



MANAGING THE STRESS AND STRAIN OF CAREGIVING SUCCESSFULLY

Caregiver

A caregiver is someone that helps another person with their medical and personal needs.

Importance of a Caregiver

A caregiver helps with daily activities such as preparing meals, running errands, personal hygiene, and performing medical tasks.

Caregivers play important roles when advocating for the patient and providing emotional support for the patients.

Caregiver Facts

- In the past five years, over 40 million family caregivers provided 37 billion hours of care for loved ones.
- Nearly half of caregivers have trouble balancing work and caregiving.
- Alzheimer's disease and other mental-health conditions are more stressful on caregivers than dealing with physical ailments.
- Depression affects 20 to 40% of all caregivers.
- Women have been found to be more susceptible to caregiver burnout than men.
- Those who are responsible for helping someone with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or a debilitating illness are also at a high risk of developing their own medical issues.

Caregiver Burnout

- Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. Burnout can also change the caregiver's attitude from positive to negative.
- Burnout can occur if the caregiver does not receive the help they need. It can also occur when the caregiver tries to do more than they are able to physically or financially.

Burnout Causes

- Caregivers are often so busy that they neglect their own needs or health. The demands put on a caregiver can eventually lead to feeling overwhelmed, fatigue, hopelessness, and burnout.
- Other factors that can lead to caregiver burnout include:
 - Role Confusion
 - Unrealistic Expectations
 - Lack of Control
 - Unreasonable Demands

Burnout Symptoms

Withdrawal from friends, family and other loved ones

Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed

Feeling blue, irritable, hopeless and helpless

Changes in appetite, weight or both

Changes in sleep patterns

Getting sick more often

Emotional and physical exhaustion

Irritability

Burnout and COVID-19

- Burnout can be more prevalent now more than ever, with the new ways social distancing guidelines
- Here are some ways to handle stress while dealing with COVID-19:
 - Regular check-ins with peers, family, or friends
 - Relaxation/stress management breaks
 - Keep a positive attitude
 - Accept situations you can not control
 - Leave anxiety for actual threats
 - Seek out accurate information
 - Seek others input when making a decision

How to Connect with Others During COVID-19

- You can still see friends, family, support groups, collages, and anyone else by using video chats online while staying at home.
- Zoom
 - Zoom can be used for visual communication with 2 or more people.
 - <https://zoom.us/>

Burnout Prevention

- Get support and join caregiver support groups online
- Educate yourself about the disease or condition
- Take regular breaks
- Know your limits
- Eat healthy and exercise
- Find leisure activities to participate in around the home
- Maintain sleep schedule

Support Resources

- The Alzheimer's Association
 - <https://www.alz.org/>
- The National Institute on Aging
 - <https://www.nia.nih.gov/>
- The National Institute of Mental Health
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/index.shtml>

Resources

- <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9225-caregiver-burnout/prevention>
- <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9225-caregiver-burnout>
- <https://www.aginginplace.org/caregiver-burnout/>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/health-caregiver-burnout#prevention>
- <https://powerfulpatients.org/2016/11/09/the-importance-of-caregivers/>
- https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_healthcare_workers.asp
- <https://zoom.us/>