

Senior Insights

UPCOMING EVENTS

Caregiver Support Information meetings are held monthly:

Andrews Senior Center—
3rd Tuesday @ 1:00

Big Spring Senior Center—
2nd Tuesday @ 10:30

Fort Stockton Senior Center—
2nd Wednesday @ 10:30

Dawson County Senior Center,
Lamesa—3rd Tuesday @ 10:00

Memorial Health Care Center—
Seminole—1st Wednesday @ 10:30

Manor Park, Midland—
Last Thursday @ 10:00 and 2:00

Midland/Odessa—
Parkinson's Caregivers - Call for De-
tails

Midland Lutheran Church
The Patio—2nd Thursday @ 2:00
Respite Care Available

Ward County Senior Center,
Monahans—3rd Thursday @ 10:00

Odessa Regional Medical Center-
South Campus
4th Wednesday @ 2:00

Courtyard at Parks, Odessa—
4th Tuesday @ 2:00 PM

Pecos Senior Citizens Center—
2nd Wednesday @ 1:00

Rankin Senior Center—
3rd Wednesday @ 10:30

Martin County Senior Center,
Stanton—2nd Tuesday @ 1:00

Permian Basin Aging Advisory Council
Meetings are held at 10:00am on the
following dates:

**February 21, 2018, May 23, 2018,
August 22, 2018 and October 24,
2018**

at the Permian Basin Regional
Planning Commission

NEW TO MEDICARE

A START TO A HEALTHY FUTURE BEGINS WITH A PHYSICAL EXAM

If an individual is new to Medicare, they should take charge of health and wellness with a thorough physical exam. Getting an in-depth physical exam is a smart and easy way for a new Medicare beneficiary and their doctor to set a starting point for personalized health care. It's a roadmap for effective, efficient and timely health care, and it will help lower the country's healthcare system's per-person costs.

Medicare covers two types of physical exams—when a person is new to Medicare and one each year after that.

Medicare covers a one-time "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam to obtain within the first 12 months of Part B coverage. This exam is free if the Medicare beneficiary's doctor accepts Medicare assignment.

The comprehensive "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam includes:

- A review of the new Medicare beneficiary's medical and social history including risk factors.
- A physical exam that includes measuring height, weight, blood pressure, visual acuity screen, and body mass index
- Education, counseling, and referrals based on the results of the physical exam
- A brief written plan, such as a checklist, for getting appropriate screening and/or other Medicare Part B preventive services
- A review of potential risk factors for depression



What to bring to the "Welcome to Medicare" preventive visit with the doctor:

- Medical records, including immunization records.
- Family health history.
- Prescription drugs. Bring a list of any prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and supplements that is taken, dosage and why.

Yearly "Wellness" Exam

- Medicare covers a yearly "wellness" exam (once a person has had Medicare Part B for longer than 12 months) which will help develop or update a prevention plan, based on their current health and risk factors.
- A Medicare beneficiary will pay nothing if doctor accepts Medicare assignment.

Get the most from Medicare benefits and stay in control of personal health: Don't delay. Schedule a physical exam today!

For further information about Medicare coverage, contact one of the Benefit Counselors at the Area Agency on Aging of the Permian Basin at 432-563-1061 or 1-800-491-4936

Original article: <https://www.medicare.gov/people-like-me/new-to-medicare/welcome-to-medicare-visit.html>



5 New Year's Resolutions for Family Caregivers

With the New Year upon us, now is the logical time to set goals for the 365 days ahead. It's that fleeting time of year when gyms are packed to the brim and burgers are swapped for salads as idealistic folks determined to meet their health and fitness goals dutifully work toward their New Year's resolutions.

New Year's resolutions get a bad rap, and that's understandable, considering the high rate of failure. As a caregiver for a senior loved one, you may be tempted to forgo the resolutions this year. After all, why add more to your already substantial to-do list?

But chucking your healthy resolutions isn't such a great idea. Study after study has revealed the many health risks family caregivers face - the chronic stress often caused by this role can lead to a whole host of health problems, and depression is common. If you've been on an airplane, you know to put on your own mask before doing the same for passengers who need your help. In everyday life, it's the same principle - you have to help yourself before you can help anyone else. The following resolutions address some of the common obstacles family caregivers face. Even if you only manage one or two, it just might help you be a better caregiver, and a happier person.

