



Helping caregivers through their journey one step at a time.

Detective Caregiver

by Gary Barg, Editor-in-Chief *Today's Caregiver Magazine*



Now that a summer is upon us where we feel at ease about traveling once again (except, of course, when standing at the gas pump), it is time to put on our deerstalker hat and reflectively puff on an empty Calabash pipe ala Sherlock Holmes and in his shadow become a loving (but slightly nose-y) caregiver detective. If you are traveling to visit your

loved ones who may be in need of care, your trip affords an ideal time to assess any changes in their health and well-being.

As any good detective knows, the first step is to follow the clues.

Clue One - Your loved one's home:

- What condition is it in? Is it a clean, clutter free and safe environment?
- The kitchen is where you can find a lot of telling clues. Look for signs of spoiled food, or an excess of junk/convenience foods compared to the last visit. This may be a sign they have stopped cooking.
- Is the bathroom safe, with grab bars (if necessary) and slip proof mats? Are cords dangling dangerously near running water?

Clue Two - Your loved one's behavior:

- How do they handle their medication regimen? Are they using expired medications?
- Is your loved one acting withdrawn, or making excuses not to participate?
- Are there noticeable changes to hearing, sight or speech?

- What is their balance like? Are stairs becoming an issue?
- Observe memory capabilities. A good way to check this is to see if a loved one remembers to pay bills, or keep appointments.
- What are your loved one's grooming habits like?

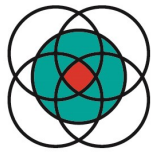
Once your detecting is done and you have a clear picture of your loved one's living situation, it is time to assess if you need to take further next steps in providing additional care for them.

- What services (appointments, shopping, banking, etc.) do they need access to on a regular basis?
- Is your loved one still able to drive? Don't just take their word for it.
- What socialization opportunities exist in the community to help prevent isolation and depression?
- Is another family member or close friend living nearby and able to help?
- What local help is available?

Before making any big changes, it's essential to talk (respectfully) with your loved one about what they see as their greatest needs. Discuss solutions, and then bring some options forward that may work for all involved.

While a well-deserved vacation hopefully includes some much needed rest and relaxation, it's also a great time for a long-distance caregiver to take the extra time to observe a loved one's living situation and address any new needs.

As your fictional counterpart might exclaim:
"It's elementary, my dear caregiver!"



Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness

Stay Cool

Wear Appropriate Clothing: Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

Stay Cool Indoors: Stay in an air-conditioned place as much as possible. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area.

Keep in mind: Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, they will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Use your stove and oven less to maintain a cooler temperature in your home.

Schedule Outdoor Activities Carefully: Try to limit your outdoor activity to when it's coolest, like morning and evening hours. Rest often in shady areas so that your body has a chance to recover.

Pace Yourself: Cut down on exercise during the heat. If you're not accustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and pick up the pace gradually. If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping for breath, STOP all activity. Get into a cool area or into the shade, and rest, especially if you become lightheaded, confused, weak, or faint.

Wear Sunscreen: Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool down and can make you dehydrated. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher 30 minutes prior to going out. Continue to reapply it according to the package directions.

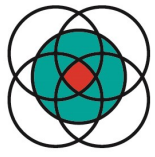
Tip: Look for sunscreens that say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels- these products work best.

Do Not Leave Children in Cars: Cars can quickly heat up to dangerous temperatures, even with a window cracked open. While anyone left in a parked car is at risk, children are especially at risk of getting a heat stroke or dying. When traveling with children, remember to do the following:

Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.

- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep in the car.

Avoid Hot and Heavy Meals: They add heat to your body!



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Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness (continued)

Stay Hydrated

Drink Plenty of Fluids: Drink more fluids, regardless of how active you are. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.

Warning: If your doctor limits the amount you drink or has you on water pills, ask how much you should drink while the weather is hot.

Stay away from very sugary or alcoholic drinks—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

Replace Salt and Minerals: Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from the body that need to be replaced. A sports drink can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.

- If you are on a low-salt diet, have diabetes, high blood pressure, or other chronic conditions, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage or taking salt tablets.

