

Alzheimer's Association: Tips to prevent wandering of loved ones

Sixty percent of those with Alzheimer's disease will wander at some point during their diagnosis. This is a significant safety concern for the more than 73,000 people living with Alzheimer's in Kentucky. A person living with Alzheimer's or another dementia may not remember his or her name or address and can become disoriented even in familiar places. In cold temperatures and winter weather conditions, wandering can be dangerous – even life-threatening. As the weather becomes inclement it is important to keep your loved one with dementia safe by taking simple precautions to prevent wandering.

Carry out daily activities: Having a routine can provide structure. Consider creating a daily plan.

Avoid busy places: Shopping malls and grocery stores can be confusing causing disorientation.

Night wandering: Restrict fluids two hours before bedtime and ensure the person has gone to the bath-

room just before bed. Also, use night lights throughout the home or facility.

Locks: Place out of sight. Install slide bolts at the top or bottom of doors.

Doors and door knobs: Camouflage doors by painting them the same colors as the walls. Cover them with removable curtains or screens. Cover knobs with cloth in the color of the door or use childproof knobs.

Monitoring devices: Try devices that signal when a door or window is opened. Place a pressure-sensitive mat at the door or bedside to alert of movement.

Secure trigger items: Some people will not go out without a coat, hat, pocketbook, keys, wallet, etc. Making these items unavailable can prevent wandering.

When weather temperatures plummet and staying indoors is encouraged, planning ahead for your loved one can be crucial for his or her safety. The Alzheimer's Association can help with activity suggestions,

communication and how to identify confusion and the triggers that increase the incidence of wandering.

Planning Ahead: Enroll the person in MedicAlert and purchase an ID bracelet or accessory to participate in the Wandering Support program. Call 800.ID.ALERT or enroll online at www.medicalert.org/alz and use the promo code ALZ.

Keep a list of people for the person with dementia to call when feeling overwhelmed. Have their telephone numbers in one location and easily accessible.

Ask neighbors, friends and family to call if they see the person alone or dressed inappropriately.

Keep a recent, close-up photo and updated medical information on hand to give to police.

Know your neighborhood. Pinpoint dangerous areas near the home, such as bodies of water, open stairwells, dense foliage, tunnels, bus stops and roads with heavy traffic.

Know if the individual is right or left-

handed. Wandering generally follows the direction of the dominant hand.

Keep a list of places where the person may wander, like past jobs, former homes, places of worship or a restaurant.

Should a loved one go missing, especially in colder temperatures, experts recommend calling 911 as soon as possible so that a Kentucky Golden Alert or other public notification can be issued. In addition, a report should be filed with MedicAlert. First responders are trained to check with MedicAlert when they locate a missing person with dementia. You do not need to be enrolled in MedicAlert in order to file a missing report.

Kentucky Golden Alerts refer to a public notification system that may be used to assist in the safe recovery of a missing adult who has a verified mental or cognitive impairment, including but not limited to Alzheimer's disease, and whose disappearance poses a credible threat to the health or safety of the person.

Medical marijuana resolution passes to Senate

A resolution asking federal regulators to speed up their research on medical marijuana received bipartisan support today in the Kentucky House.

House Concurrent Resolution 5 sponsor Rep. Danny Bentley, R-Russell, said his resolution would serve as an official request from the Kentucky General Assembly for more federal research into the safety and efficacy of medical marijuana. Some federal study is already underway, he said.

"There has been a study OK'd (at the federal level) at Yale University in the med school. It is a Phase I study – the marijuana will be produced in the United States," said Bentley. "I think that is a big step forward, because in our resolution here we ask those institutions to do this. We haven't been doing this in vain."

HCR 5 differs from similar resolutions

filed by Bentley in past sessions that would have made legalization of medical marijuana in Kentucky dependent on more federal study. Bentley said HCR 5 isn't tied to any current medical marijuana proposals in the General Assembly including HB 136, sponsored by Rep. Jason Nemes, R-Louisville, and Rep. John Sims Jr., D-Flemingsburg.

Nemes voted in support of the resolution and what he said he sees as its call for safety and efficacy while adding that HCR 5 "in no way—in my view—is a delay on the necessity that we pass medical marijuana this session."

Thirty three states have legalized medical marijuana. The substance remains an illegal controlled substance under federal law, however.

HCR 5 passed the House 89-2 and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Recognizing cancer all February long

The 4th of February has been designated as World Cancer Day. Cancer is a term used for diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and can invade other tissues. Cancer cells can spread to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph systems. Cancer is not just one disease, but many diseases, which require different treatments. However prevention strategies are often common to many, if not all cancers. A person's cancer risk can be reduced with healthy choices like avoiding tobacco, limiting alcohol use, protecting your skin from the sun and avoiding indoor tanning, eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, keeping a

healthy weight, and being physically active. It is thought that about 40-50% could be prevented by practicing healthy living.

