

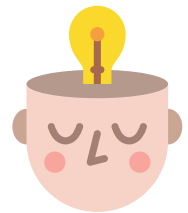
HOW TO MANAGE STRESS 10 WAYS TO A HEALTHIER CAREGIVER

Are you so overwhelmed by taking care of someone else that you have neglected your own physical, mental and emotional well-being? If you find yourself without the time to take care of your own needs, you may be putting yourself and your health at risk.

1.

UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE

Symptoms of Alzheimer's may appear gradually. It can be easy to explain away changing or unusual behavior when someone seems physically healthy. Instead, consult a doctor when you see changes in memory, mood or behavior. Don't delay; some symptoms are treatable.



KNOW WHAT COMMUNITY RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE

Contact the Act Now Foundation or use an online Community Resource Finder at www.communityresourcefinder.org to find Alzheimer's care resources in your community. Adult day care programs, in-home assistance, visiting nurses and meal delivery are just some of the services that can help you manage daily tasks.

2.

3.

BECOME AN EDUCATED CAREGIVER

As the disease progresses, new care giving skills may be necessary. Act Now Foundation offers programs to help you better understand and cope with the behaviors and personality changes that often accompany Alzheimer's.



GET HELP

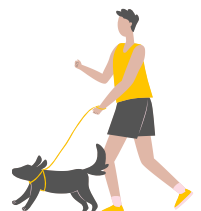
Trying to do everything by yourself will leave you exhausted. Seek the support of family, friends and community resources. Local support groups are good sources for finding comfort and reassurance. If stress becomes overwhelming, seek professional help.

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5.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Watch your diet, exercise and get plenty of rest. Making sure that you stay healthy will help you be a better caregiver.





MANAGE YOUR LEVEL OF STRESS

Stress can cause physical problems (blurred vision, stomach irritation, high blood pressure) and changes in behavior (irritability, lack of concentration, change in appetite). Note your symptoms. Use relaxation techniques that work for you, and talk to your doctor.

6.

7.

ACCEPT CHANGES AS THEY OCCUR

People with Alzheimer's change and so do their needs. They may require care beyond what you can provide on your own. Become aware of community resources. They can make the transition easier. So will the support and assistance of those around you.



MAKE A LEGAL & FINANCIAL PLAN

Plan ahead. Consult a professional to discuss legal and financial issues including advance directives, wills, estate planning, housing issues and long-term care planning. Involve the person with Alzheimer's and family members whenever possible. See the WHAT WE DO section of this website and view the Alzheimer's Care Project for more information.

8.

9.

GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT, NOT GUILT

Know that the care you provide does make a difference and you are doing the best you can. You may feel guilty because you can't do more, but individual care needs to change as Alzheimer's progresses. You can't promise how care will be delivered, but you can make sure that the person with Alzheimer's is well cared for and safe.



VISIT YOUR DOCTOR REGULARLY

Take time to get regular checkups, and be aware of what your body is telling you. Pay attention to any exhaustion, stress, sleeplessness or changes in appetite or behavior. Ignoring symptoms can cause your physical and mental health to decline.

10.