

Care for Caregivers

What is happening

Caring for a loved one with serious illness can be:

- Meaningful and deeply personal
- Physically exhausting
- Emotionally overwhelming
- Mentally stressful

Many caregivers experience:

- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Isolation
- Burnout

These feelings are common and expected during caregiving.

An important reminder

Caregiving requires:

- Strength
- Patience
- Flexibility
- Endurance

Some days may feel deeply meaningful.

Other days may feel extremely difficult.

You do not need to manage everything alone.

Support available through hospice

Respite care

Hospice programs may offer respite care to give caregivers time to rest and recover.

Respite care may be used for:

- Caregiver exhaustion or burnout
- Attending important family events

- Managing your own medical needs
- Taking a temporary break from caregiving responsibilities

This usually involves temporary placement of your loved one in an approved care facility for a limited number of days.

Ask the hospice team if you feel overwhelmed or need support.

Members of the hospice team who can help

Social workers

Hospice social workers can help with:

- Emotional support
- Family stress
- Financial or practical concerns
- Coordinating community resources
- Support groups and counseling

Chaplains or clergy

Spiritual care providers can help with:

- Fear or anxiety
- Meaning and purpose
- Existential or spiritual distress
- Difficult conversations and closure

Support is available regardless of religious background or level of religious practice.

Volunteers

Some hospices provide volunteers who may help by:

- Sitting with the patient
- Giving caregivers short breaks
- Providing companionship

Availability varies by hospice.

Bereavement support

Hospice programs also provide support after a loved one dies.

Bereavement services may include:

- Individual counseling
- Support groups
- Grief resources for family members

What you can do for yourself

- Accept help when it is offered
- Take breaks when possible
- Maintain your own medical care and sleep
- Stay connected with supportive people
- Talk openly about stress, sadness, or exhaustion

Caring for yourself is an important part of caring for your loved one.

Additional resources

Reliable caregiver resources may be available online through organizations focused on:

- Hospice care
- Dementia caregiving
- Grief and bereavement support

Your hospice team can help identify trusted resources.

When to talk with the hospice team

Reach out if:

- You feel overwhelmed or exhausted
- You are struggling emotionally
- You need practical help or resources
- You need time away from caregiving
- You are concerned about burnout or depression