



# Caring starts with you

## Tips on being a healthy caregiver

Caring for a loved one or someone with an illness can be rewarding. But it can also be demanding on both your physical and emotional health. And as a caregiver, you likely have more than just that on your plate. You might find it tough to meet the time demands of your career, family and other commitments.

**Depression is common among caregivers.** It might not just be “stress.” Talk to your doctor if you have symptoms of depression, such as a lack of interest in things you enjoy, a lack of energy or trouble sleeping. Remembering to focus on your own health and well-being is key. Learning ways to manage your health, lower your stress and take care of yourself helps ensure you’re better able to take care of others too.

# Tips for caregivers

Taking care of yourself makes you a better caregiver. Here are some tips to help keep you at your best.



## Take care of your health

Keep up with regular doctor visits. Eat well. Exercise and get enough sleep. All these together help you stay as healthy as possible.



## Share tasks

Make your to-do list and share them with family or friends. Ask for help with shopping and errands.



## Include family in decisions

Including family members can be helpful when it comes to health care decisions, finances and insurance issues — even if they live out of state.



## Ask for help

A counselor or therapist can help you better understand your feelings, build new coping skills and handle the challenges of caregiving.



## Don't go it alone

Join a caregiver support group. It gives you a chance to talk about your worries and concerns with others who understand.



## Find temporary care to get some relief

If you can, find someone who can stay with your loved one while you get away for a bit. Time away can help you recharge.



## Find resources in your area

Hospitals, churches and other groups may be able to help with transportation or other tasks that come with caregiving.



## Take a breath

Things like deep breathing and meditation can help relieve stress.



## Take a break

Spend time doing things you enjoy. Make time for social activities and friends, even if it's only a phone call or coffee break.



Being the best possible caregiver starts by taking care of you. To learn more, register or log in at [Aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com) and look under “Stay Healthy.”

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