

Module 15 – The Home Care Aide’s Role in Providing Care for the Most Common Diseases Seen in Home Care

Handout #1 – Cost of Inpatient Care vs Home Care

There are significant cost savings to home health care

Selected conditions are per patient, per month.

Condition	Hospital Cost	Home Care Cost	Savings
Low birth weight	\$26,190	\$330	\$25,860
Ventilator-dependent adults	\$21,570	\$7,050	\$14,520
Intravenous antibiotic therapy of cellulitis, osteomyelitis, or other	\$12,510	\$4,650	\$7,860
Congestive heart failure in the elderly	\$1,758	\$1,605	\$153

Source: Homecare and Hospice – National Association for Home Care & Hospice

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Handout #2 – Hyperglycemia vs. Hypoglycemia

Hyperglycemia

Causes: Too much food, too little insulin, illness, or stress
 Onset: Gradual, may progress to diabetic coma
 Blood sugar: Above 200 mg/dL
 Acceptable range: 115-200 mg/dL

SYMPTOMS:

Extreme Thirst	Frequent Urination	Dry Skin
Hunger	Blurred Vision	Drowsiness
Nausea	What a home care aide can do: Report to a supervisor	What a home care aide cannot do: Check blood sugar without being instructed to do so

Hypoglycemia

Causes: Too little food, too much insulin or diabetes medication, or extra exercise
 Onset: Sudden, may progress to insulin shock
 Blood sugar: Below 70 mg/dL
 Normal range: 70-115 mg/dL

SYMPTOMS:

Shaking	Fast heartbeat	Sweating	Anxious
Dizziness	Hunger	Impaired vision	Weakness/ Fatigue
Headache	Irritable	What a home care aide can do: Report to a supervisor and have patient drink a cup of juice or milk if instructed to do so	What a home care aide cannot do: Check blood sugar without being instructed to do so

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Activity #1 – Jeopardy Game

CVA	COPD	Chronic Renal Disease	Heart Attack	Diabetes	Arthritis
100 points	100 points	100 points	100 points	100 points	100 points
200 points	200 points	200 points	200 points	200 points	200 points
300 points	300 points	300 points	300 points	300 points	300 points

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Activity #1 – Jeopardy Game: Faculty Question & Answer Guide

CVA	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of CVA</p> <p>A: A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is stopped due to a blocked blood vessel. The result of a CVA depends on which blood vessels are blocked and which brain center is destroyed.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: List two causes of CVA</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embolus – a blood clot which forms in the body, travels to the brain and lodges in a small vessel • Thrombus – a blood clot forms in the brain and blocks the blood vessel • Plaque – accumulates in the blood vessel and eventually closes it • Hemorrhage (aneurysm) – a blood vessel bursts, most common in people with high blood pressure
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role related to a CVA</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a home care aide, be alert to changes in the patient’s condition. • It is impossible to predict when or if function will return to a body part. Do not compare one patient to another. • Give personal care – follow the instructions of the physical, occupational, and/or speech therapists. This care is planned with these principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevention of complications due to decreased mobility – Need for proper nutrition – Safety – Emotional aspects of the chronic condition for the patient and his/her family • The home care aide helps the patient plan the daily routine with all the different therapies. Arrange the activities so that the patient does not tire often. • Give positive encouragement regarding his/her progress. Use simple instructions the patient and family can understand. • Show patience and understanding. • Do the exercises you have been instructed to do by the therapists. • Assist the patient with taking his/her medications – help the patient and family work out a system so that it is clear.
COPD	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of COPD</p> <p>A: Refers to all diseases that cause irreversible damage to the lungs over a period of time. One of the leading causes of death in the United States.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: List two types of COPD</p> <p>A: Asthma and emphysema are two common types of COPD.</p>
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role in COPD</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your role provides a respite or rest for the primary caregiver. Encourage the primary caregiver to take care of personal needs or leave the home while you are there. • Encourage the patient to take or use his/her medications properly. • Report any behavior changes immediately to your supervisor. • Encourage the patient to eat small, nutritious meals. Check to see if fluids are restricted. • Help the patient occupy his/her time.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the patient to keep bed in Fowler’s position. • Warn the family regarding smoking and the use of oxygen (if oxygen is being used). Notify your supervisor of any problems. • Keep the home as dust free as possible.
Chronic Renal Disease	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of Chronic Renal Disease</p> <p>A: Renal failure is when the kidneys no longer function as usual or they are impaired. Waste products are not removed from the patient’s blood and fluids build up in the body. A patient with chronic renal failure will be extremely ill.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: List two signs of chronic renal failure</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leg cramps • Bruises • Muscle twitches • Loss of appetite, nausea, and/or vomiting • Skin issues (dry, itchy, thin, or brittle) • Yellowing skin • Hypertension • Congestive heart failure
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be especially important for the home care aide to pay close attention to a patient’s diet, especially fluid intake. Check the plan of care for specific requirements. • The home care aide will perform tasks to prevent many other side effects from occurring. For example, measures should be taken to prevent skin problems – therefore the patient will need bath oils and lotions and/or creams after each bath. • The patient’s safety is also especially important, as those with chronic renal failure can have abnormal bleeding patterns. Preventing any injury is necessary. • It would also be good practice to weigh the patient each day, to ensure fluid retention is not occurring. Weigh the patient using the same scale each day and perform this task at the same time each day. • As always, report any changes in the patient’s status or routine to your supervisor.
Heart Attack	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of a heart attack</p> <p>A: There are many medical reasons but all result in a decrease in blood supply to the heart. If heart tissue dies as a result, it is a myocardial infarction.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: Define Atherosclerosis:</p> <p>A: Atherosclerosis - hardening of the arteries which leads to a decrease in the blood supply to body tissues due to a thickening of vessel walls. Could result in a buildup of fatty plaque and lead to complete obstruction.</p>
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role related to a heart attack</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The home care aide’s role will involve helping a patient recover from a heart attack. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The patient’s plan of care will depend on: – The type of heart attack the patient had – Recovery up to that point – Home situation – Prognosis

