

# Leeza Gibbons joins Novartis to improve caregiving experience for millions of Americans through real-world peer advice on [AlzheimersDisease.com](http://AlzheimersDisease.com)

Oct 16, 2012

- - Leeza and family share highs, lows and insights about caring for her mother with Alzheimer's disease in new video series
- - Ten national contest winners recognized for words of wisdom about finding strength and support while caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease
- - Programs including live webcast in November address caregivers' increasing demand for information to help navigate the challenges of caregiving [1]

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EAST HANOVER, N.J., Oct. 16, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- More than five million people in the United States have Alzheimer's disease, and that number is expected to triple by 2050.<sup>2</sup> As the prevalence grows, more Americans are becoming caregivers to a loved one with Alzheimer's. Often an unexpected and life-changing role, caregivers can experience health, relationship and financial challenges and may question how to best navigate the journey.<sup>3</sup> In a continued commitment to help fill this unmet need, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation and Alzheimer's caregiving advocate and Emmy-winning TV personality Leeza Gibbons have rallied the caregiving community to share their personal, real-world advice and are now empowering other caregivers to learn from each other on [AlzheimersDisease.com](http://AlzheimersDisease.com).

A new video series, *Conversations in Caregiving*, now available on the site features a profound discussion between Leeza and her extended family. Their caregiving story is told through generational points of view and helps fulfill a promise Leeza made to her mother to help ease the emotional, physical and spiritual burden that so many caregivers experience.

"Caring for my mom over 10 years, I learned how to love someone with Alzheimer's disease without losing myself. But it wasn't easy," said Leeza. "My family and I felt as if we survived an endurance race, but there were still many emotions and topics we had never discussed – until now. We hope by sitting down together and being honest and candid, we can offer others our best lessons and improve their journey."

In addition, the winning advice from the 10 Alzheimer's caregivers of the national Words of Wisdom contest is featured on [AlzheimersDisease.com](http://AlzheimersDisease.com). Among hundreds of entries, the winners were selected by Leeza and an esteemed panel of judges for being the most positive, unique, useful and affordable "words of wisdom" about finding strength and support during the caregiving journey.

"I was honored to participate as a judge for the Words of Wisdom contest and found each and every entry to be truly inspirational," said James Galvin, MD, MPH, Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry at New York

University's Langone Medical Center. "When speaking with caregivers I frequently hear about the uncertainty they experience, and the number of entries demonstrates their profound desire to share the relatable and practical advice they have gathered along their journey to help ease the experience for others."

The next installment in the Conversations in Caregiving series is a free live webcast that will continue to bring much needed resources to caregivers. The webcast, being held on November 15 at 8:00 pm ET, will be hosted by Leeza and a panel of experts including Richard Isaacson, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology at University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and Caring.com Senior Editor Paula Spencer Scott. Nutrition and caregiver stress will be among the topics discussed. Participants can register for the webcast and submit questions in advance, or view and submit questions during the live event at [AlzheimersDisease.com](http://AlzheimersDisease.com).

#### About Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive and devastating condition that gradually causes the loss of memory, and complications with thinking and behavior.<sup>4</sup> The disease afflicts more than five million people in the United States and also impacts millions more who love and care for these patients.<sup>4,5</sup> Currently there is no cure for Alzheimer's, but treatments are available, and research continues surrounding the disease and its causes.<sup>6</sup>

#### About Leeza Gibbons

Leeza is the host of two television shows: "America Now" with Bill Rancic and "My Generation" on PBS. An AARP Ambassador of Care and well-known Alzheimer's advocate, she is the co-author of the book Take Your Oxygen First and served as a long-distance caregiver to her mother. In her mother's honor, Leeza founded the Leeza Gibbons Memory Foundation and Leeza's Place, which provide support for caregivers.

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#### References

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2. National Institutes of Health. "Aging: Alzheimer's Disease." Available at: <http://www.nih.gov/about/discovery/allages/alzheimers.htm>. Accessed July 1, 2012.
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4. National Institutes of Health. "Alzheimer's Disease Fact Sheet." NIH Publication No. 08-6423. November 2008 (reprinted February 2010). Page 1.
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