

Quick Facts That Can Protect

**Your Assets, Quality
and**

Dignity of your Life

How Long Term Care

insurance can be useful?

Part 1- Looking After Seniors At Home

When you are caring for a senior at home, there are certain aspects you need to keep in mind. We provide here a guideline as to the different aspects on the care for senior health.

1. Keeping and maintaining information files
2. What to do in emergencies
3. Preventing accidents
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Part Two- Long Term Care Insurance

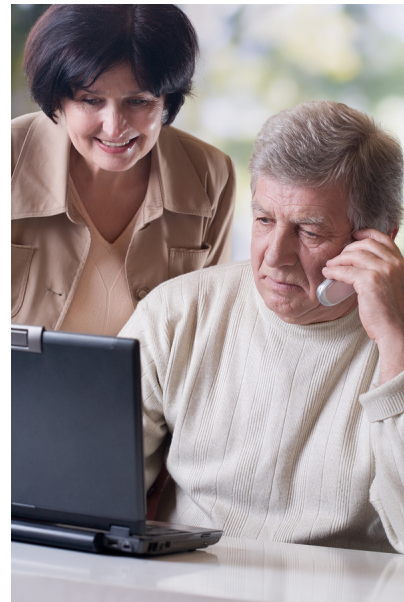
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(1) Keeping and maintaining information files

When you are providing care to a senior member at home, it is always a good idea to keep a medical file containing all his details on hand. This will help you in taking medical and financial decisions in the future. It is a good idea to collect the details you need on an immediate basis. This will prevent delays in the future. These are a few files you need to maintain when caring for seniors at home.

- Medical- Maintain a list of doctors, their names and addresses, together with telephone numbers. You also need to maintain a list of past afflictions, surgeries and injuries or illnesses, no matter how minor. Make a list of all known allergies and any medication that the patient is taking. You should include details of the strength of the medication and at what frequencies it is taken. Also include details like the date from which the medication was started and who prescribed it.
- Financial- make a list of all the bank accounts, including savings accounts, checking and the money market. You should include the names of the contact persons and their telephone numbers. Also keep a list of the accountants, advisors and social workers you may need to contact. Make a list of the income sources of the family member concerned. This will help you in gauging his financial status. If you think that you will be expected to pay the bills, consider opening a joint account with the member.
- Also keep a list of the bills and receipts so that you can seek help while filing for claims in the future.
- Keep Medicaid and Medicare cards at hand. If you have any hospital or clinic cards, keep them organized also. Collect all the private insurance policies you may have and make a list of the names, addresses and contact numbers of the people involved. You may also consider gathering more information on long-term care policies (see section two), Medicaid and Medicare.

- There are also certain legal documents you need to maintain. If your family member has retained the services of a lawyer; make sure you keep his name and address handy. You should also keep a copy of his will and his power of attorney, if any, at hand. You can talk to a lawyer about these and make sure you have an idea about whether he has a safety deposit box containing all important documents and valuables.



(2) What to do in emergencies

There are certain things you can do which will help you in dealing with emergencies. Take a look at the following ideas:

- Emergency telephone numbers- keep a list of local emergency telephone numbers you may need. This should include numbers of your local doctor, fire, ambulance, pharmacy, hospital and neighbors. Keep these numbers near the telephone so that you can get them easily during an emergency. It is better to keep your own number in this list also. During an emergency, you may fail to think clearly.
- Cordless or speaker phones allow a person to talk even when he has limited mobility of the hands. You can even give the person a whistle or a bell to help him during emergencies. You can also make use of baby monitors to listen from a distance. Some cities even let you use a special device with which the disabled person can call for help from anywhere.



- CPR-cardiopulmonary resuscitation is used to keep up the supply of oxygen to the heart, lungs, brain and other important organs of the human body when it is having a heart attack. CPR training is essential if you have seniors to be taken care of at home. The American Heart Association conducts classes on CPR. It is also undertaken by the Red Cross society. It is essential for all members to have an idea about these when they are dealing with seniors at home.
- Fire exit plan- whether you are disabled or fit, having a fire escape plan is essential. You should include plans of how to evacuate disabled people when you are in a fire. One method is to put him on a blanket and drag it out, head first.

- Have a fire exit plan with your family members and install a fire detector at home. You could also inform the local fire department that you are dealing with a disabled person at home. Inform them about the type of disability you are dealing with and the exact room in which he is residing. The fire department can also help you in designing a fire exit plan for yourself.

