

WELL BALANCED

- NOVEMBER 2025 -
National Family Caregivers Month

Preventing CAREGIVER BURNOUT

November is National Family Caregivers Month, a time to recognize the more than 53 million family caregivers who provide unpaid care and support for older adults and people with disabilities in the United States. The National Council on Aging reports this staggering figure, highlighting the role caregivers play in our families and communities.

When a loved one needs care, deciding how to provide that care becomes personal. For many families, keeping care within the family unit is important for reasons such as honoring the recipient's wishes, maintaining trust and familiarity, fulfilling a sense of duty, addressing financial strains, and preserving privacy. While caregiving can be deeply rewarding, the level of support required can sometimes amount to a 24/7 responsibility, which may lead to stress and, without proper precautions, even burnout.

One of the most important ways to prevent caregiver burnout is to recognize the warning signs. The American Medical Association lists nine key symptoms to watch for.

1. Constantly feeling worried or overwhelmed
2. Often feeling tired or having low energy
3. Sleeping too much or too little
4. Gaining or losing weight
5. Easily becoming irritated or angry
6. Losing interest in activities previously enjoyed
7. Often feeling sad
8. Frequently experiencing headaches, bodily pain, or other physical problems
9. Abusing alcohol or drugs, including prescription medications



Did You Know?

November 13th is [World Kindness Day](#)? One of the simplest ways to demonstrate kindness and express gratitude is by saying "thank you." Whether you are a caregiver or you know one, take a moment to show appreciation for yourself or for the caregiver in your life.

If you or someone you know is a family caregiver, there are strategies that can be used to help prevent burnout, beyond recognizing the symptoms. A few to consider are:

- **Take care of your personal health.** When you are not at your best, it can be challenging to provide care to others who need you. Prioritizing your own health may include making time for physical activity, getting enough sleep, fueling your body with nutritious foods, keeping up with doctor visits, giving yourself breaks, and knowing when to seek professional support.
- **Communicate and stay organized.** Learning how to communicate effectively with health care professionals can help you better manage your loved one's care. Strong communication is also an important tool for staying organized with their treatment plans and caregiving needs. Consider using organizational tools such as filing systems or digital folders to keep documents up to date and easy to find. This can help prevent the stress that comes with misplaced paperwork.
- **Ask for and accept help.** Asking for help is not always easy, and receiving it can be even more challenging. Remember, you are not

alone, and more often than not, people truly want to help. Here are a few strategies to consider to make accepting help easier.

- Be honest about what you need.
- Share responsibilities rather than taking everything on yourself.
- Hold caregiver meetings with family members to keep everyone on the same page.
- Schedule regular check-ins with a friend or family member.
- Practice saying “yes” when someone offers help.
- Use available resources. As a caregiver, it can feel difficult to give yourself a break, especially when it means placing your loved one’s care in someone else’s hands. With trusted support, however, outside resources can make your role more manageable and sustainable. Some options to consider include:
 - Adult day care—for individuals with complex care needs, such as dementia
 - Palliative care—for anyone experiencing advanced symptoms of a serious illness
 - Respite care—short-term relief that gives caregivers time to rest and recharge.

Did You Know?

Palliative care and hospice care are often confused, but they serve different purposes. Palliative care is intended for anyone experiencing advanced symptoms of a serious illness, while hospice care provides support for people who are nearing the end of life.

- **If outside care is not the right fit**, there are other resources to explore, such as medical alert systems or other technology solutions that can track your loved one’s location or signal a medical emergency.
- **Find support.** Sharing your feelings with friends or family members can be therapeutic, and connecting with others in similar circumstances can make a meaningful difference. One idea to consider is joining a caregiver support group which could offer opportunities to exchange advice, share experiences, and learn from others. If you or someone you know is struggling beyond this, consider reaching out to a professional or utilizing an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for additional support.

Resources

- » [National Family Caregivers Month \(ncoa.org\)](https://www.ncoa.org/article/preventing-caregiver-burnout-tools-you-can-use/)
- » [World Kindness Day \(randomactsofkindness.org\)](https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/)

Sources

- » <https://www.ncoa.org/article/preventing-caregiver-burnout-tools-you-can-use/>
- » <https://www.helpguide.org/family/caregiving/caregiver-stress-and-burnout>
- » <https://www.caregiveraction.org/10-tips-family-caregivers/>
- » <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/latest-news/tips-for-caregiver-burnout.html>

