

Employee Assistance Program *Tip Sheet*

Caring for Yourself While Caring for an Aging Loved One



Supporting an aging loved one often brings a mix of emotions from gratitude, frustration, concern, love, anxiety, and sometimes exhaustion. Many caregivers are also managing careers and families of their own. Research shows that caregivers are at higher risk for stress, sleep problems, and health concerns, especially when one family member is holding the bulk of the responsibilities.

Consider these strategies for finding balance:

- **Plan ahead.** Discuss care preferences with your loved one early to reduce uncertainty and conflict later.
- **Clarify and organize specific needs.** List current needs such as medical appointments, medications, meals, household tasks, and companionship. Organized information reduces stress and makes it easier to share responsibilities.
- **Invite family into the conversation.** Hold a meeting to discuss your loved one's needs and use specific, manageable requests. Even small roles like weekly check-in calls, scheduling appointments, arranging grocery deliveries, or handling paperwork can lighten the load.
- **Use coordination tools.** Shared calendars or caregiving apps can help everyone stay informed and accountable. Apps like Google Calendar, CaringBridge, or LotsaHelpingHands allows everyone to see schedules, sign up for tasks, and set reminders.
- **Protect your own well-being.** Schedule breaks, maintain your own medical appointments, eat well, and stay connected socially. Watch for signs of caregiver stress, including irritability, exhaustion, or feeling overwhelmed.

You don't have to navigate caregiving alone. Your Employee Assistance Program offers free and confidential counseling, caregiving resources, and referrals to community support services.

Reference: National Institute on Aging, Caregiving. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving>,
CDC. Healthy Habits: Caring for Yourself When Caring for Another. <https://www.cdc.gov/caregiving/caring-for-yourself/index.html>

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