(3) Preventing accidents

Accidental falls are a major reason behind people needing long term care. Falls can result in injuries like broken bones and sprains. However, preventing these accidents are relatively simple. Just make sure that you remove rugs, small objects and cords etc from the way. This can contribute a lot in preventing these accidents. The most likely places where these accidents take place are the bathroom, on the stairs and in the kitchen. Make sure the floor is kept clear of small toys, pets and food. Make sure that the railings on the stairs are strong and that there is adequate lighting around the house. Placing night lamps around the house is also a good idea.

Transfer belts are a good idea when you want to provide additional grip. Encourage a person to take help when he is moving from one place to another. This will help the person prevent falls to a large extent. You can also encourage the use of canes and walkers. You can also use skid free slippers to provide more protection.





(4) Home modifications

There are certain safety modifications you can undertake when you are looking to care for seniors at home. There are certain community help groups that can help you with construction if the materials are supplied. Every community has its specifications, so if you feel constrained in making these modifications, make sure you ask for help from communities like the Kiwanis, Civitan and the Rotary Clubs. You may also find out if you qualify for help from the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Take a look at the following modifications you can make to the house to make it more secure for your family member:

- The walking abilities of the disabled person in your house, your income and your physical strength as a caregiver will determine what you can do to your stairs.
- If you use stairs leading to your home and your family member needs to use a wheelchair, consider using a ramp. Ideally, you should have at least 12 feet of ramp to tackle each foot of stair to the top. If you have a steeper ramp, it may be dangerous and difficult for the family member to negotiate it. If you have a ramp that is longer than 30 feet, make sure you make landing sections that are at least 5 feet long between each section. The ramps you build should have railings that are 30 to 32 inches high. It should also have a non slip walking surface. The width should be at least 32 inches.
- If the entry is too high for a ramp, consider having an outdoor lift installed. If the rooms inside require your family member to climb stairs regularly, consider installing one inside also. If that is not affordable, just shift his room downstairs.
- You also need to take care of doors when you are dealing with a disabled person. If he is using a wheelchair, consider widening the doors or installing a new one. If that is impractical, remove the door and hang a curtain for some privacy.
- When a person is using a wheelchair, he may find it difficult to access tables or a sink. You can eliminate this problem by simply raising the height of the table with some wooden blocks. You can also try removing the cabinet doors under sinks so that he makes it more accessible. Make sure that the pipes are covered so that a person who is unable to feel

a sensation in his legs does not burn them accidentally.

- You can also make a bathroom more conducive to use by a disabled person by raising the seat height and installing grab bars. You can also consider getting a portable toilet for the patient, if the bathroom is not big enough or if it is too far away.
- If the family member is too limited in the use of his limbs, you should not let him use bath tubs. It will pose a health risk both for him and the caregiver. Encourage him to use a hand held shower while he is sitting down, this will prevent a risk of falls. Install grab bars all along the bathrooms.
- These are the most common places where accidents take place. Make sure you take into account the little things as they matter a lot. Install liquid soap dispensers and long handles sponges that can make washing easier. If the person needs a bed bath, you can give him one with a special basin that is called a shampoo – ez.
- You should also take care of bedrooms when you are dealing with disability. Try to make the room pleasant to be in. Remove useless stuff and add a few flowers and lights so that it looks cheerful. You can also try removing medication so that the room does not look like a hospital. You can also try installing a railing to the bed. Try a water proof mattress for more comfort.
- If the living room is the area where the patient will spend most of his time, make sure that it is not littered with small items or objects like toys and cords. If the patient is finding the furniture too low to be used from a wheelchair, try raising it with a wooden block.
- If you are taking the patient out to a friend's place or an outing, make sure the doors are wide enough. You might want to consider hotels which have wider doors in some rooms just for this purpose. There are also hotels which provide convenient railings in bathrooms for these patients. Make sure you are requesting a handicap accessible room when you make reservations.