1. Prioritize your own physical and mental health.

Family caregivers tend to be big-hearted people willing to devote themselves to ensuring a loved one's well being, often at the expense of the chronic, daily stress experienced by many caregivers means they're also at greater risk of many serious illnesses, from diabetes and heart disease to cancer. It won't be easy, but at some point, you need to make a realistic plan for yourself to look after your own physical and mental health. Make it happen this year with the help of a medical professional who can determine your most pressing health needs. Maybe your first priority is weight loss and physical fitness, lowering your cholesterol, or finding a therapist who can help you cope with stress and boost your mental health. The sooner you take care of your own health needs, the better you'll feel and more equipped you'll be to care for your loved one.

2. Get more sleep

Sleep has a huge impact on overall health, yet for too many Americans, a regular good night's sleep is nothing more than a dream. For caregivers juggling myriad responsibilities, it's even tougher to get the recommended 7-8 hours of slumber nightly. But getting more shut-eye is key to improving your health and happiness. Try starting small, by setting your bedtime 15 minutes earlier than usual, then add another 15 minutes and so on until you're logging at least 7 hours of sleep.

3. Schedule more "me" time

Time for yourself is a rare commodity for most family caregivers. When you're not caring for your loved one, you're taking on other responsibilities. Carving out some time just for you — at least once a week — is essential for your health and well-being. Respite care can give you some much-needed time off while ensuring your loved one is in good hands. There are plenty of forms of respite care available today, from asking a trusted loved one for help to adult day care or short-term assisted living stays.

4. Spend more quality time with your loved one

If you're like many family caregivers, you're so busy taking care of your loved one's daily needs that you're not really spending quality time together. Rather than letting the hours with your loved one get consumed by monotonous care tasks, make a point of creating fond memories with that person. Planning a fun activity once a week with your loved one that gives the time to connect is a good start. That could include looking over old photo albums together, baking, exploring a local museum together, or going on a scenic drive. Whatever the activity, make it something you can both enjoy together that takes you out of the daily care routine.

5. Plan for Your Loved One's Future Care

It's a tough pill to swallow, but there will likely come a day when you're no longer able to care for your loved one. This may happen due to your own physical limitations, or as their symptoms become too advanced for you to handle alone. Planning ahead and researching care options for your loved one could save a lot of time and stress in the future. Depending on your situation, that could mean in-home care or assisted living. And while no one wants to contemplate it, it's wise to designate an alternate person to care for your loved one in your will.

Original article: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/laura-dixon/resolutions-family-caregivers_b_8901564.html

For more information, contact Susan Frederickson, Caregiver Program Specialist with the Area Agency on Aging at (432) 563-1061.

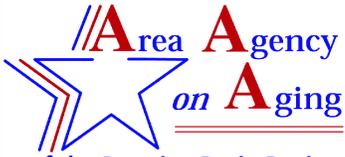
Why Volunteering Makes the Perfect New Year's Resolution

Welcoming a new year offers a wonderful opportunity to make new choices and take new chances in life. Whether you reflect proudly on your many accomplishments in the past year or you can't wait to turn a new page and look toward the future, the new calendar year is an opportunity to do the things that might have been in the back of your mind. If you've been thinking about volunteering or have been contemplating your resolutions for the new year, consider volunteering to advocate for residents in nursing home and assisted living facilities in 2018! Volunteering makes the perfect New Year's Resolution because it creates great outcomes. Volunteerism has countless benefits to the community and also to the health and happiness of individuals who commit to volunteering. The Ombudsman Program is seeking dedicated volunteers to serve as nursing home or assisted living facility advocates. After receiving FREE certification training, volunteers visit nursing homes and assisted living facility to advocate for quality care and to protect residents' rights. No experience required.

Take the Plunge in 2018!

If you would like more information about the Ombudsman Program or would like to become a Certified Volunteer Ombudsman, contact Carolyn Torres, Managing Local Ombudsman with the Area Agency on Aging at (432) 563-1061





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Hilarious New Year's Resolutions

"My New Year's resolution is everything I said my New Years resolution was last year and the year before that I still haven't done."

"My New Year's resolution is to pretend I have the willpower to magically fix all my problems."

"My New Year's resolution is to be a more positive, better person....and to wear more fake eyelashes."

"My New Year's resolution is to get really into essential oils and then make sure I bring up the fact that I'm really into essential oils in every conversation I have until the end of time."

If you wish to stop receiving this newsletter, please call Marydyth Taylor at 1-800-491-4636 or 432-563-1061 or e-mail mtaylor@aaapb.com