



SELF-CARE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT



MANAGING CAREGIVER STRESS

Providing care for individuals and other conditions can be extremely fulfilling and challenging at the same time. It's important that caregivers take care of themselves so they can remain hopeful, energetic and optimistic to provide proper care.

Signs of caregiver stress (womenshealth.gov)

- ▶ Feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and angry
- ▶ Making mistakes when giving care
- ▶ Feeling alone, isolated, or deserted
- ▶ Not getting enough sleep
- ▶ Getting too much sleep
- ▶ Gaining or losing a lot of weight
- ▶ Feeling tired frequently
- ▶ Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy
- ▶ Becoming easily irritated
- ▶ Feeling constantly worried or sad
- ▶ Having headaches or body aches more often

Self-care and stress management tips

It's important for caregivers to take care of themselves, both physically and emotionally even while they care for others. Finding the time to care for yourself with proper nutrition, exercise and sleep—as well as getting support from family and friends will help caregivers relieve stress and can prevent burnout.

Physical ways to manage stress



- Get regular exercise
- Participate in extracurricular activities
- Eat a balanced diet



- Pamper yourself on occasion
- Meditate



- Stay on track of your own health
- Get plenty of sleep
- Get regular doctor check ups

Mental/Emotional ways to manage stress



- Talk with supportive friends
- Get support from family members
- Celebrate small victories



- Applaud your own efforts
- Enjoy a good laugh



- Join a caregiver support group
- Get help when you need it
- Set routines and stay organized

💡 Home Care Tip:

There are many community resources available for caregivers such as adult day care programs, in-home assistance, and meal delivery programs. You can talk with one of Advantage licensed medical social workers to find out about programs and resources by calling **330.491.8161**

Started by Physicians.
 Locally Operated by Clinicians.
 Always Patient Focused.



Nursing



Physical Therapy



Occupational Therapy



Speech Therapy



Nurse aide Services

North Canton
 7951 Pittsburg Ave. N.W.
 North Canton, OH 44720
 330.491.8161

Elyria
 260 Burns Rd Suite 200
 Elyria, OH 44035
 440.787.6016

New Philadelphia
 1243 Monroe St. NW,
 New Philadelphia, OH 44663
 330.491.8161



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What is the relaxation response?

When stress overwhelms your nervous system, your body is flooded with chemicals that prepare you for "fight or flight." This stress response can be lifesaving in emergency situations where you need to act quickly. But when it's constantly activated by the stresses of everyday life, it can wear your body down and take a toll on your emotional health.

No one can avoid all stress, but you can counteract its detrimental effects by learning how to produce the relaxation response, a state of deep rest that is the polar opposite of the stress response. The relaxation response puts the brakes on stress and brings your body and mind back into a state of equilibrium.

When the relaxation response is activated, your blood pressure drops or stabilizes and your muscles relax. In addition to its calming physical effects, the relaxation response also increases energy and focus, combats illness, relieves aches and pains, heightens problem-solving abilities, and boosts motivation and productivity. Best of all, anyone can reap these benefits with regular practice.

TAKE A BREAK FROM TECHNOLOGY



Taking a short hiatus from the television, computer, and cell phone will give you insight on what your senses respond to best.



Try tuning into relaxing music instead of talk radio during your commute. Or try riding in silence for 10 minutes.



Stuck in a long line at the grocery store? Instead of talking on your phone, take a moment to people watch. Pay attention to what you hear and see.



Instead of checking email while waiting for a meeting, take a few deep breaths, look out the window, or sip some tea.



While waiting for an appointment, resist the urge to text and give yourself a hand massage instead.



Self-Massage to Relieve Stress

A combination of strokes works well to relieve muscle tension. Try gentle chops with the edge of your hands or tapping with fingers or cupped palms. Put fingertip pressure on muscle knots. Knead across muscles, and try long, light, gliding strokes. You can apply these strokes to any part of the body that falls easily within your reach. For a short session like this, try focusing on your neck and head:

01

Start by kneading the muscles at the back of your neck and shoulders. Make a loose fist and drum swiftly up and down the sides and back of your neck. Next, use your thumbs to work tiny circles around the base of your skull. Slowly massage the rest of your scalp with your fingertips. Then tap your fingers against your scalp, moving from the front to the back and then over the sides.

02

Now massage your face. Make a series of tiny circles with your thumbs or fingertips. Pay particular attention to your temples, forehead, and jaw muscles. Use your middle fingers to massage the bridge of your nose and work outward over your eyebrows to your temples.

03

Finally, close your eyes. Cup your hands loosely over your face and inhale and exhale easily for a short while.