

## Caregiver Resources

Whether by choice or necessity, the role of caregiver is full of rewards and challenges.

Caregiving requires an outlet - whether it's getting in touch with a support group, developing a support network of family or friends, getting information on home care services, or just having someone to talk to, it's important not to let things get out of hand.

Take care of yourself.

Common Caregiver Issues include not enough time for self or other family members, feelings of anxiety, anger, guilt and feeling alone and isolated.



### Signs of Caregiver Stress:

- Anger at the person using the alcohol or drugs or with the mental health disorder.
- Withdrawing socially – not staying in touch with friends or participating in activities you enjoyed.
- Anxiety about facing another day.
- Depression – feeling sad and hopeless much of the time.
- Exhaustion – you barely have the energy to complete your daily tasks.
- Sleeplessness – waking in the middle of the night or having nightmares and stressful dreams.
- Emotional Reaction – crying at minor upsets or often feeling irritable.
- Lack of Concentration – having trouble focusing or finding it difficult to complete complex tasks.
- Health Problems – losing or gaining weight, sick more often.

### Tips to Help You Manage

- Make your self-care a priority - maintain activities and contacts outside the home.
- Get enough sleep, exercise and nutrition.
- Set limits – you can't be available all day, everyday.
- Establish a support group of friends and / or family.
- If you are helping a child who is attending school, involve school staff - ask for advice and meet regularly.
- Do things you enjoy.
- Make time for other friends or family members, nurture your relationships. Establish a rapport with the mental health and alcohol and drug counselor in your community.
- Talk to your family doctor about your care giving role and any problems you might be having.
- Learn to recognize signs of stress – headaches, insomnia, short temper, muscle tension, decreased socialization, feelings of depression – and get the help you need.
- Seek support from other caregivers.



### Other Resources

- [Interior Health Caregiver Newsletters](#) These newsletters have great tips about caring for yourself
- [Family Caregivers Network Society](#)