house for a while; visit a lonely homebound elder; transport those who can no longer drive; help with sorting mail or other paperwork and grocery shop for shut-ins and the disabled. Come and hear about the process to enroll a loved one for volunteer caregiver services and how it can benefit you! The Chat will meet on **October 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 – 3:00 at Stay Healthy in the Oakdale Mall.** Joanne will speak at 1:00 and then there will be time for sharing. Call Judy Bobinski with questions at 778-2411.

## Hope Dispensary of the Southern Tier

This program is a service of Lourdes Hospital that offers help to individuals who are uninsured or underinsured and have income at 200% or below of the Federal Poverty Level. They are located at 477 State Street, Binghamton, NY. Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 10:00 AM-6:00 PM. To qualify for prescription coverage assistance, contact the Hope Dispensary at: 607-584-9376.

Size of Family Unit	200 Percent of Poverty
1	\$20,800
2	\$28,000
3	\$35,200
4	\$42,400

## Tips for Dealing with Feelings of Guilt and Anger

- ☞ Realize rest and relaxation are a right, not a privilege
- ☞ Do not expect perfection of yourself
- ☞ Allow yourself daily pleasures
- ☞ Accept that there are times you will get angry

## About Dementia & Depression

- ☑ Individuals diagnosed with dementia can present with coexisting depression.
- ☑ Several symptoms are common to both dementia and depression: apathy, lack of interest in people or activities, poor sleep, restlessness, memory loss, and difficulty concentrating.
- ☑ Distinguishing between dementia and depression and determining whether each condition exists or if they co-exist is critical to ensure proper treatment.
- ☑ The frequency and severity of depression remain fairly constant through most stages of Alzheimer's disease.
- ☑ For most individuals with Alzheimer's disease who develop depression, it tends to be mild and moderate in severity, and suicidal behavior or completed suicide is rare.
- ☑ Depression may cause or worsen memory loss and other cognitive impairment.
- ☑ It appears that Alzheimer's disease is more likely to develop in people who have depression plus cognitive impairment, but that depression occurring without cognitive impairment does not increase the risk of developing the disease.
- ☑ Counseling or psychotherapy may be helpful in mild to moderate depression in the earliest stages of dementia, but systematic studies on this issue are lacking.
- ☑ Antidepressants are usually indicated for those with Alzheimer's disease who demonstrate persistent or severe depression. However, only half of the published research shows superiority for antidepressant medication over placebo in the treatment of depression in those with Alzheimer's disease or dementia in general.
  - ☑ If a physician prescribes antidepressant medications, it is important to monitor the choice of medication, dosage, possible side effects, impact on cognition and activities of daily living, and the status of the depression.

*Adapted by an article written by D.P. Devanand, M.D., a professor of clinical psychiatry and neurology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University in New York.*

## How to Gain an Extra Hour!

Here are some tips that may help you save time. And maybe even some energy!

1. Send gift certificates for presents. Phone in the order - no shopping, no wrapping, no exchanges.
2. Buy bagged salad greens and rotisserie chickens, two cornerstones of quick, healthy dinners. Add shredded chicken to casseroles, salads, soups, and pastas.
3. Ask for the earliest appointment. The later in the day you book a doctor's visit, a haircut, or a meeting, the greater the chance it will be delayed.
4. Keep a stash of all-purpose birthday cards on hand, at home and in the office.
5. Put a list of movies you want to rent and books you want to read in your wallet or PDA.
6. Keep doubles and triples of things you use all the time (scissors, tape, reading glasses, and cleaning supplies) in every corner of the house. This will prevent extra trips up and down the stairs for minor projects.
7. Invest in a wireless handheld e-mail device (such as a BlackBerry). Keep in touch with friends during unexpected downtime.
8. Sign up for automatic bill paying at your bank's website.
9. Buy a case of your favorite olive oil or wine so you don't have to make last-minute trips for hostess or birthday gifts.
10. Buy movie tickets in advance using Moviefone or Fandango to avoid wasting time in lines.
11. Whenever possible, double a recipe. Eat half right away, and freeze the rest for a future meal.

## Very Veggie Chili

**Make a batch and put it in the freezer for when you are just too tired to cook! It takes 15 minutes and serves 6.**

### Ingredients

- 1 Can (14.5 oz each) Hunt's® Fire Roasted Diced Tomatoes with Garlic, undrained
- 1 Can (8 oz each) Hunt's® Tomato Sauce-No Salt Added

- 1 Can (15 oz each) Ranch Style® Beans, undrained
- 1 Can (15 oz each) Van Camp's® Red Kidney Beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 Small yellow onion, chopped
- 1 Medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 tablespoon Gebhardt® Chili Powder
- ½ teaspoon ground red pepper
- 12 corn tortillas (6 inch), warmed

### Directions

1. Place all ingredients, except tortillas, in 4-quart slow cooker; stir to combine.
2. Cover; cook on HIGH 1-1/2 to 2 hours or on LOW 3 to 4 hours.

Serve chili with tortillas.

## Share Your Wisdom An Online Tip from a Caregiver

"I am a caregiver to my husband. He has memory loss due to a stroke in 2007. Whenever I feed him, he has a habit of saying, "man I haven't ate all day". After each meal I would always clean up his area, but now to help him to know that he has eaten I leave evidence such as a bowl or a plate with the residue of what he ate, sitting near by, just to remind him that he did eat."

*This was posted by a caregiver on [www.Caregiver.com](http://www.Caregiver.com). Check it out to learn other tips from caregivers. Note: The most recent comments are at the bottom of the Share your Wisdom page.*

## Powerful Tools Class for Caregivers Starting Soon

Caring for someone with a chronic illness such as dementia, heart disease or stroke can be stressful physically, emotionally and financially. Broome County Caregiver services is pleased to announce that this fall we will begin offering a new class called Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Please plan to join us for a six-week educational program designed

to provide you with the tools you need to take care of yourself. You will learn to: reduce stress, improve self-confidence, increase your ability to make tough decisions, better communicate your feelings, and locate helpful resources to balance your life.

The first session will be at the **Broome County Council of Churches on Otsenigo Street in Binghamton on Tuesday afternoons from 3-5:30pm.** A second class will also be meeting on **Tuesdays from 1- 3:30pm at the Broome West Senior Center. Pre-Registration is required. Call 778-2411 or email [ofa@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:ofa@co.broome.ny.us) for more information and to register. Classes are 2 1/2 hours and they will run from October 6<sup>th</sup> – November 10th.** There is a suggested donation of \$20 to cover the cost of a book and materials but no one will be turned away if

they choose not to make a donation. Participants will receive a copy of a book entitled, *The Caregiver Help book*. We anticipate offering the class again in spring of 2010. Call to get on the list.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a program of the Legacy Foundation and is being supported locally by: The Good Shepherd Foundation, Broome County Council of Churches, Lourdes Parish Nurse Program, United Health Services Stay Healthy Center, and the Office for Aging.

Caregiver Services and its publication, "*Caregiver Corner*" are supported by a grant from the New York State Office for the Aging

**Your October 2009 "Caregiver Corner"**  
Broome County Office for Aging  
44 Hawley Street  
PO Box 1766  
Binghamton, NY 13902-1766

PRSRF FCM  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 122  
Binghamton, NY



**Broome County Office for Aging**  
*...bringing seniors and services together*