



Caregiver Resources

A Guide for Caregivers

Most people find themselves thrust into the role of caregiver unexpectedly. There isn't a time frame given for when it will begin, nor is there an opportunity to prepare or train for caregiving duties. The need comes quickly in having to learn how to care for a loved one who is unable to care for him or herself.

Caregiving can be both rewarding and difficult. Many caregivers consider it a duty, calling, or even a privilege to care for a loved one.

There are different levels of caregiving...some caregivers are part-time; other caregivers are responsible for full-time care. They may be providing the social, financial or physical support; it may be weekly visits, living with a family member or arranging care for someone out of state...but they all share something in common—caregiving takes time and energy from their lives to care for someone who needs their help.

Caregiving can also be overwhelming, especially when just starting out. Most caregivers need help, too; they may also be experiencing some of these feelings:

- A sense of isolation.

- Worry or doubt about the quality of the care they are providing.
- Guilt that they are not doing enough.
- Resentment toward the person cared for.
- Anger at the lack of time they have for themselves and their families.
- Frustration that this is not what they had planned for this time in their lives.
- Fear about how much longer they can keep this up, given all of the other demands on their time.
- Confusion about where to turn for help.
- A sense of loss because the person they love has changed so much.
- Physical fatigue.

There are also resources available for those who assume the caregiving role to assist with support,

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training, services, information and more:

- The **Home Alone AllianceSM** is a collaborative from AARP providing a video series in English and Spanish with simple concrete instruction on a variety of topics such as wound care, suppositories, using a walker, ostomy bags, insulin injections, dementia and more.
aarp.org/ppi/initiatives/home-alone-alliance.html
- **Caregiving.com** is a community of supportive individuals caring for a family member or friend with chat groups, blogs, webinars, podcasts, and other ways to connect.
- **Eldercare Locator**, a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging, helps find resources in your area that enable older persons to live independently in their communities.
eldercare.acl.gov/Public/index.aspx
- **Next Step in Care** provides easy-to-use guides to help family caregivers and health care providers work together to plan and implement safe and smooth transitions for seriously ill patients. **nextstepincare.org**
- **Caring.com** is for family caregivers seeking information and support as they care for aging parents, spouses, and other loved ones. Find helpful content, advice from leading experts, a supportive community of caregivers, and a comprehensive directory of eldercare services.
- **Lotsa Helping Hands** is a free caregiving coordination web service that provides a private, group calendar where tasks for which a caregiver needs assistance can be posted. Family and friends may visit the site and sign up online for a task. The site tracks each task and notification, and reminder emails are sent to the appropriate parties.
lotsahelpinghands.com
- **Alzheimer's & Dementia Resource Center** offers support groups, counseling sessions, educational programs and wellness events to help caregivers in Central Florida with the day-to-day tasks of caring for their loved ones, as well as maintaining their own health.
adrccares.org
- **AdventHealth Cancer Institute** provides monthly support groups and is open to all cancer patients and caregivers. Services include counseling, peer support, and education. **adventhealthcancerinstitute.com/cancer-support-resources/cancer-support-groups-programs**
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:** For those caring for an older Veteran, caregiving resources through the VA and information on new research. **va.gov/GERIATRICS/index.asp**
- **Rare Disease Caregivers** can receive support through the Caregiver Action Network at **rarecaregivers.org**
- **Senior Resource Alliance** is a local resource for accessing the many services and programs of the state and federal government, available to senior citizens, their caregivers and family members. SRA also is an objective clearinghouse for information and services offered by local, state and national organizations. **seniorresourcealliance.org/**
- **National Alliance for Caregiving** provides a state-by-state family care navigator with legal help and advocacy, services and policies for family caregivers, resources on living arrangements, government health and disability programs, disease-specific organizations, and caregiver education. **caregiving.org**
- **Seniors First** helps seniors in Orange and Seminole counties with in-home care, medical equipment, meals on wheels, respite and companion services for senior independent living. **seniorsfirstinc.org/**
- **Share the Care** specializes in providing respite, services, and support for family caregivers.
helpforcaregivers.org
- **Florida Department of Elder Affairs** Helps families caring for older relatives with information, caregiver training, and supplemental services. **elderaffairs.org/resource-directory/caregiver-assistance-programs/**