

Caregivers, taking time for self-care

Family caregivers help loved ones who can no longer take care of themselves. That means they have a lot of responsibilities. Caregivers can be on-call at all hours and have to handle difficult health issues. You have to be at your best when taking care of someone. But if you are stressed and tired, you can't do your best and risk burnout. Check out these tips on how not to neglect self-care while giving a loved one the best care possible.



Two women, Enigmatico; hands, Halfpoint, courtesy iStockphoto

Avoiding caregiver burnout

1 Find time to step away. Make a list of friends, family and neighbors who might help you take care of a loved one for an hour or two. Time off will help you remain at your best when caregiving.



2 Be sure to get enough sleep. Some family members might need 24-hour care, disrupting your sleep pattern. Ask for nighttime help from someone or hire a health professional.

3 Caregivers who also do a lot of household tasks can quickly feel stressed out. Ask a relative, neighbor or friend to sometimes help around the house.

4 Reach out to other caregivers for moral support. Join a caregiver meeting group or online chat to connect.

5 If it's still too much, don't delay seeking professional help. Talk to your doctor about options you may have. Reach out to a community aging office for advice. Seek out a caregiving expert from whom you can receive one-on-one counsel.



>> For more information on family caregiving, visit www.caregiver.org.