

MARCH
2011

Support For Home Staff Attends NPDA Conference

Support For Home is a member of the National Private Duty Association. That group is focused on improving the quality of home care provided to our clients and raising the level of integrity of the industry, overall. A couple of weeks ago, NPDA's annual conference was held in Las Vegas, with a host of experts presenting on how we can "Take the Gamble Out of Home Care" for our clients and their families. The event included the first annual Caregiver of the Year award, as well, which was a very emotional event for the recipient and for those of us in the audience. Dr. Tom Barrett talked to us about "The Power of Small," how the "little things" actually make such a huge difference in care for our clients – truly excellent. We had a number of peer-to-peer sessions on a variety of topics. Lisa Blaskie (ComForcare in San Francisco and Riverside County, CA) and Bert Cave of Support For Home had fun leading two sessions on social media and social networking. HomeCare Pulse discussed a major survey of the industry that many of us participated in, geared to helping agencies improve. We expect great results from it. Doug Busch, COO of Care Innovations, talked about technology as a positive force for improving home care. Frankly, we are very excited about what is coming and will be working closely with them. There were a number of other excellent sessions as well. We are proud to be NPDA members and supported by the great staff of the Association. They share our passion for helping folks age in place.

Support For Home
1333 Howe Ave
Suite 206
Sacramento, CA
95825

Phone
916-482-8484
530-792-8484

Fax
916-564-6847

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SFH Resource of the Month Bay Medical Alarm

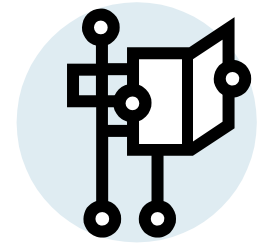


BAY ALARM medical
personal emergency response systems

At Bay Alarm Medical, family and independence are values especially close to our heart. Now in our third generation of family management, Bay Alarm remains an independent, family owned and operated company. For over 60 years, our singular mission has been to protect the most important things in life family, health and independence. With our medical alert system have the confidence in knowing that in the unfortunate event of a fall, stroke or even a heart attack, with just a push of a button, our professionally trained emergency operators will be there to contact, personal contacts (relatives, friends, neighbors), emergency responders (paramedics, police, fire department), medical personnel (caregivers, doctors). With our medication management system quit worrying about missed medications and incorrect dosages. Our iConnect RX provides the you with the right dose at the right time. It is a simple effective solution for seniors that need to take several medications each day. At Bay Alarm Medical we strive to help seniors stay at home and to Live Life Independently. For more information, please contact Stacey Dalton, Account Manager, 916-949-6203.



Fight The Flu



The seasonal flu vaccine protects against three influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season. The 2011-2012 flu vaccine will protect against 2011 H1N1, and two other influenza viruses (an H3N2 virus and an influenza B virus). The viruses in the vaccine change each year based on international surveillance and scientists' estimations about which types and strains of viruses will circulate in a given year. About 2 weeks after vaccination, antibodies that provide protection against influenza virus infection develop in the body.

When to Get Vaccinated

Yearly flu vaccination should begin in September or as soon as vaccine is available and continue throughout the influenza season, into December, January, and beyond. This is because the timing and duration of influenza seasons vary. While influenza outbreaks can happen as early as October, most of the time influenza activity peaks in January or later.

Where to Get Vaccinated

Get vaccinated wherever you see vaccine available in your community. Your doctor's office, a public health clinic, supermarkets, pharmacies, schools, churches, senior centers, and a variety of other places are offering flu vaccine this season. Use this handy "Flu Vaccine Finder" widget to locate places offering flu vaccine near you.

Who Should Get Vaccinated

On February 24, 2010 vaccine experts voted that everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine each year starting with the 2010-2011 influenza season. CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted for "universal" flu vaccination in the U.S. to expand protection against the flu to more people. While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it's especially important that the following groups get vaccinated either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

1. Pregnant women
2. Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
3. People 50 years of age and older
4. People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
5. People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
6. People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu

*Avoid negative
people at all costs.
They are the
greatest destroyers
of self confidence
and self-esteem.
Brian Tracy*

Check out Center for Technology and Aging

<http://www.techandaging.org/>

Chicken with Creamy Mushrooms

This quick and easy recipe can be done from start to finish in 30 minutes. Use pre-marinated chicken breasts to cut both the marinating and the cooking time. If you can't find pre-marinated chicken breasts, plain skinless, boneless chicken breasts work well.

Calories 456, Total Fat (g)34, Saturated Fat (g)19, Monounsaturated Fat (g)9, Polyunsaturated Fat (g)2, Cholesterol (mg)183, Sodium (mg)967, Carbohydrate (g)7, Total Sugar (g) 3, Fiber (g)1, Protein (g)33, Vitamin C (DV%) 1, Calcium (DV%)5, Iron (DV%)5, Vegetables (d.e.)1, Very Lean Meat (d.e.)4.5, Fat (d.e.)6, % Daily Values based on a 2,000 c. diet.