Many cancers however are triggered when dividing cells make errors leading to out of control growth. Thus knowing early symptoms and following screening recommendations are helpful in finding cancer early which is more amenable to treatment.

The number of new cancer cases can be reduced and many cancer deaths can be prevented. Research shows that screening for cervical and colorectal cancers as recommended helps prevent these diseases by finding precancer-

ous lesions so they can be treated before they become cancerous. Screening for cervical, colorectal, and breast cancers also helps find these diseases at an early stage, when treatment works best.

Vaccines can also prevent cancer. The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine helps prevent most cervical cancers as well as many throat cancers, and the hepatitis B vaccine can help lower liver cancer risk.

On a separate note, it is important to point out that Kentucky is one of the unhealthiest states in our nation; but, a few healthy lifestyle choices could change this. First, eating normally proportioned helpings of nutritious foods includ-

ing at least five fruits and vegetables a day can lower weight and reduce heart disease and diabetes. Second, exercising about 30 minutes per day can lower blood pressure. Third, avoiding the use of tobacco products can reduce several types of cancer. Finally, making sure you get your needed preventive screenings can detect diseases early and greatly increase your chances for a positive health outcomes, while receiving your recommended vaccinations can prevent acquiring disease in the first place. Visit our website at www.LCDHD.org and click the "52 Weeks to Health" banner to learn more about each of these areas.

Bill to address youth suicide

Legislation that would put crisis hotline numbers on student IDs advanced out of the state Senate last week.

The measure, known as Senate Bill 42, would require student IDs for middle school, high school and college students to list contacts for national crisis hotlines specializing in domestic violence, sexual assault and suicide. The requirement would go into effect on Aug. 1 and apply to public middle and high schools, as well as public and private postsecondary schools that issue student IDs.

"Senate Bill 42 is a simple little bill that may save lives," said sponsor Sen. Denise Harper Angel, D-Louisville. "By having these crisis prevention numbers ... on the back of their IDs, we will be letting them know that they are not alone. Help is readily available."

Senate Republican

Floor Leader Damon Thayer of Georgetown stood to speak in favor of the bill. He said teen suicides have become an epidemic across the nation.

"I don't know what the answer is from a government point of view," he said. "But I do believe (Harper Angel) has today come up with a very simple solution that I think can help save lives by providing a place for troubled youths to go, seek help, to know there is someplace they can reach out to anonymously to help them through their problems."

Thayer reflected on the suicide of his nephew's father.

"That has tinged my family's life ever since," he said. "I know what it is like to be touched by this horrible epidemic, and I'm so grateful to (Harper Angel) for her forethought in bringing this bill together before us today."

During a prior committee hearing on SB

42, supporters of the bill expressed alarm in the record-breaking number of youth suicides last year in the state's two largest cities -- Lexington and Louisville. Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in Kentucky and the second leading cause of death for residents ages 15 to 34, according to language in the bill.

Interpersonal violence statistics listed in the text of SB 42 include these additional stark figures: Thirty-nine percent of Kentucky women experience sexual violence in their lifetimes. Child abuse and neglect are more prevalent in Kentucky than any other state in the nation, with 22 victims per 1,000 children compared to the national average of nine victims per 1,000 children.

SB 42 passed by a 35-1 vote. It now goes to the House of Representatives for its consideration.

NOTICE FOR BIDS

The Green County Cooperative Extension Service is now accepting sealed bids for the following items:

- **Building Renovation / Floor Tile Repair**

Please see Ricky Arnett, Extension Agent Agriculture & Natural Resources for a detailed description, at 298 Happyville Rd., Greensburg, KY 42743 during normal business hours of 7:30am-4:00pm (closed Noon-1:00pm) or by calling 270-932-5311.

Bids must be submitted no later than February 17 at 4 pm CST in a sealed envelope marked "SEALED BID" at the address above.

Bids will be opened at 4:01 p.m. and discussed at the Extension District Board meeting on February 17 at 5 p.m. We reserve the right to accept or reject any and all bids received.

Greensburg
Record-Herald

OFFICE HOURS

Closed Thursdays
Mondays, Tuesdays,
Wednesdays & Fridays
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Show your Sweetheart you love them this Valentine's Day and join the Rotary Club effort to eliminate Polio!



For every \$25 donated to Polio Plus you receive a 16" Stuffed Bear Hugg bear.

Visit the website at www.bearhuggs.org.

The Rotary BearHuggs Service Project supports Rotary's End Polio Now initiative. Your donation is matched 2-for-1 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation so a \$25 donation becomes \$75 for End Polio Now!

Every \$75 provides the vaccine to immunize 100 children!

To donate call or stop by Nancy Stearman's CPA office
105 N. Public Square, Greensburg • 270-932-3284
www.bearhuggs.org