

Caregiver fatigue can happen to any caregiver at any time. Sometimes referred to as caregiver burnout, caregiver fatigue occurs when a caregiver feels physically and emotionally exhausted.

Identifying the symptoms of caregiver fatigue is the first step in preventing it. The longer it goes on, the worse the fatigue will become for the caregiver.

CAREGIVER FATIGUE SYMPTOMS

- Withdrawal from friends and family members, spending more time alone
- Lack of motivation at work or at home
- Missing appointments, avoiding responsibilities
- Increase in use of excessive use of alcohol or drugs, including sleeping pills
- Having trouble falling or staying asleep
- Feelings of depression – hopelessness, alienation, helplessness, irritability
- Resentment toward the person you are caring for, possibly resulting in wanting to hurt them



PREVENTING CAREGIVER FATIGUE

Below are 6 tips to help prevent caregiver fatigue:

1. Ask for help.

There are many resources available for caregivers and the person you care for that provide emotional, physical, and financial support. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for more information. To find the AAA near you visit the Eldercare Locator at eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.

2. Consider respite care.

Respite care is temporary care to help provide relief for the person who typically cares for the person. Look into government provided respite care programs, or if possible, there are private options. You can also enlist friends and family members to take over every once in a while, giving you time to rest and recharge.



3. Talk with supportive friends and family.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, speak up. Let your friends and family members know – don't assume they'll automatically know how you are feeling. If you need a break, let them know. Consider finding online support groups, which can connect you with other caregivers going through similar experiences.

4. Take care of yourself.

Self-care is essential for keeping yourself healthy, and it's necessary if you want to provide excellent care for your loved one. Make time to do things that you enjoy and keep you energized. Listen to music, take a walk, spend time with friends, or sit and relax.



5. Stay active.

Staying active can go a long way to helping you feel better throughout the day. It combats sluggishness and keeps you charged up and ready. Find ways to move your body every day. You can walk, dance, run – anything that brings you joy and keeps you active.

6. Eat well.

Strive to eat nutritious foods, including lots of fruits and vegetables and stay hydrated with water. If you have a medical condition that is impacted by what you eat, like diabetes or Congestive Heart Failure, be sure to talk to your doctor before changing what you eat.

Caregiver fatigue is common, especially among family caregivers. However, knowing the signs of caregiver burnout, using available resources, and practicing good self-care habits can help you stay healthy – both physically and emotionally.

Careforth helps families by supporting those who care for their loved ones at home. Learn more about our coaching and support programs for caregivers and how they could help you by visiting the website or calling the number below.

To learn more visit **Careforth.com**
or call **866.797.2333**