Keep Your Pets Hydrated: Provide plenty of fresh water for your pets, and leave the water in a shady area.

Stay Informed

Check for Updates: Check your local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips and to learn about any cooling shelters in your area.

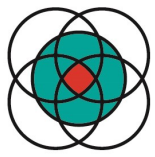
Know the Signs: Learn the signs and [symptoms of heat-related illnesses](#) and how to treat them.

Use a Buddy System: When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you. Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness. If you are 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know someone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day.

Monitor Those at High Risk: Although anyone at any time can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others:

- Infants and young children
- People 65 years of age or older
- People who are overweight
- People who overexert during work or exercise
- People who are physically ill, especially with heart disease or high blood pressure, or who take certain medications, such as for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation

Visit adults at risk at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.



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WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

The words appear UP, DOWN, BACKWARDS, and DIAGONALLY. Find and circle each word.



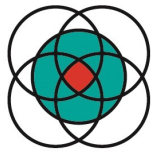
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| CAKE | CUPCAKES | LEMONADE | STEAK |
| CHICKEN | FRENCH FRIES | PASTA | VEGETABLES |
| CHIPS | FRUIT | PIE | WATERMELON |
| COBBLER | HAMBURGERS | POPSICLES | WINGS |
| COLESLAW | HOT DOGS | PUNCH | |

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Do you have an email address? Want to receive your newsletters electronically? Please submit your email address to me for future correspondence! You can email me at jferril@thrive-alliance.org. Caregivers of Older Adults support groups are currently held the third Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom. You can also join the first Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom or live at the Decatur County Hospital. Relative Caregivers support groups are currently being held the second Tuesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Relative Caregivers support group will also be meeting in person on August 2. We also have a Thrive Alliance Caregiver Resources Facebook group. Email me if you would like to be a part of the group.



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Ice Cream in a Bag

This easy homemade **ice cream in a bag** recipe is a must-try this summer! You only need five ingredients to make this homemade ice cream. Don't forget to add your favorite toppings like sprinkles or fruit!

An easy step-by-step to make homemade ice cream in a bag!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Half-and-Half
- 1.5 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 1 tbsp Sugar
- Ice
- 1/4 cup Salt
- Ziploc bags 1 Small, 1 Large

INSTRUCTIONS

- Pour 1 cup of Half-and-Half into the small Ziploc bag.
- Add 1.5 teaspoons of vanilla extract and 1 tablespoon of sugar.
- Seal the bag firmly and get any excess air out.
- Fill the larger Ziploc bag about 1/2 way with ice. Add 1/4 cup of salt.
- Place the small Ziploc bag into the large bag and fill with extra ice on top. Seal the large bag.
- Get gloves for shaking and shake for 6 minutes. (Gloves are needed since the salt makes the ice extra cold.)
- Take the small bag out of the large bag and rinse the outside of the small bag with cold water. Make sure to rinse out the top part of the bag also (above the seal).
- Once done rinsing, carefully open the small bag to not get any remaining salt from the outside of the bag inside the bag.
- The ice cream will be a little icy looking to start. Use a spoon to mix it around and soften it up a bit.
- Scoop out and enjoy!



HINTS

Can I use Whole Milk?

Yes! You can still make this recipe with whole milk. The ice cream won't be as creamy but will still be tasty. For an even creamier version use cream and whole milk instead. You can experiment with different proportions until you find it to be a texture and flavor you prefer!

How to Prevent Salty Ice Cream

This is important – because there's nothing worse than shaking the bags and then having salty ice cream. You want to make sure that the bags you are using are **quality bags**.

Make sure you properly seal the bag that has the Half-and-Half mixture in it. You don't want salt accidentally getting into this bag. **To be safe, you could double bag this also.** Once you're done shaking, rinse off the little bag with cold water (including the top part above the seal) before opening it up to eat the ice cream. This will ensure that any salt on the outside doesn't leak in.

If you use chunkier salt, this will also help prevent the salt from getting into the little bag.

Finally, be extra careful when taking the ice cream out of the bag. If there is any salt still on the outside of the small bag, it will mix with the ice cream.