



“It is not how much you do, but how much love you put in the doing.”

-Mother Teresa

## CAREGIVING

About 43 million adults in the U.S. provide unpaid care for someone else in a serious health condition each year.<sup>2</sup> Chances are you will be one of them at some point in your life. The stress of caregiving can take a toll on your own health. It is important to understand ways to take care of yourself as well as others.

## “THE SANDWICH GENERATION”

Remember the term, “*sandwich generation*”? That term is often used to describe the responsibilities of caring for your children, your parents, and you all at once.

Expand on that and recognize all caregivers who may be sandwiched between multiple responsibilities, including those with children and older parents.

Not only do most caregivers have their own full-time jobs, in addition, they manage other people’s healthcare, households, bills, pets, and more.

## PREPARE FOR APPOINTMENTS

1. **Questions to ask physician:**  
Write down questions you and your family thought of since the last appointment. When put on the spot, we may forget what came to mind earlier. Have a list and you will get your questions answered at each appointment.
2. **Pack healthy snacks:**  
Appointments can make for a long and tiring day. Refuel by packing healthy and wholesome snacks.
3. **Things to keep you busy:**  
Waiting between appointments can make time feel like molasses. Pass the time by bringing a book, playing a card game, or doing a Sudoku puzzle.

# Caregiving Includes Caring for YOU

## STAY CONNECTED AND ASK FOR HELP

There is joy in helping support and care for others, however constantly caring or others can become overwhelming. To prevent fatigue and burn-out stay connected to friends and family and ask for help.

### How to stay connected:

- Make plans ahead of time to meet up with a friend or co-worker so plans aren't last minute which could lead to canceling.
- Ask a family member or friend to assist you in taking your loved one to appointments or giving care.

## JOIN A CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Studies have shown that caregivers often have physical health problems, anxiety, and depression. It is also well-known that caregivers need support. Look for community resources that provide support in your area.

### Importance of support groups:

- Meet other people going through similar situations.
- Share information and talk about emotions and problems you may be facing.
- Problem solve and learn how to approach certain situations.

## EAT HEALTHY FOODS AND EXERCISE OFTEN

Caring for yourself is one of the most vital things you can do to provide the best care you can to the one you love. Eating healthy foods and getting in physical activity throughout the day is an important way of keeping yourself healthy.

### Tips on eating healthy and exercising:

- Eat healthy snacks throughout the day to keep you full:
  - Fruit and vegetables
  - Nuts and seeds
- Get outside. Not only will the fresh air clear your mind but taking a walk can be a great way to get in some physical activity while de-stressing at the same time.

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## GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION

Take guilt-free time for yourself. It can be hard to allow yourself breaks, and it may feel selfish to take time, but it is equally important to prioritize your needs too. Schedule appointments at the spa, take breaks with friends, or enjoy quality alone time.

Make sure to set aside time to keep your own life organized and complete your own tasks too. Finish paperwork, pay bills, go to the grocery store, and doing your own laundry are just a few tasks to allow yourself to stay on top of.

Giving yourself permission to take this time for yourself. It can help you reset and feel recharged when putting in time an energy for others.

We care about your health and well-being and our staff of registered nurse care managers, mental health professionals, wellness coaches, and clinical pharmacists are here to help. **If you have questions, please call 855-586-2568, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT.**