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The quickest and best way to contact the EAP is by calling **1-800-222-0364**

Give Yourself a Hand

Avoid caregiver burnout—get the support you need through EAP

Caregiving is one of the most important roles anyone can perform. Caring for another person—no matter their age or relationship to you—can be both highly rewarding and quite challenging.

Prevent caregiver
burnout—get the
support you need with
EAP



If the day-in and day-out expectations and demands become draining, one remedy is to seek outside support. This can come from professional programs like your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). You can also get assistance from local and state government-run programs, as well as your family, friends, and spiritual community.

Pulling Together Your “A” Team

One day, a loved one may be doing well and taking care of his or her daily needs; days later, that same person may need full-time care because of an accident or medical complications.

Realizing that you can't do it all by yourself is natural. When you see the staff that the average hospital patient sees in a day, you begin to understand that sometimes it takes a number of people with different talents and strengths to effectively care for someone.

So, find your team for support. The EAP can help you with resources on home care agencies, useful local and state programs, transportation, and more. The EAP also offers short-term counseling if you need someone to talk with—about anything related to your experience as a caregiver.

Caring for the Caregiver

Being a caregiver can be an all-consuming occupation. It's not difficult to imagine how overwhelmed a caregiver can become—being “on call” for so many hours a day, for example. Even with all the demands, caregivers can be reluctant to reach out for help. So if you know someone who's a caregiver, don't be afraid to offer some assistance to lighten the load. And rather than saying “let me know if I can do anything,” look for ways to provide meaningful help. Give him or her some concrete choices of exactly how you can help.



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The important thing is to be there for the caregiver in whatever way you can. Even small things can be a big help:

- Find someone to cover the caregiver’s duties and then take the caregiver out for some time away. Even if it’s just a meal, a short walk, or a cup of coffee outside the home, that break can really make a big difference.
- Visit and help with light housework or other tasks that make the caregiver’s job easier.
- Offer to drive the person being cared for to one of his or her appointments, including doctor appointments, care programs, etc.
- Ask the caregiver if he or she would like you to research useful programs and support groups for extra help.

Bigger commitments can help, too.

- Propose a day or night of the week to cover the caregiver duties, if you’re able.
- Offer to hire a professional housecleaner to relieve the caregiver of some of the burdens of housekeeping.
- Arrange for a professional caregiver come in from time to time to relieve the primary caregiver.

By providing even a little time away for a caregiver, you can make a world of difference. This respite from regular duties can allow him or her to recharge and renew. This can help the caregiver return to his or her duties refreshed, relaxed, and better equipped to focus on their important role.

Recognizing Caregiver Burnout

You’ve been doing a great job, but may not have noticed the toll it’s taking on you. As a caregiver, you may be experiencing burnout and not even know it. Look for these common signs:

- Being more easily irritated than normal
- Feeling overwhelmed
- No longer getting enjoyment out of the things that used to make you happy
- Feeling down and blue
- Noticing a change in weight (heavier or lighter)
- Noticing a change in appetite (larger or smaller)
- Noticing a change in sleep (more or less)
- Feeling unworthy
- Feeling like you want to hurt yourself*
- Feeling like you want to hurt the person you’re caring for*

*If you feel like you want to hurt yourself or someone else, seek help immediately. You can call your EAP (see the number below) or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s toll-free number at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Both are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Self-care

Self-care is not a luxury; it’s a necessity. You need to recharge and regroup in order to be at your best for those you care for. Even ten minutes by yourself in the morning can help. Try listening to relaxing music with a cup of tea, or take a walk outside. Ideally, you should have time away—even an hour or two—on a regular basis. This time away can be used for self-care:

- Get some physical activity
- Go to a support group
- See a counselor
- Go to religious services or other gatherings with a spiritual community
- Visit the doctor or dentist for a checkup
- Go out for dinner or a movie with friends
- Get a facial, massage, or other spa treatment

Taking care of yourself can make the difference between feeling relaxed, refreshed, and at your best, or feeling worn out and spread too thin. Ultimately, both you and the person you’re caring for benefit from the care you provide for yourself.

Employee Assistance Program

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HOURS A DAY

1-800-222-0364
(TTY: 1-888-262-7848)
FOH4You.com

Services are confidential and offered as a **FREE** benefit to you and your family members.