

Tips for Caregivers

How to Prevent Burnout When Caring for an Aging Loved One

Caregivers often feel that their biggest challenge is finding time to take care of themselves. At times, it can be hard to put your own needs first, and this is especially true when you're caring for an aging loved one or someone with memory loss. It's important to understand the various signs of burnout so that you can identify them in your own life and find ways to cope. Signs of caregiver burnout may manifest as:

- Fatigue
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Mood swings
- Loss of interest in hobbies
- Feeling sad, hopeless, or overwhelmed

Here are some of the ways to reduce the stress of caring for an aging loved one and help protect your own health and well-being.

- **Find time for yourself** - It's important to still make time in the day for yourself and the activities and daily routines that you enjoy. Taking a break from providing care is important and something you should make sure to incorporate into your lifestyle. As a caregiver, you should never be afraid to delegate and ask for help when you need it.
- **Get enough sleep** - Changes in your sleep patterns can drastically change both your physical and mental health. Try to find the source of your sleep disruptions. If you're constantly lying awake worrying, you're not getting the sleep that you need. Take steps to reduce your stress and anxiety, learn about techniques to help you fall asleep and stay asleep, or contact your doctor if you think there may be a bigger issue.
- **Find time for exercise** - Just ten minutes of exercise during a lunch break or after dinner can help reduce stress. Try going on a walk, a bike ride, or exploring something new, like a dance class or yoga.
- **Utilize community resources in your area** - Check out your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). AAAs offer community resources to help caregivers. You can also check out in-person and online caregiver support groups in your community. Being able to speak with others who know what you're going through can help combat feelings of isolation.

If your loved one's care gets to be too much, it is okay to step back, re-evaluate the situation, and consider memory care, skilled nursing community, or home care. At Covenant Living, we offer both Memory Care and Skilled Nursing residences that prioritize safety, comfort, and engagement, and our continuing care retirement communities offer Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Rehabilitation. We also provide home care in the Turlock, CA and St. Charles, IL areas through CovenantCare at Home. To learn more, visit our website at [CovLiving.org](https://www.covliving.org) and get in touch.