(5) Emotions and feelings

Feeling helpless and dependant is not an easy task. Make sure you respect the person's right to privacy and respect when you are dealing with a disabled person. As far as possible, let him decide what he wants to see, eat, when he wants to take a bath and what he wants to wear. Respect his privacy and make sure you are covering him when you are washing or dressing him. Close the bathroom when he is using it and make sure you do not talk about him when he is within earshot. This might make him feel like he does not exist. There is no alternative to love. Even though the person is disabled, it does not mean that he is incapable of displaying or needing it. Don't scrimp on hugs and kisses. There are a thousand ways in which you can show your love. Touching his hand or even brushing his hair are powerful actions. A disability may prevent sexual intimacy, but it need not affect your feelings for each other. If you feel that you are facing a stress due to this reason, make sure you talk to your doctor openly about this

(6) Stress to the caregivers

One of the basic problems you may face is that of stress, if you are giving care to a family member. Looking after a disabled person is not an easy task. Feelings like anger, fear and guilt are common. If you feel that you are facing such a problem, talk to your family members, friends and colleagues. You can even join a support group that offers you help. There are a number of symptoms you need to watch out for. These signify that you are under a lot of stress: The most common feeling is that of guilt. You also need to watch out for fatigue, anxiety and depression. If you are faced with insomnia, less ability to work and nervousness at all times, get help. The outcomes of burnout are unpleasant. The family member may be forced to seek hospitalization, even if his condition does not warrant it. The caregiver may also need mental support for herself. The stress suffered by the caregiver increases as the time she spends with the family member does. A useful way of dealing with the tress would be to secure support from other communities, as soon the patient comes home. These are a few **coping skills** the caregiver can try:

- Taking care of herself-exercise is one of the most useful ways in which stress can be removed. It reduces tension, allays fatigue and can help in raising self esteem also. This

should be backed up by adequate rest and nutritious food.

- Delegation-make sure that the caregiver is not taking on too much. Learn to delegate job like grocery shopping, running errands and other simple chores. Family members and friends can be encouraged to spend some time with the disabled, at least for sometime in the day. You can also find out whether your church can help.
- Join a support group or just take a break at times. This will give you the all important time you need to recover and recuperate. Spend time doing something you like or cherish. Make sure you keep up with family and friends when you are giving care to a person.
- Education is key to managing your concerns and tensions. Make sure you know about the condition of the family member and have realistic expectations of what his progress will be in the coming days.
- Professional help is another aspect you need to consider. You should ensure this service so far as business, psychological, personal adjustment and other matters are concerned. You can also avail of the services of respite care trained people, who can relieve you for a few days.

Find out about the services offered by your community. This includes personal care aides, housekeeping help, adult day care, case management, home delivered meals and the availability of insurance that can help you deal you the daily chores.

(7) Medicines

Medicines are another thing you need to be very careful about. Senior patients tend to suffer from a number of ailments. Since they are under a number of doctors at the same time, one doctor may not know what another is prescribing. Medicines may react with another if adequate care is not taken, creating a separate set of problems altogether.

Another problem that may arise is that the patient may be unknowingly taking the same medications under different names. Make sure you are following the directions minutely. If you feel that a medication is not having a desired effect, talk to the doctor about it. Make sure you keep the medications organized and keep them away from children.

(8) Flues and colds

Pneumonia is one of the leading killers of the elderly. It is caused by a bacteria or virus that affects the lungs of a person. It is aggravated by the fact that bedridden patients have weakened lungs. For this reason, it is important for you to never ignore the effects of flu and a cold. If a family member has it, treat it right away. Any cold can turn into Pneumonia, so don't ignore it. A cold will have symptoms of fever, a runny nose, coughing and a scratchy throat. A cold usually goes away in a week, if a person gets rest and takes fluids. Medications for colds do not really have a lot of effect. They just take care of the symptoms for a while. Flu is more serious and can come on without warning. Flu usually starts with a high fever and is accompanied by a dry cough. Other symptoms like muscle aches, weakness and a chill are common with flu. Since flu can lead to pneumonia in senior patients, it is advisable to call your doctor as soon as a disabled patient reports a flu attack. You doctor may even advise your family members about taking a flu shot.

(9) Skin problems

A pressure sore is a common affliction for people who cannot move freely or are paralyzed in some way. A pressure sore or a bed sore occurs at places where the skin dies off due to lack of blood. This is a very serious problem and may take months to heal. There may be recurrent infections, and, in the worse of cases, you may need to get surgery done.

The most likely cause that may cause a bed sore is recurrent pressure at a certain area. If the person has feeling in the area, he will be able to tell whether he has been sitting on an area for too long a time. You can then change his position so that the pressure is relieved.

You can pad the bony areas to prevent sores from forming. Regular changing of positions every two or three hours will prevent sores to some extent. If the patient is using a wheelchair, make sure he is provided with cushions that will help prevent sores.

