



Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information

In an endeavor to continually assist caregivers in their search for pertinent information regarding eldercare, our staff address topics most frequently asked questions via Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information (CATHI). Additionally, caregivers are also invited to e-mail individual questions and an Information and Referral Specialist or Family Caregiver Specialist will reply.

Dear CATHI,

Question: My loved one needs care but will not accept help. What are some tips to encourage my loved one to accept assistance?

Answer:

Involve the person in decisions.

- Approach the person with respect. If possible, the person should still be in charge of his or her care. Your role may be to facilitate decisions rather than making them.
- Watch for openings in the conversation. For example, "You mentioned feeling tired. Are you having trouble keeping up with your chores?"
- If the person does not think he or she needs help, give examples of instances that have you concerned.

Evaluate specific care needs.

- Ask, "What kind of help do you need or want?" say what you think too.
- Consider very specific needs, such as help with meals, household chores or personal care.
- Ask about needs for social support, transportation, or medical care.

Ask the person about concerns over accepting care.

- It may be easier to find solutions if you know the person's reasons for resistance.
- Acknowledge all concerns - they are very real for that person.

Present Options

- A person may feel more empowered-and more likely to accept help-if he or she has options.
- A person who needs daily care might choose to have a caregiver come into the home, move in with a relative or go to an assisted-living home.

What if the person still refuses care?

- If the person's health or safety is at risk, say gently but firmly, "We have to address this. We cannot put it off any longer."
- Bring in other people. Call a family meeting to strategize how to help the person accept help.
- Ask the person's doctor, clergy, or another outside person to step in. Sometimes an outside person will have more influence.

Do not give up.

- Sometimes a person will refuse at first, but over time may accept help.
- Keep offering and providing what care the person will accept.

Take care of yourself.

- Knowing that a person needs care but will not accept it can be very difficult emotionally. Try not to take it personally. It is not your fault.
- Consider talking about the situation with supportive friends, family members, or a counselor. Consider joining a caregiver support group.

The information in this article was adapted from the brochure *When Your Loved One Resists Care* created by Mardi Richmond, 2003 (rev 3/15).

Note: This is for informational purposes only.

For referrals to community organizations in Guilford County that assist older adults and caregivers with these documents, contact Senior Resources of Guilford's SeniorLine at (336) 884-6981 in High Point, all other areas (336) 333-6981 or the Caregiver Support Coordinator, at (336) 373-4816 or (336) 883-3586 in High Point.

