

Investigate

Find Support and Information



Much of elder care involves being able to investigate and research to find information, support and help. Learning how to find information—about health problems, medical treatments, services available and organizations—will make you a better caregiver. It will also give you a greater sense of understanding and control.

Make sure, however, to do thorough research and to double-check all information that you find with a professional. When researching medical information, in particular, you will want to confirm all information with a doctor or other health professional.

When searching for support and information, you may be overwhelmed and not know where to begin. Where are some of the best places to turn for information? Here are some ideas:



Area Agency on Aging

Also sometimes called the City or County Office on Aging, Council on Aging, or the Office of Elder Affairs, your local aging office will be able to help you locate resources, phone numbers, websites, contacts and organizations for a wide variety of needs. These offices are clearinghouses for information, and if they don't have the information you need they know who will.



Health Department

The health department in your county or city will be able to give you information about medical conditions, free or cheap medical services, immunizations, special treatments and health programs.



Internet

The Internet provides a wealth of information about almost any topic imaginable. If you don't have computer Internet access, you might be able to find a connection at the local library. You might even consider taking a brief class to learn the basics of searching the Web. Remember, though, to double-check any information you find on the Internet, and to look for information only from reliable, established sources.



Library

The local library has a wealth of information, including medical reference books, organization directories, books on aging, magazines and newspapers. It may even offer Internet access for research on the Web.



Senior Center

Your local senior center can provide information and support through their own library, staff people, contacts with organizations, support groups and activities.



Hospital

Hospitals offer a great deal of information for those seeking it: referrals to doctors or other agencies, brochures and pamphlets about specific diseases, support groups, educational seminars and other services.



Department of Veterans Affairs

If your care recipient is a veteran, seek out the local or regional Department of Veterans Affairs for support and services available to veterans, as well as information about medical conditions and diseases specific to veterans.