The most common places where these sores develop are the ankles, elbows, tailbone, sitting bones and the hips. Wet skin caused by a dirty bed and rubbing across sheets can also lead to these painful sores. An important way of preventing this is to dry your family member thoroughly after a bath. If he has difficulty controlling his bladder, go for chux- these are disposable pads that keep your sheets clean. Also see to it that the patient does not wear tight clothes or shoes.

Whatever you do, make sure you make **daily checks** all over the body for red or pink spots. These are indications of a sore developing. You can tackle it immediately by relieving pressure in that area. If left alone, the area develops blisters and open sores. There are ointments and creams that can be used to toughen the skin so that these sores do not develop. Another problem you may face is that of dry and thin skin. Aged people have thinning skin that becomes drier every day. The skin becomes vulnerable and develops cuts and bruises very easily. Dryness can also cause itching. This may be tackled with the use of lotions and other emollients. Make sure that he is not receiving too many hot baths, as there may be an increase in the dryness. Using soaps with glycerin may alleviate the problem also.

(10) Dealing with diarrhea and constipation

A useful way of dealing with constipation is to consume foods that are rich in fiber and to take adequate amounts of water. You can even encourage the use of laxatives. If he can, encourage him to go for some exercise, ideally after breakfast.

Diarrhea can also be a problem as the digestive system fails to take in food from the digestive tract. A person may become malnourished and even dehydrated. If constipation or diarrheas go on for more than two days, get in touch with the doctor.

(11) Care of the mouth

Take special care of the teeth and the gums if the family member is unable to tackle oral hygiene. If he is disabled in the hands, try an electronic brush for more ease of brushing. Tooth decay and gum disease are common in disabled patients, so take care.

(12) Swellings

Older people may often suffer from swellings in different parts of the body. This happens due to a poor blood circulation or a weak heart. If your family member develops a swelling, tackle it as soon as possible. This is because the area may get clots or sores as a result of the swelling. You doctor may also ask the patient to use an elastic stocking in order to control the swelling.

You can also help in controlling the swelling by keeping the swollen area elevated above heart level. You can also move the arm and legs so that the swelling is reduced. If these fail to reduce the swelling, call your doctor because it may be caused by others serious problems.

(13) Swallowing and feeding

Some people may also face trouble swallowing and chewing when they have certain medical problems. This can lead to choking or inhalation of the foods into the lungs. This can also result in pneumonia. This can also result in the patient avoiding food, which may cause malnutrition. You should inform the doctor if you see the patient coughing during eating, drooling or having trouble drinking liquids.

Make sure that your family members are sitting upright when they are eating or drinking. They should also sit upright at least 20 minutes after they have taken food. If he must eat in bed, make sure you prop him up well. He should take small bites and avoid talking when he is eating. It may make it easier for him to swallow drinks when he takes it with a straw.

Some medication may cause patients to develop a dry mouth. This may cause problems with his speech. It may also cause problems with drinking and swallowing. You can help a bit by having him rinse his mouth with citric drinks or saline water. If a pill is stuck in his throat, keep him upright and give him a carbonated drink. If the pill is still stuck after 15 minutes, call a doctor.

(14) Infections of the bladder

Elderly women tend to have recurrent problems with bladder infection. So do people who have had catheters inserted in their bladders. Take these infections seriously. They need to be treated with antibiotics. The signs to look out for are burning during urination, cloudy and smelly urine, frequent urination and lower back pain. Drinking lots of water and cranberry juice are useful ways of preventing bladder infections. Regular bowel movements and urination are very important.

(16) Legal issues

Most aged people handle legal issues themselves. However, a sudden loss of memory or a debilitating illness may make it essential for you to handle such issues. If you are an individual or a family, you should prepare for such legal issues such as Advance Directives. Guardianship may also become necessary at times. Here are a few things you might need to consider:

- A power of attorney- this is a legal document that lets a person handle your legal affairs if you become incapacitated.

- Appointing a Health Care Power of Attorney- this lets you appoint a person as your healthcare agent so that he can take health care decisions on your behalf; in case your physician certifies that you are unable to take the decision on your own.
- Finding an attorney- perhaps the best way to find an attorney is to go through personal recommendation. You may go through a friend, a relative or an acquaintance. You can also get one through a support group of people who are going through the same problem. Seniors may also get advice on legal matters from senior legal services provided by their local area agencies. These are funded by the Older Americans Act. You may also get help for senior related issues from community legal help agencies.

