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## **Healthy Cleaning Tips for Caregivers of the Elderly**

*Tips from Maid Brigade to Ease Caregiving Chores*

ATLANTA— Caregiving for an elderly family member can take its toll. A recent survey by [AgingCare.com](http://AgingCare.com) found that an estimated 34 million Americans are personally providing care for older family members and that 34 percent of caregivers spend \$300 or more per month out of their own pocket for caregiving expenses.

Cleaning is always an important part of the caregiving agenda and using cleaning products and processes that are safe for those with lower resistance to chemicals and compromised health is imperative.

“If you choose to use an outside service to clean for an elderly person, it is essential that they have a background of working with the elderly and references indicating they are trustworthy,” says Marie Stegner, consumer health advocate for Maid Brigade, the leading maid service company. “Ask the service about the products they plan to use to be sure that they are free of toxic chemicals.”

Stegner also says that it is important, when possible, to ask the senior for permission to help and about what kind of cleaning assistance they feel they need.

“Seniors want to make their own decisions and they value their privacy,” Stegner adds. “Your idea of a cleaning approach may be different than what they have in mind.”

To help, Maid Brigade offers the following caregiver cleaning tips.

**Respect the routine.** Elderly people have a set way of doing things developed over their lifetime. Take this into consideration when deciding how to help and when.

**Take a test run.** If you are unsure if the elderly person in your care wants and needs cleaning help, purchase them assistance as a gift so they can try it out and get comfortable with having someone come into the home.

**Keep it in reach.** Make sure that any cleaning products or tools they may want to use themselves are easily within reach so they do not have to use a stool or travel a flight of stairs to get them.

**Compassionate companionship.** Remember that older people and those with disabilities who don't get out much look to anyone who comes to the home for companionship and

conversation. Adding a little extra time during cleaning and chores for conversation makes all the difference.

**Handle with care.** For seniors, the mementos, photos, and knickknacks they have represent special people and places they hold dear. Make sure these items are handled with respect and care.

**Go natural.** Harsh or heavy chemicals are not healthy for anyone let alone those with fragile and sensitive systems. Make your own natural and inexpensive cleaning products to use or better yet, select a cleaning service that uses green cleaning products. If DIY'ing it, remember that a few basic household ingredients such as salt, lemon juice, white vinegar, baking soda, and castile soap can be used to make safe and effective cleaning solutions for just about every area and surface in your home.

Want more green cleaning tips and ideas? Visit Stegner's blog at [www.maidbrigade.com/blog](http://www.maidbrigade.com/blog).

### **About Maid Brigade**

Headquartered in Atlanta, Maid Brigade is the only house cleaning service that is Green Clean Certified® with more than 400 franchise service areas in the United States and Canada. Established in 1979, Maid Brigade is the green cleaning industry leader and has a longstanding legacy of providing quality customer service and consistent and thorough cleaning using the most advanced techniques and equipment. The company has also implemented a consumer advocacy program in response to reports from the Environmental Protection Agency linking chemicals in traditional cleaning products to a wide range of health risks. For more information visit [www.maidbrigade.com](http://www.maidbrigade.com) or call 866-800-7434.

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