

Keep checking for quality care

Dear Jo:

I read your column regularly and enjoy it very much. I would like to comment on your column on nursing home etiquette.

My family and I have gone through a very bitter experience with a nursing home and the rules of etiquette just didn't apply.

We admitted my mother to a nursing home that we thought was quite suitable, almost luxurious. We took a great deal of time to find the right place for her, including looking into such things as level of care, inspection records, etc. In spite of all that, my mother was badly treated. She was neglected. Shortly after her admission, she fell ill and was misdiagnosed as having the "flu."

When I asked if I could speak to her doctor, I was told that he was away on vacation and she would be seen as soon as he got back. When that would be, I wasn't informed.

Much to the shock of the nursing staff, I immediately arranged to have her taken to a general hospital by ambulance. Her diagnosis upon admission called for immediate surgery. She did survive the surgery, only to be put on a respirator.

Other heroic measures were also used to keep her painfully alive. She died while still in the hospital, leaving her family filled both with grief and guilt. Had we known how sick she was, we would have gotten her to the hospital sooner.

My advice to those who care very much about the welfare of their family members who are in the

gerontology

A. Jolayne Farrell

nursing homes is:

• Yes, be courteous, but don't telephone ahead. Arrive at different times of the day and monitor the care.

• Do go at mealtimes (at least occasionally) to make sure the food is well prepared and is eaten by your family member.

• Do not ignore your family member's complaints. Check them out — they may be valid.

• If your family member is left in bed and never helped to sit up in a chair or walk, find out why.

• Know the nursing home staff by name.

B. D.

Dear B.D.:

Thank you for your letter. It is important that both sides of the issue are brought to light.

I am sorry that you had such a terrible experience with the nursing home in your area. Vigilance by a caring family is essential. Along with this, support for good nursing care starting at the legislative level right on down to volunteerism can and will make a difference.

Tips for a safer trick or treat

Q. Do you have any tips on taking the "tricks" out of trick or treating?

A. To make sure your little goblins are "goblins" safely this Halloween, here are some tips to take the tricks out of your child's treating:

Adults can consider offering house or neighborhood parties as an alternative to trick-or-treating. If you do trick-or-treat, remember that little ghosts and goblins need to wear their seatbelts when traveling — even when in their costumes.

Other healthy, inexpensive alternatives as handouts include: stickers, bookmarks, pencils and erasers, sugar-free bubblegum, crayons, sports or movie character trading cards or plastic Halloween puppets.

Other points to remember:

• Small children should always be accompanied by an adult; older children should go in groups, never alone.

• Children should trick-or-treat only in their own neighborhood and only at homes with lights on.

• When making costumes, use brightly colored, flame retardant materials; make the costumes short enough so the child won't trip and be sure hoods or masks don't obstruct



Terry Glibb

the child's vision.

• Children should leave home and return before dark; or carry flashlights — never candles or other flame — so they can see and be seen.

• Children should eat only packaged candy and throw away homemade treats. Make sure children understand they are not to eat anything until you have examined it. Many local police stations offer free candy checks. Call your local station to ask.

Q. We have a small pumpkin patch. How can I fix them for future use?

A. A pumpkin, depending on the size, will provide you with several cups of vegetable for use all winter long. Pumpkin is a nutritious vegeta-

ble, high in vitamin A, offers vitamin C, trace minerals, such as zinc, a little protein and fiber.

Your pumpkin can be used in many recipes including all varieties of baked goods from bread and muffins to pie and cake. Pumpkin is also interchangeable with winter squash in casseroles and can be shipped to replace sweet potatoes.

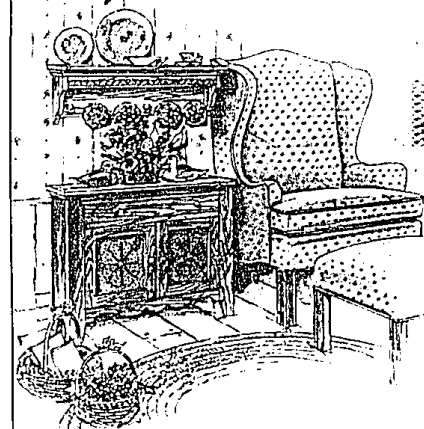
To prepare large amounts, simply cut into manageable pieces and place skin side up in a baking dish that has about one inch of water in

the bottom. Bake in the center of a 350 degree oven for about 45 minutes or until soft. Scoop flesh away, from skin, mash, cool and store in the refrigerator or freezer. Pumpkin keeps well in the freezer for up to four months.

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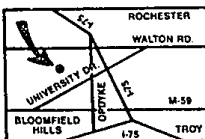


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