There is also an attorney referral service you can avail of. The local bar association may provide you help.

- You may get initial help through the payment of a nominal fee.

Taking care of a senior at home, especially for a long time, is not an easy task. Apart from the physical strain involved in looking after the person yourself, there are costs associated that might make you go financially off balance. Having a long term care policy is therefore an important part of the financial planning for your family member. Go through the section below and find out everything you need to know about long term care insurance



Part Two- Long Term Care Insurance

What do you mean by long term care?

This is generally a term that indicates a condition where a particular person requires continuous care for a long time. This may be due to a chronic illness, disabilities or an injury. For instance, a person may be suffering from a chronic illness that makes him unable to go through with the daily activities of life viz. bathing, dressing or eating. This also includes care required in conditions like Alzheimer's disease. The long term care you require may last only for a few days, or it may go on for years. You may avail of this care at home, in a community or a residential facility like a nursing home.

Will I get Medicare coverage for long term care?

Medicare is a program that helps people over 65. However, Medicare does not provide facilities for securing long term care easily. There are certain things you need to keep in mind before you can avail of facilities from Medicare for your long term needs:

- There must be a hospital stay period that goes on for at least 3 days on a consecutive basis. This does not include the day of discharge.
- You must be admitted to a nursing facility for at least 30 days within your discharge from a hospital, for the exact illnesses you were hospitalized for.
- You should be receiving only skilled care
- A medical professional should certify that you need the rehabilitative or skilled nursing on a daily basis.

If you are receiving skilled care on a daily basis, Medicare will provide you with 100% of the cost from the first 20 days. Beyond that period and up to a period of 100 days, you will need to pay the first \$114 every day while Medicare pays the rest. Beyond 100 days you will have to bear the entire cost of your care.

What is the meaning of long term care insurance?

Long term care insurance is an insurance that is designed to pay for long term care costs so that it does not burn a hole in your pocket. There are a number of policies on offer, depending on the exact nature of your needs and whether you qualify for coverage.

What are the benefits from this coverage?

A good long term care policy will offer you a range of benefits that cover most of your needs. As per our analysis, a good long term policy will provide you the following benefits:

- Taking the pressure of long term care off your family
- Ensure that your independence is secured
- Provide you with a choice of the type of care you receive and the quality you receive.
- Ensure that they do not have to tackle the inconveniences of Medicaid
- Provide protection to the assets of the patient
- Provides proactive decisions so that the patient and the family are protected. Remember, long term care insurance could save you vital dollars when you need it the most.

Should you buy long term care insurance?

This is a very personal decision. You can of course just decide not to go for it. However, in our opinion, an informed decision is often the best way out. Ask yourself these questions before you decide on it.

- Are you likely to need long term care?
- What will you be risking if you do need it?
- Can you afford to buy long term care insurance? –
- How much will care at home cost?

What are your chances of needing long term care?

It would be wrong to think that only elderly people need long term care. Research shows that around 40% of those needing long term care are working adults between the ages of 18 and 64. You may need long term care due to a variety of factors, namely sclerosis, strokes or an injury.

What are your chances of being at a nursing home?

Statistics reveal that over half of women and more than a third of men aged over 65 will need to stay at a nursing home at some stage of their lives. This percentage goes up with your age. So, some sort of nursing home care seems inevitable as your age advances.

What do you have to pay in order to get nursing home care?

Long term care is not inexpensive. Given the current level of health care costs in the country, securing long term care even for a few days may set you back by a few thousands of dollars. It can cost over \$100000 a year in some parts of the country. At the current rate, the amount might go up to \$480 a day by the year 2021.

How much does care at home cost?

Most people of course prefer to stay at home while they are receiving care. However, recent surveys show that at home care cost nearly double the cost associated with nursing homes. Take a look at this statistic- home care costs around \$37 on an hourly basis for a nurse and \$18 for a health aide. You also have to take into account the other costs you associate for care at home. Having said this, if you have enough support and care giving from members of your family, the costs are considerably reduced.

Is it right to obtain LTC insurance if your savings and investments are at risk?

Insurance will be the right solution to go for, however, keep these conditions in mind when you are considering your decision.

- If your assets are very little- In such a case, you will probably lose all your assets in having to pay for LTC insurance. Besides, you might qualify for Medicare alone.
- If you are wealthy and can pay for long term care yourself. You may find the relatively low costs you have to pay for premiums more lucrative compared to the high healthcare costs you have to pay for long-term care in case you do not have insurance.
- If you have assets that need to be protected but cannot afford to pay for long term care, consider the information you have at hand about long term care insurance. This may be a useful alternative to having to pay for the care yourself.

