

simple ways to spread holiday cheer to the homebound

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For many of us, the holidays are considered the "most wonderful time of the year." But, for the frail, elderly, or homebound among us, the holidays can be a disheartening reminder of one's own isolation and stripped independence.



As a registered nurse and care coordinator with VNSNY CHOICE Health Plans, I understand the fragile set of circumstances that often define this time of year for many people, including grief, limited mobility, and depression. Paying a visit to a shut-in friend, loved one or neighbor is not as consuming as you might think — and can go a long way to spreading the joy of the season in meaningful ways. Below are a few ways to show a homebound person you care about them this holiday season.

Little Bird, Little Bird. For many seniors with reduced mobility, gazing out the window can be an important connection to community and the outside world. Helping an isolated loved one set up a small bird feeder outside a window can help keep their spirits up and encourage them to engage with the outside world – however small its creatures may be!

Just for You Coupons. Handmade "favor" coupons are free, yet meaningful. Offer a "Ten Minute Back Scratch," "Free Day of Washing Dishes," "Neck or Back Massage," or "Walk in the Park" for some guaranteed smiles.

The Spice is Right. Healthy spiced nuts and other "sweet" gifts are a two-fold opportunity to spend some quality time with a loved one without sabotaging special dietary needs. The Caregiver's Cookbook has great suggestions: https://www.vnsny.org/article_category/caregivers-cookbook.

For more information about VNSNY CHOICE Health Plans from the not-for-profit Visiting Nurse Service of New York, please call 1-888-867-6555 or visit www.VNSNYCHOICE.org.