

Caregivers—Let's Take Care of You!

"CARING FOR YOU ... CARING FOR OTHERS"

Your Health Is Important Too

It's easy to become so busy taking care of someone else's health that we neglect our own. Here's a list of the medical checkups you should be having for *your own* good health:

- ❖ **Dental checkups** once or twice a year
- ❖ **Hearing checkups** as needed, and eye exams annually after age 65
- ❖ **General medical exam** at least every two years, including blood pressure checks
- ❖ **Cholesterol test** every five years (or as recommended by your doctor)
- ❖ **Breast exams** every year after age 40, and mammograms every year after age 50 (earlier if your family has a history of breast cancer)
- ❖ **PAP smears** for women every one to three years up to age 65, especially for sexually active women
- ❖ **Annual screening for colon cancer** after age 50, especially for anyone with a family history of colon cancer
- ❖ **Prostate cancer screening** every year after age 50 for men, sooner if there is family history
- ❖ **Flu vaccinations** every year after age 65
- ❖ **A pneumococcal vaccination** once after age 65



Reaching Out Listen or Share

What happens at a support group meeting? People talk! It is a place to express feelings—of joy, of sadness, of anger or frustration—among a group of people who can listen and share similar experiences. It's a chance to meet others to exchange ideas, thoughts,



and resources. Ask your local religious organization, disease chapter, hospital or Area Agency on Aging if there is a support group near you. If there are no support groups in your area, ask those organizations about starting one.

Source: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services. These are general guidelines; consult your doctor with questions about your personal medical situation.

Source: *Effective Support Groups, How to Plan, Design, Facilitate and Enjoy Them* by James E. Miller, 1998 (Willowgreen Publishing, 10351 Dawson's Creek Blvd, Suite B, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46825, 219-490-2222) ISBN 1-885933-26-6, paperback, 64 pp., \$6.95

Caregivers Make the Difference!



Caregivers are known to have:

- ♥§ Renewed faith and deeper spiritual meaning
- ♥§ Closer ties to family and loved ones
- ♥§ A sense of purpose and fulfillment
- ♥§ Sympathy, patience, and understanding
- ♥§ A sense of personal satisfaction and pride
- ♥§ Valuable experience to pass on to others
- ♥§ Gratitude

Self-Care Check

- ❁ *How many servings of vegetables did I eat yesterday?*
- ❁ *How often did I reach out to a friend for support and laughter?*
- ❁ *What did I do this week just for me?*
- ❁ *Can I make time for a walk today?*



Back-Up Help You Deserve a Break

Sometimes friends, family, or neighbors will say, "If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know." Try saying "yes." The next time someone offers to help, say "In fact, it would be so helpful if you could _____ this weekend so that I can have a little break!"

To get started, fill in this chart, or make your own. Professional caregivers: use this in your personal life and when talking to the person in care's family members.

TASK	WHO CAN HELP - NAMES/ PHONE NUMBERS
Laundry	
Errands/Grocery Shopping	
Cooking (soups or casseroles)	
Heavy house work	
Light house work	
Yard work	
Understanding legal documents or finances	
Driving to appointments	
Taking the person for a walk	
Entertaining the person your care	

Inspiration

Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments slip away, and a sunny spirit takes its place.

✿ Mark Twain



RESOURCE FOR YOU

The **Family Caregiver Alliance** is a national caregiver support organization that can help you find caregiving assistance in your community. They also provide free information and publications on caregiving. Call and ask to speak to a resource specialist.

800-445-8106 www.caregiver.org

HUMOR

Patient to Doctor:
I hate this place. They treat me like a dog.

Doctor to Patient:
You know that's not true. Okay, now roll over.



How Would You Handle This?

Easing the Way to Day Care

Question: I have heard that day care centers are a great support resource, but the person in my care refuses to go. What do I do?

Answer: Author and caregiver Jacqueline Marcell describes what she would do to ease the transition to a new caregiver:

“First, I’d have a social worker call my father a few times and develop a relationship with him over the phone. Then I’d have her “drop in” to say hello because she was “in the neighborhood.”

Then, after taking my parents out to a relaxing lunch, I’d casually drive by the day care center and say, “Why don’t we drop in and say hello to that nice lady, Mary, who was so sweet to stop by the other day?” I’d have an appointment already set up so we could take a tour and meet the rest of the staff and other seniors. Then, a few days later, I’d go with my parents to lunch at the center and help the social workers make them feel comfortable.”



RECIPIENT'S NAME
RECIPIENT'S ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME
YOUR ORGANIZATION'S ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Our Purpose

To provide caregivers with critical information enabling them to do their job with confidence, pride and competence.

Ordering Info

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Put your organization's announcements below or leave the article

Mood Booster

Make a Date ↻

Caregivers are some of the busiest people in the world. By some estimates, the average caregiver day is 18 hours long. No wonder collapsing in front of the TV is the easiest thing to do with a free moment. But watching TV can actually cause *more* stress and depression.

Instead, make a date with yourself to explore a local park, wander through a thrift shop, visit a museum, sit in a coffee shop to read a book, or simply listen to music. We don't need to wait for a friend for a date. Use the Back-Up Help Chart to find some free time for *you*.



"It's so good to finally take care of me."