5 factors to consider before you go for LTC insurance

Keep these things in mind when you are going for LTC insurance

- Make sure the insurance you buy is adequate- not too much or too little. For instance, too little coverage will not provide you with adequate coverage. However, if you buy too much coverage, your assets will be depleted in paying for the insurance. Make sure that your insurance is something you can afford to pay for.
- Seek protection against a rise in premiums- this is very important. Always look for companies that have a history of stability in their premiums. Most of the companies you see will offer stability in rates. However, you will need to put in a lot of effort before you really find a company that offers you stability in rates. If you zero in on a company that offers you stability of rates, even if it is done at a higher rate of premiums, it is better to settle for that company, rather than one which offers you lower rates but is unstable.
- Don't take rejection to be a permanent affair- if you have been rejected as a candidate for long term care insurance by a carrier, don't take it to heart. Carriers differ in the underwriting policies they follow. So, if you have been rejected by a carrier, consult an expert on long term care insurance. He will be able to offer you the right options you need. It is a fact that it might be more difficult to secure long term care insurance when you have a health condition. However, do consider the fact that this cover will be invaluable to you if you need care later on.
- Get expert advice- it is also very important for you to have the best of guidance when you are considering long term care insurance for yourself. Real estate agents and accountants may offer you some advice, but a specialist who deals very specifically with long term care insurance is a better bet for you simply because he will be aware of more options. He will also know about the different intricacies of LTC insurance. This may prove invaluable to you when you are choosing a plan.

Women should think about getting long term care insurance. This is because women mostly take up the role of caregiver in the family. They are likely to live longer and may also find their assets depleted at a time they need it the most. It is important to note in this context that women make up about two thirds of those admitted to nursing homes. Share this information with your spouse and make sure that she is suitably protected.

More insider secrets to help you get the best coverage ever

- Get the benefits of long term care insurance discounts- there are a number of discounts you can avail of that will drastically bring down your costs. These are a few discounts you may qualify for:
 1. Discount as a spouse
 2. Discount on preferred health
 3. Discounts on group coverage.

You may even get discounts between 5% and 30%. Not only do you save money in this way, you also acquire more coverage. Every company offers different policies that are catering to different needs. You need to have an overview of all policies so that you can understand which is best for you.

- There are two kinds of policies-one that pays you cash and one that reimburses you- the benefits you enjoy will vary according to the policy you have chosen. For instance, reimbursement policies only pay you reimbursements for a cost, up to a certain limit. However, a cash policy will pay you a cash amount that has been determined previously. You receive the cash irrespective of what care you have got and where you have got it. This kind of a policy ensures that you get the full benefits you were covered for, irrespective of the amount you actually spent. Some policies may even be a combination of the two. You need to decide which you prefer before you go for a policy.
- Some policies will even return you the entire premiums whether you need the care or not. These benefits are offered in a number of states. There are policies which return you the premiums after deducting any claims you have made. Some policies even offer a return of all the premiums you have paid, regardless of any claims you might have made. If the policy holder dies, his or her beneficiary will receive all the benefits. However, before you jump into it, make sure you find out about the costs. Some of these options may be expensive. Businesses should consider the premium return aspect because it can get them valuable tax returns. While you are considering all these options, don't lose sight of the primary objective- getting the most benefits when you need it.

- Group coverage may not be the best for you under all conditions. Group coverage has a number of benefits including underwriting and deduction benefits. However, if you are an individual with higher health risks, you might want to consider the fact that you get all this at the cost of lesser covers. Consider some of these features of group plans:
 1. Most of these plans suffer from the 'one size fits all' syndrome. Therefore, they may not be customized to your needs.
 2. They also have limited benefits.
 3. They may also offer you lesser benefits for at home care.
 4. They rarely provide inflation benefits. They usually offer only future purchase options. This means that you will have the option to buy more benefits in the future, not reduce the premium. Inflation may result in you paying more for your premiums. However, group insurance will work for you if you have problems purchasing insurance as an individual.
- Coverage can increase if you have spousal benefits that are shared: if both you and your spouse buy cover, you have an added advantage of combining the maximum benefits available to both of you. Either of you can get more coverage when you need it.
- You can also consider state partnership programs, if you are concerned about affordability. Residents of New York, Connecticut, California and Indiana can avail of these programs. These are programs which have been designed for individuals with a low level of income. The plans come with a level of benefits that are pre determined. Once this is exhausted and if the individual still needs care, he is eligible to receive Medicaid, without losing all his assets.



