

CAREGIVER CONNECTION

EMBRACE ~ EDUCATE~ENGAGE~EMPOWER

Tips for Family Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

At Caregiver Action Network, we're family caregivers too, so we know: Caregivers are great at planning ahead and managing unexpected health crises, but with COVID-19 you may not have time to plan, or sort through the rapidly changing and sometimes conflicting available information. These tips can help keep you and your loved ones as safe as possible.

The CDC has put together a number of resources to answer specific questions and address concerns you may have. The CDC's current recommendations to help ensure everyone's health and safety, include:

- Avoid large crowds.
- Avoid non-essential travel.

Find support

Do you participate in a support group? Many places, such as churches and community centers, have suspended meetings and events with outside groups. Before you go, call ahead to see if the group is still meeting as scheduled and if they may be doing virtual groups.

Refill Prescriptions

Make sure you have enough of your loved one's medical supplies and medications for an extended period.

Check to see if your loved one's medications are part of a patient assistance program

During this time, many pharmaceutical companies are expanding their patient support programs to help eligible unemployed patients in the U.S. who have lost their health insurance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These expanded programs offer access to many prescription medications for free.

Monitor the health of your loved one, and keep in touch with their medical team

Many health care plans and practices have their own guidelines for how and when they should be contacted about possible COVID-19 exposure or symptoms. Call your loved one's primary care doctor and ask how they want you to proceed.

Only go to the Emergency Room for emergencies

If you suspect that you or your loved one are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, call your doctor.

Know your own risk factors

Do you have a chronic condition? Are you immunosuppressed? Many caregivers themselves have health issues, so don't put yourself in unnecessary danger.

Be aware of any changes to visitation policies

Many hospitals and emergency rooms no longer allow visitors, including family caregivers, in treatment areas or patient rooms. Many skilled nursing and assisted living facilities have made changes to their visitation policies. Discuss a strategy with staff that will allow you to get updates on your loved one.

Call ahead before going to some medical appointments

To minimize the risk of exposure, many healthcare facilities are handling some appointments with telemedicine. Medicare and other insurance providers have expanded coverage to now include telemedicine. Call your loved one's healthcare provider in advance of the appointment to see if the appointment can be held via telemedicine.

Self-care is Important:

With the stress and anxiety around COVID-19, ensure that you're taking care of yourself. For tips to help you visit <https://caregiveraction.org/resources/10-tips-family-caregivers>

From: Caregiver Action Network,
<https://caregiveraction.org>

Special Points of Interest:

- **Tips for Family Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic**
- **Community Resources Spotlight**
- **Community Resources to Utilize Now**
- **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Corner**
- **Quick Family Recipes**

A Note from Tracy...

Staying Informed Right now, COVID-19, also called the novel coronavirus, is changing many things, for many people, all over the world. It can help to remember that while there are always going to be some things we cannot control, we can always control our own actions and responses. It's down to finding the right balance – to stay informed but keep calm and ground yourself whenever you can.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed at times. Crisis Centers provide 24/7 free, confidential emotional support - Dial 211 or visit www.crisiscenter.com

You are welcome to contact the First Tennessee Area Agency on Aging Disability at any time. We're here to help.

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Family Caregiving...Don't Try It Alone

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Thought for the Day... "My caregiver mantra is to remember: The only control you have is over the changes you choose to make." — [Nancy L. Kriseman, The Mindful Caregiver: Finding Ease in the Caregiving Journey](#)

Community Resources Spotlight

GRANDfamilies Network

One of the Vision Councils, sub-committees of the CAP Committee for United Way of Greater Kingsport. The Vision Councils are community in focus and serve as the eyes and ears of the UWGK.

The mission of the GRANDfamilies is to provide a network, for both community service providers and grandparents/relative caregivers raising children, that can connect these families with services, education, resources and support opportunities.

Resources For You To Utilize Now...

Connecting People with the Assistance They Need: [FTAAAD Information & Assistance Call 423-928-3258](#)

Virtual Support Group for Family Caregivers to connect via telephone, as person-to-person support groups are currently suspended. Plan to connect on Mondays at 1 p.m. CST/2 p.m. EST. For details visit www.alz.tennessee.org/support-groups

Caregiver Community Connection (C3) is an interactive web series that aims to empower, inspire, and engage America's military, veteran, and family caregivers. <https://hiddenheroes.org/c3/>

ALZ Connected® and 24/7 Helpline: Through the Alzheimer's Association, ALZ Connected is a free online, community/message board. Visit alzconnect-ed.org or call 1-800-272-3900 for the helpline.