Ingredients

1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms, such as button or shiitake

3 tablespoons butter

6 Italian-marinated skinless, boneless chicken breast halves

3 tablespoons rice vinegar or white wine vinegar

1-1/2 cups whipping cream

3 tablespoons capers, drained

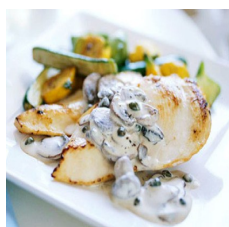
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Chicken with Creamy Mushrooms

Directions

In a large skillet cook mushrooms in 1 tablespoon the hot butter over medium-high heat about 5 minutes or until tender. Remove mushrooms from skillet.

Reduce heat to medium. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons butter and the chicken breast halves to skillet. Cook for 8 to 12 minutes or until no longer pink (170 degrees F), turning once. Remove chicken and keep warm.

Remove skillet from heat; add vinegar, stirring to loosen browned bits in bottom of skillet. Return skillet to heat. Stir in cream, capers, and pepper. Bring to boiling. Boil gently, uncovered, for 2 to 3 minutes or until sauce is slightly thickened. Return mushrooms to skillet; heat through. Top chicken with mushroom sauce. Makes 6 servings.



Elders and Driving – One More Time

I recently posted an article in our blog talking about seniors and driving, stimulated by a very good article in The New Old Age. As a home care company that serves many elders, this is an issue that comes up time and again, for our clients and for their families and loved ones.

In the prior article, we referenced the AMA Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers. That is a very useful and comprehensive, but quite lengthy document. We certainly hope that doctors will read it and use it.

For family caregivers and trustees, however, there is a publication in an appendix called Patient and Caregiver Educational Materials. The entire document is about 15 pages, but it contains an embedded survey that would be great for elders and families to go through. It is important that it be done in a relaxed, non-threatening environment, as there is probably going to be an emotional reaction if the conclusion is not favorable to continued driving.

Survey: Am I a Safe Driver?

- I get lost while driving.
- My friends or family members say they are worried about my driving.
- Other cars seem to appear from nowhere.
- I have trouble finding and reading signs in time to respond to them.
- Other drivers drive too fast.
- Other drivers often honk at me.
- Driving stresses me out.
- After driving, I feel tired.
- I feel sleepy when I drive.
- I have had more "near-misses" lately.
- Busy intersections bother me.
- Left-hand turns make me nervous.
- The glare from oncoming headlights bothers me.
- My medication makes me dizzy or drowsy.
- I have trouble turning the steering wheel.
- I have trouble pushing down the foot pedal.
- I have trouble looking over my shoulder when I back up.
- I have been stopped by the police for my driving.
- People no longer will accept rides from me.
- I have difficulty backing up.
- I have had accidents that were my fault in the past year.
- I am too cautious when driving.
- I sometimes forget to use my mirrors or signals.
- I sometimes forget to check for oncoming traffic.
- I have more trouble parking lately.

Sincere thanks to the AMA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for their work on this extremely important and very difficult topic. For the safety of our seniors and everyone else on the street, this is a subject that simply has to be addressed.

Please check out our blog at:

supportforhome.wordpress.com

And let us know your thoughts and suggestions.

Best wishes, Bert

Home Care, Hospice and Beyond

By Bert Cave

Our passion is home care. Helping folks who want to age in place, growing older in their own homes, is what Support For Home, the company, is all about.

For all of us, however, there does come a time when our own mortality needs to be faced. That is a very tough subject, with which some of the most committed, supportive people in the world help us.

We have talked, in this space, about hospice services before, and we will do so again. We just had a marvelous Social Worker from Yolo Hospice talk to some of our Home Care Aides this week.

Last June, I wrote about a marvelous Internet service called Dignity Memorial for creating memorials. I wrote for my mother and my father, both of whom died last year. It was both difficult and comforting to be able to do that.

There are, in the Sacramento area where we live and where Support For Home provides home care, a number of funeral homes and mortuaries / memorial parks dedicated to helping families deal with and manage the death of a loved one.

We have no financial relationship with any of them, of course, and we are not in a position to offer any warranty. This is not, obviously, our area of expertise.

We have gotten to know some of these folks, however, and are impressed with the passion and commitment they exhibit. Just as in home care, there are just some folks that seem to operate from the right motivations and with the right standards. One such group appears to be the folks at East Lawn.



One of the attributes which impressed us, in talking with them, is that they look beyond the specific services they provide for the deceased to the broader needs of the family. Obviously, that includes bereavement services, but sometimes the needs of a spouse or even a parent change dramatically with the death of a loved one.

If a couple has been living independently, supporting each other's needs as they aged together, the loss of a spouse can make living at home, for example, much more difficult. Good funeral home staff understand these situations and can sensitively help the family explore good options, such as home care services.

A difficult subject for all of us, but the sensitivity and passion of folks in hospice and the funeral / mortuary industry make it so much easier for us.

Best wishes, Bert

