FAMILY EMPOWERMENT TIPS: COVID, COLD, AND FLU SEASON

As the weather turns chilly and the sniffles spread, it’s important for you and your loved ones in nursing homes to stay in good health. Here are a few tips for families and caregivers.

☐ Be Proactive!
  o Make sure your vaccinations – COVID and flu – are up to date.
  o Stock up on COVID-19 tests (free at https://www.covid.gov/tests), masks, and hand sanitizer.

☐ Take Care of Yourself
  o Being a caregiver is hard! Stay at your best by getting enough sleep, eating healthy, and following public health guidelines.

☐ Stay In-the-Know
  o Keep in touch with nursing home staff. Establish a contact person to stay informed about your loved one.
  o Ask for regular updates on COVID, flu, and other infections.
  o Be respectful when addressing issues with the nursing home administration and staff.
  o Recognize the hard work of the nursing home staff. Kindness and gratitude go a long way in building a positive environment.

☐ Have a Backup Plan
  o Ask yourself who can visit your loved one if you can’t.
  o Use technology! Help your loved set up their phones or tablets for video calls, phone calls, and texting. Ask staff for support setting up calls.

☐ Team Up with Other Families
  o Ask the administrator if there’s a family council – and join it! There is strength in numbers.
  o Don’t be shy. Say hi to other families. Share your number, email, or Instagram 😊.
  o Visit nursinghome411.org/families or contact us at families@ltccc.org to learn about family councils and family empowerment.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- LTCCC Fact Sheet on Infection Prevention and Control
- CMS’s Critical Element Pathway for Infection Prevention Control and Immunization
- Johns Hopkins Medicine Winter Illness Guide