- There are ways in which you can reduce the cost of long term care-consider the coinsurance you have to pay when you need long term care. This is the cost you have to pay for when you are making a claim for a cost you have incurred. Moreover, if you increase the elimination period or the deductible, you can receive covers for a more serious risk of an extended stay. You can reduce the premium by reducing the in home care benefits. When you receive home care, you reduce not only the dependence on family members through the help from a health care provider; you also reduce the costs you would have incurred if you were admitted at a facility. The real financial risk you face is when you need nursing home care. When you reduce the at-home care benefits, you reduce premium costs, without compromising on the risk of a nursing home stay.
- There are a number of tax savings you can make when you are buying long term care insurance. The government offers you a number of advantages for buying this insurance, so take full advantage of them. If an employer pays for a part of your coverage or even the whole amount, it is exempt from tax. There is 35% tax saving to be made, so take full advantage.

If you don't want to buy long term care insurance, there are still other options available for you to secure protection. Here are a few you might like to consider:

1. Reverse mortgage- this is an option which will allow you to pay for your care in return for depletion of equity on your house. You can even use this to pay for a long term care policy.
 2. Accelerated benefits- these are cases where the company pays you benefits early on, if you are suffering from a terminal illness like cancer.
 3. Deferred annuities- these are annuities that let you withdraw money if you have to be admitted to a nursing home. This is usually done without penalty.
 4. Impaired risk annuity: if you have an established health concern, this annuity will offer you more than a standard return for your health problem.
- The best step you can take is to minimize the needs for long term care. The following are

steps that might bring down your chances of needing long term care considerably.

1. Getting medical examinations on a regular basis.
2. Follow a good diet and go for regular exercises.
3. Quit smoking.
4. Cut back on excessive alcohol
5. Practice safe driving
6. Take care to prevent accidental falls, especially in the bathroom
7. Consider going for osteoporosis, Alzheimer's and other tests

One of the major reasons why people need long term care is the lack of cognitive health. Even presidents are not above the long term care that is needed to look after patients in such cases.

What is the biggest mistake you can make so far as long term insurance is concerned?

If you feel that long term insurance is right for you, delaying it by even a day may be wrong. Think about these reasons why waiting can prove to be costly:

- If you are eligible now, get it now. You may not have that eligibility later on.
- It is a known fact that your health will deteriorate with age. So, if you get it while you are still healthy, you can get the insurance at a lower cost. Makes more sense, doesn't it?
- Long term care insurance costs more as you age. If you get it now, you get it at a lower cost that is fixed. This is the reason why more people are opting for this insurance at a younger age.
- You even get a wider choice of plans if you get it at a younger age.
- You can also get additional years of coverage if you get this insurance at a younger age.

If you are planning to wait a number of additional years before you get a plan, here are the costs you might expect to pay:

Waiting may result in increased annual costs of insurance as you have to pay more for higher daily benefits. You will also pay higher premiums at that age.

What is your next step? Where do you get professional advice?

There are a number of places you may go to in order to secure more information about long term care insurance. These are a few options you might need to consider.

- Insurance agent-your insurance agent might help you with getting a long term care plan for yourself. Most of the agents dealing with home owners and life insurance products now provide insurance for long term care also. However, you need to consider whether they are providing you with a variety of plans, so that you can get the one that is just right for you.
- You may also get help from your financial advisor about any plans that might be right for you.
- A number of financial institutions like banks and credit institutions are also making long term care insurance available.
- You may also consider getting a plan for your employer. However, make sure it is the right one for you before you opt for a group plan.
- You might also consider seeking the help of a long term care specialist. He is a person who deals with a number of these products. He will have a number of options for you. They also have access to a number of plans and they will be able to guide you on the one that is just right for you.

What are the special long term care insurance benefits available to businesses?

The HIPAA act of 1996 provides a tax advantage to people who opt for long term care. Business owners who have bought plans for themselves or their employees can avail of tax benefits on the premiums paid. They can count it as an expense for business and can therefore get tax benefits on them. Take a look at these tax rules:

1. Employees and the employer can both buy long term care plans and get tax benefits. There is no limit to the contributions an employer can make to the employee's long term insurance plan. These are treated as medical costs and are therefore tax deductible.
2. The premiums paid by the self employed are also tax deductible, up to a certain level. If the insurance is bought for personal use or the use

of employees, business owners can also get significant tax deductions on these.