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always follow the plan of care, it should include instructions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Activity restrictions – Diet restrictions – Medication – Emotional support • Many people become a cardiac cripple because they are afraid of another heart attack if they exert themselves. They will need encouragement to do some of their care and follow an exercise program. • The patient may also show a total disinterest in his/her condition. The patient does not take prescribed medications or follow any medical plans. This is considered denial of the patient’s condition and should be reported to your supervisor. • Report any further chest pain to your supervisor.
Diabetes	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of diabetes</p> <p>A: Results when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin to break down carbohydrates in the blood. This results in a decrease of starches and carbohydrates being used for energy and absorbed by the cells. The sugar remains in the bloodstream and is excreted in the urine.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: List two signs or symptoms of diabetes</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Weight loss • Inflammation of the vagina • Sores heal poorly and slowly • High blood sugar • Sugar in the urine • Frequent and substantial amounts of urine • Excessive thirst • Poor vision
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role in diabetes</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the patient adjust live with this disease and follow the routine of medication and diet. • Notify the nurse or dietician (if available) if the patient is having difficulties following his/her treatment plan. • Assist with medication reminders, but never give an injection or oral medications. Insulin should be stored in a cool location away from heat and light. • Notify your supervisor if your patient does not take medications as ordered or if he/she appears to be having a reaction. • Observe the patient during a blood sugar check to make sure the patient understands how to do it – report any abnormal results to your supervisor. • Patients with diabetes have a harder time healing due to poor circulation – be sure to observe skin for early signs of skin breakdown and report this immediately. • If a patient with diabetes has vision problems, assist with activities of daily living. • Observe nails and toes for infection or pressure areas. Do not cut toenails or fingernails. Be sure to give proper foot care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bathe feet daily in warm water – Pat the feet dry, especially between toes, with a soft towel – Massage the feet to increase circulation – Encourage the patient to wear clean white cotton socks and change daily – Do not apply iodine or carbolic acid (phenol) to cuts on the feet – Avoid walking barefoot

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes • Encourage patient to wear an ID tag or bracelet which includes their name, address, phone number, medical condition, and any known drug allergies
Arthritis	
100 points	<p>Q: Definition of arthritis</p> <p>A: Inflammation and destruction of joints. Most often affects the shoulders, ankles, elbows, wrists, fingers, and toes. Arthritis can be due to an allergy, an injury, or an infection. Some arthritis has unknown causes.</p>
200 points	<p>Q: List two types of arthritis</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osteoarthritis – the most common type, occurs amongst the elderly. After continual use, the joints and their linings become thin. The bony surfaces become thick and develop spurs. The bones rub against each other, causing pain and inflammation. • Rheumatoid – a crippling, chronic disease. All connective tissue in the body is affected. Usually starts in young adulthood or childhood. Three times more common in women than in men. • Ankylosing Spondylitis – more common in men than in women. It may start in childhood but most frequently before the age of 35. This disease attacks the spine and/or shoulders and hips. These patients usually remain stiff but can function and lead normal lives. • Gout – more common among men. Uric acid crystals build up in the blood and lodge in the joints. This causes inflammation and extreme pain. Any joint can be affected but the big toe is often the site.
300 points	<p>Q: List two examples of the home care aide’s role in arthritis</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that arthritis is a chronic condition. Help the patient establish a routine for daily care that is safe, efficient, and decreases muscle stress and fatigue. • Encourage exercise and rest as ordered. Report any changes in the patient’s response to the exercise routine. • If the patient is trying an unconventional treatment for arthritis, report this to your supervisor. • Listen to your patient. Discuss these conversations with your supervisor so that he/she may help the patient obtain professional counseling if needed.