Alzheimer's Association Education Programs: Visit alz.org/CRF to register online and to explore all of the education programs available. There are a variety of topics covered monthly.

Mini Grants Program from Tennessee Respite Coalition: Designed to provide family caregivers with the opportunity to access funding to

take care of their health and wellness by purchasing "breaks" of their choosing. Applicants are encouraged to be creative with what would give them the most effective break and tailor their requests accordingly. To access the application please visit: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mpLgEtdOO6kR46o8TAw84_u2FH1_pAdXTEARXP00MVg/edit

Tennessee Respite Coalition

Join their private caregiver support page on Facebook for alternative respite resources! They talk daily about the struggles of care-giving during a pandemic, share ideas, and provide support for one another.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TRCCaregiversupportpage>

Free Telephone Learning Sessions

Caregiver Teleconnection provides monthly learning sessions with various topics related to caregivers. There are typically six different sessions a month. To see the topics or to register on-line go to: www.caregiverteleconnection.org or call 866-390-6491

Caregiver Help Desk

Contact Care Support Team at Caregiver Action Network, staffed by caregiving experts, to help you find the right information you need to help you navigate your complex caregiving challenges. Caregiving experts are availa-

ble 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM ET. Their website also has lots of resources, videos, a community you join and more so visit <https://www.caregiveraction.org/>

We Care About You!

Visit Generus Video Visits that can be enjoyed by you and the care receiver. Hear friendly stories, hopeful messages and more from people who care about you. Use any computer or device with an internet connection. Open up your favorite web browser, and typed in: bit.ly/MyVideoVisit. Then click on any Video Visit and start watching!

Grandparent Resources:

W.W.O.W (Warrior's Words on Wheels)

Available through Sevier Middle School, the W.W.O.W is a new traveling book mobile. If any grandparent who resides in Kingsport City and has a child living with them would like the book mobile to stop at their home with a book and activity, please contact Debbie Moore at 378-2406.

Children's Resource Center at Niswonger's Children Hospital

Families in need of resources or education can contact Tara Chadwll or Meagan Yarnall at crinfo@balladhealth.org. Examples of education/resources are water safety, child passenger safety education, medication safety, and many other injury prevention topics.



**FIRST TENNESSEE AREA
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Quick Family Recipes...
Beef Lomardi Casserole

1 lb ground beef, turkey or chicken or can use sausage	1/4 tsp garlic powder (or use minced fresh garlic)
1 (10-oz) can Rotel diced tomatoes and green chiles (use mild if you don't want heat)	1 (6-oz) can tomato paste
1 (14.5-oz) can diced tomatoes	1 (6 oz) package medium egg noodles
1 tsp salt	1 cup sour cream
1/4 tsp black pepper	1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1/4 tsp onion powder (or use finely diced fresh onion)	1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
	1 cup shredded mozzarella (or use a combination of cheeses your family likes)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray a 9x13-inch pan with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. Brown ground meat in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook until no longer pink. Drain.
3. Stir in diced tomatoes with juice, diced tomatoes and green chiles with juice, salt, pepper, onion powder, garlic powder and tomato paste.
4. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Cook egg noodles according to package directions. Drain.
6. Stir together cooked egg noodles, and sour cream.
7. Spread noodles in bottom of prepared pan. Top with meat sauce. Sprinkle with cheddar, Parmesan and mozzarella cheeses.
8. Cover and bake 35 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 5 minutes.

You can assemble the casserole in advance and freeze. To bake after freezing, thaw completely and bake as directed above.

You can also half the recipe or split into two pans. Bake one and freeze one for later.

You can substitute plain Greek yogurt or Ricotta cheese for the sour cream.

**Connecting People with the
Assistance They Need:**

Contact us at:

Information & Assistance Line

(423) 928-3258

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postage costs**

We hope you find the newsletter
informative.

Please let us know if:

- You are willing to receive the newsletter via email
- You are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter
- If you have ideas/suggestions for future editions.

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