

# Disability Campaign.org

## Care for Caregivers



Photo: Community and Senior Services, L.A. County

Being a caregiver can be quite rewarding and comforting, especially knowing your loved ones are receiving proper care. Yet, even when caring for another is done out of love and selflessness, you may grow tired and need support. This is completely understandable. We encourage caregivers to remember to take care of their health and wellbeing.

### *Giving yourself a break*

1. **Set aside a certain amount of time each day or week to have to yourself.** Do something that brings you joy, such as gardening, playing with your pets, or even just reading a book you love. Take a walk and let your mind relax from your daily pressures or assignments. You may not have as much time for these kinds of activities as you used to have, but setting aside a time — even if it's just for a few minutes — will keep you energized and prevent burnout.
2. **Remember to treat yourself to a little pampering.** Go get your nails or hair done, or maybe even a massage! Taking time for yourself can be rejuvenating. You regularly care for others; why not let someone else provide you with some personal care?
3. **Make sure to visit with friends frequently.** They can bring you laughter that will brighten your day. Friends can also provide support, comfort, and encouragement when you feel overwhelmed or stressed.

## *Ask Others for Help*

1. **Delegate responsibilities.** Oftentimes, caregivers will feel a sense of guilt when relinquishing some of their responsibilities; while this is common, it's important to remember you cannot—and should not—do everything on your own. Ask friends or family members to lighten the load of tasks for you; you will be surprised by how many people have a heart to help!
2. **Be willing to accept help.** Sometimes as a caregiver, you may become stuck in your own routines. Focus on flexibility in your schedule and accept new ways of accomplishing your day-to-day tasks with help.
3. **Engage in support groups.** You are not alone in this duty! Speaking with others in similar situations will not only provide encouragement, but also give you new ideas of how to be a better caregiver.



Photo: Penn Medicine

## *Care for Yourself*

1. **Remember to attend your regular Doctor visits.** While attending the health concerns of your loved ones, take care not to neglect your health. In order to be there for your family and the person for whom you care, you need to care for your physical and emotional wellbeing. Have one or two people in mind that are willing and able to assist your loved one in the case that you were to require regular or emergency medical treatment.
2. **Provide your body proper nourishment.** Whether you're on the go or at home don't forget to eat healthy foods to keep your body strong and energized. Keep snacks and water handy!

3. **Fit in any kind of exercise.** Getting your heart rate up will rid your body of toxins. Also, working out releases endorphins that will enhance your overall, day-to-day mood! Remember to first consult your physician before beginning a workout regimen.
4. **Make sure to get proper amounts of sleep.** This is crucial for your health. Sleep deprivation has the ability to lower your immune system and cause stress levels to rise, amongst many other unhealthy reactions.

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