



Caregiver Tip of the Month – November 2011

Notes from Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho

Assistive Technology (AT) can support independent living.

As we live longer, we deal with chronic disease and decreasing functional abilities. Seniors and their caregivers can benefit by knowing what aids will help lessen the struggles and make independence more of a reality. Help can be in the form of technology that can assist with functional limitations.

We often think of wheel chairs, walkers and canes that can assist with mobility when balance, joint or strength deficits prevail and mobility aids are necessary. But we often just accept the aches and struggles of getting older—and a little complaining. Many assistive devices are on the market for seniors and their caregivers that can help maintain independence and provide help with day to day diminishing abilities. A magnifier or screen reader could help with diminished sight. A raised toilet seat with side bars or side bars on beds for ease of getting up and down. Adaptive reading, writing, eating, bathing aids can be a great boon to the caregiver. Gate Belts can assist with the transfer of someone from bed to chair. Bubble packs can help manage medications. A personal emergency response system can make others aware if a fall has occurred and get help.

Check out Idaho's Assistive Technology Project, www.idahoat.org, North Idaho's Disability Action Center for information on AT, Organizations such as Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Idaho State Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Contact Betsy Bullard, Area Agency on Aging, at 667-3179, ext. 222, or email infoassist@aaani.org to find out more about these topics and other resources or visit our website at www.aaani.org.