

## Taking Care of the Caregiver

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Being a caregiver can be overwhelming and result in forgetting about oneself and one's needs. This can lead to self neglect, anger, depression, feelings of isolation, resentment, and even illness. These are some helpful ways to take care of yourself when you are a caregiver.

- Be proactive – think about how you will take care of yourself before you even leave the hospital.
- Utilize peer supporters to get some tips on how they have taken good care of themselves.
- Don't feel guilty about having needs – you're human, too.
- Think about your basic needs, like eating, sleeping, and socializing, and build them into your schedule.
- Remember other needs, such as your own medical appointments, seeing other people, and maintenance, like haircuts and shopping needs, and plan for those too.
- Take people up on offers to help – if they need ideas, make some suggestions, like meal and grocery deliveries, laundry, cleaning, help with pets, sitting with you or your loved ones for companionship, driving you or your loved ones to appointments and/or therapies, driving kids to activities, helping with homework.
- Don't feel like you are the only one capable of providing care: teach others – there are many things, aside from personal care, that are needed.
- Seek volunteers at church, social organizations, high schools, your neighborhood, graduate programs to help.
- Get outside– a change in scenery, and some fresh air or sun can do a lot of good.
- Talk with your loved ones, so that they understand what you're going through, and how you plan to take good care of yourself. They worry about you, too !