3. If an employee is making the contribution, it may be tax deductible also, provided that itemized medical expenses are over 7.5% of annual income.
4. Even businesses can buy these long term insurance plans for their owners and main employees and get a tax deduction on the amount. This can be displayed as a part of a special compensation package and result in tax advantages for the employers without them having to invest in insurance for all employees. There are particular advantages that can be accessed under the following categories
 - Contributory arrangement from employers
 - Corporation with a 501 trust that makes coverage available to employees.
 - An individual who buys long term care insurance
 - A company with limited liability.
 - A self employed person who buys a policy with after tax dollars
 - A sub C corporation

Additionally, you can transfer hundreds of thousands of dollars from a corporation to an individual's estate free of tax, if you use the full return of premium at death as a rider. You can talk to a specialist or a tax adviser for full details of how this can be done.

Can you delay or prevent the need for long term care?

Long term care insurance is a very important part of your financial planning. Long term care drains not only your finances; it is a drain on your health and independence also. Even after you have bought a long term insurance plan, it will not protect you against robbing your place in this world. What you may be secretly hoping for is a guarantee that you will never need long term care in your life. Though no one can guarantee you this, there are a number of cost effective preventive measures you can take to cut down the risk. Moreover, there are indications of the development of a new research that suggests that illnesses may benefit from early handling and treatment. Early detection techniques can help you take advantage of these procedures. You can protect both your health and wealth by taking advantage of these early detection methods.

The Main Factors behind Needing Long Term Care and What You Can Do To Prevent Them

Since long term care insurance has been in the market for the last 30 years at the least, there are a few indicators which can help us find out the main reasons behind people needing it. In most of the cases, there are reasons which could have been prevented with early detection and care. Here are the 5 main reasons which have resulted in the need for long term care insurance:

- Alzheimer's disease and related cases of dementia- this results in 31% of the costs for dementia. There are swift screenings lasting for around 15 minutes that can result in the detection of this disease in the earliest of stages. This can delay the need for nursing home care by up to 3-6 years.
- Diseases related to hyper tension and circulatory causes- these account for 16% of the total amount spent on long term claims. Peripheral arterial disease resembles a pain in the heart most of the times. PAD is a disease that is highly ignored till it reaches serious proportions. Most people also fail to recognize the fact that this disease may be an indicator of a heart attack or a stroke. However, you can invest in a simple ankle brachial index to detect the condition in the earliest of stages. This may help you avoid a major medical problem in the future.
- Parkinson's disease and other disorders related to the central nervous system: early detection of Parkinson's disease has major advantages so far as treatment is concerned. There have been reports of early detection with the help of a new drug and a brain scan device.
- Strokes account for around 9% of the claims resulting in claims. Strokes are the third main reason behind nursing home admissions in the US. Ultrasound preventive detections can help in the identification of plaque buildup in the arteries of the person, thus resulting in the diagnosis and treatment of the person.

Broken hips together with the related injuries can result in the need for long term care. One of the major reasons behind this is osteoporosis. Even in this condition, prevention can help save lot on patients. Regular screenings can result in a diagnosis of losses in bone density. This can then be addressed with the help of medications or treatments. This initial care can help in saving you a lot of money in long term care later on.

How can you prevent or delay the need for long term care?

Take a look at the services offered by the Medical Care Corporation. They offer the most updated technologies so far as cognitive conditions are concerned. You can also take a look at the services offered by Lifeline Screenings. They offer inexpensive and sensitive screenings through the use of mobile services across the country. Of course, there is no guarantee that taking these screenings can prevent life threatening conditions from developing. However, you just have a better chance of dealing with the condition if you come to know about it as early as possible. A combination of these methods together with a suitable long term care insurance plan will provide you the most security against this condition.

Finally, if you are really considering putting of this decision, consider the following facts:

- What if you do buy the long term care insurance and never need it? You will pay for the premium every year and buy the assurance that a need for long term care will not burden your family.
- What if you do not buy it and need long term care later on? You will have no control over the type of care you need and will likely become dependent on your family for care. What's more, you will also lose most of your assets.

Long term care protects most of your assets and your dignity. It ensures that you never lack quality health care because of needing it for a long time. It is a very important part of your financial planning for the future.

