

HOLIDAY HINTS

Helping Seniors Celebrate The Season

(NAPSA)—When celebrating the holidays this year, don't forget to check on elderly friends and family members. While the holidays are a happy time for most people, some seniors may find the season less than festive.

The holidays can be difficult for a variety of reasons. For many seniors, the holidays are a reminder of parents, siblings and friends who are no longer alive. For others, the holidays are lonely, as relatives with whom they might celebrate live far away.

Also, seniors who are ill or disabled may have difficulty getting out to shop or taking part in religious observances and seasonal festivities. And winter weather can further complicate travel, isolating seniors from the companionship and social interaction that are so essential to mental health.

Even writing or reading a Christmas card can be difficult if your vision is affected.

If you can, call, send a card or bring over a plate of cookies. At this time of the year, seniors can derive extra benefit from companion care. If you live far away or are unable to provide that kind of attention, you may consider companion care.

A companion can do more than remind seniors about their medication and take care of household responsibilities; he or she can help make the holidays a little brighter. A companion can help write cards, prepare a festive meal and help decorate a home. The companion can also help alleviate seniors' isolation by taking them out for seasonal shopping and shipping, and helping them to attend religious services and festive community events.



A companion can help make the season brighter for seniors.

Before you decide on a companion care agency, it's important for the agency to first carefully assess the condition of the senior. Ask the agencies you research which services they will provide and how their caregivers are selected and are scheduled.

Some agencies offer both companion care and home care to seniors. For example, Interim HealthCare, one of the leaders in the home care industry, provides both companion care (or nonmedical personal care and support services) and medical services to over 50,000 individuals nationwide.

Through trained health care professionals, Interim provides a broad array of home care services including senior care and physical, occupational and speech therapy.

When should a senior get such care and what kind does he or she need? The company offers a self-assessment test to help families identify factors that may place someone at home alone at risk.

For more information, visit www.independentlivingassessment.com.