

# TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS

## Caring for Yourself When You Are Caring for Others?

Caregivers often report stress, loss of sleep, and poor personal health. Experts suggest four strategies that can help you take care of yourself, as well as others.

### HELPFUL TIPS

- **Identify local support services.** Local agencies can connect you to services and benefits such as adult day care, respite care (temporary breaks for caregivers), training programs, and caregiver support groups both in your community and on the Internet. To find your local Area Agency on Aging and connect to support groups and other caregiving services, visit the Eldercare Locator at [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov). Identify local respite care providers at the Access to Respite Care and Help (ARCH) National Respite Network and Resource Center at [archrespite.org](http://archrespite.org) or 1-800-473-1727.
- **Make connections with others.** Sharing experiences with others can help caregivers manage stress, reduce feelings of isolation, and recognize that they are not alone. Caregivers should find someone they can talk to about their feelings, like a fellow caregiver, clergy, friend, family member, or therapist. Go to the *Ask Medicare* site at [www.medicare.gov/caregivers](http://www.medicare.gov/caregivers) and click on “Caregiver Topics,” then “Support for Caregivers,” then “Taking care of yourself,” and “Connect with resources to make your life easier” for links to messages boards, discussion groups, and forums.
- **Ask for help.** Speak up when you need support or assistance. Help can come from community resources, family, friends, and professionals. Consider getting help to manage meals, transportation, social activities, and services to assist with other daily needs. Visit “Lotsa Helping Hands” at [www.lotsahelpinghands.com](http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com), a free service for creating private online communities where family and friends can stay informed and easily provide assistance to caregivers, share a common calendar, and find additional resources.
- **Take care of your own health.** Managing your own health is important to make sure you are healthy enough to help others. Eat properly, get regular exercise, and set aside some time each week to do something you enjoy. Continue to get regular check-ups and see your doctor if you experience any health problems.

*Ask Medicare* ([www.medicare.gov/caregivers](http://www.medicare.gov/caregivers)) also offers information on enrolling in Medicare, choosing a prescription drug plan, finding state and local resources to support caregiving tasks, accessing in-home services, and a free e-newsletter with the latest Medicare updates.