

Caring for Parents and Emergencies

If you're a baby boomer, there is a good chance that you are or will be caring for your aging parents. According to a Gallup poll, 41 percent of boomers with living parents are caring for them either financially, physically or both. About 34 million Americans serve as unpaid caregivers, spending an average of 21 hours a week caring for older adults, usually elderly relatives, according to the number one rated magazine for older adults.

If you are in this group of caregivers, or if you just help your parents out every once in awhile, there are a few things that are important to know in case of an emergency, according to the Mayo Clinic.

First of all, you need to know the names of your parents' doctors. This is because chances are you don't know the specifics of your parents' medical history or medications. In an emergency, this will be crucial information for the hospital or urgent care to know. Another thing to make sure you know is your parents' birth dates. Information, such as medical or insurance records, is often easier to find when the person's birth date is provided. If either of your parents is allergic to a medication, like penicillin or aspirin, be sure to provide that information also.

One thing that is often fought over when it comes to dying parents is whether or not to keep them on life support. To avoid these issues, it is a good idea to get an advance directive. This is a legal document that gives instructions regarding resuscitation efforts and life support issues. Through this legal document, your parents will make it clear what they would want done in this situation.

Caring for an elderly parent can take an emotional and physical toll on the adult child. Worrying about emergencies won't prevent them from happening, and will just stress you out. Hopefully, knowing the information above will help ease your mind.

In the midst of all this, don't forget to take care of yourself. One way to do this is to make sure you get a full eight hours of sleep each night. If you are getting restorative sleep, it will be much easier for you to handle your daily life as well as caring for your elderly parent.

Also, eating well will keep your energy up so that you can keep going. If it becomes too much, however, don't be afraid to consider a rest home. There are many high quality senior living communities out there that can make life easier for both you and your parents.

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