

# Caregiver Checklist

By Kimberly French

- Caregiver
  - Decide which of the family members will help the caregiver.
  - Decide how much help they will be able to give.
  - Establish a good relationship with the patient's medical doctor.
  - Meet with a lawyer to get legal advice on decisions that need to be made about health care and finances.
  - Learn all you possibly can about the illness so you can deal with it in the best possible way.
  - Try to teach family and relatives about the illness so they will understand what is happening to the patient.
- Your Patient
  - Reassure and comfort the patient, repeatedly, with words or hugs.
  - Give the patient time alone if he or she needs it.
  - Keep your sense of humor.
  - Read the patient's body language.
  - Stay with the patient during an activity.
  - Never assume the patient does not understand what is being said or done.
  - Keep a watchful eye and step in gracefully when the patient needs assistance.
  - Make a safe sleeping area.
  - Be sure tea or coffee is not too hot.
  - Include exercise in the patient's daily routine.
  - Make sure anything you leave lying about is harmless.
  - Do not attempt full care without assistance.
  - Allow children and pets to play with the patient.
  - Take the patient outdoors several times a day.
  - Give the patient pleasure with music.
  - Be alert for signs of developing physical problems.
  - Bathe the patient daily.
  - Always have assistance when trying to lift the patient.