

“Take Care to Give Care”

November 2016 - National Family Caregivers Month

Practically everyone today either knows a caregiver or is one him/herself. Whether it is a family member, friend or neighbor they all dedicate countless hours providing care to their relatives and loved ones. Day in and day out caregivers fulfill a vital role on their loved one’s care team. No one else is in a better position to provide comfort, support, and advocacy on their behalf.

Caregiving can be a rewarding experience, but it is also physically and emotionally demanding. The stress of dealing with caregiving responsibilities leads to a higher risk of health issues. As a caregiver, remember:

- *Pay close attention to your own physical and mental wellness.*
- *Get proper rest and nutrition.*
- *Identify programs in the community that can help you.*
- *Let your mind run free once in a while by reading a book or watching a movie.*
- *Take some “me” time to decompress and re-energize.*

Only by taking care of yourself can you be strong enough to take care of your loved one.

You really do need to “take care to give care!”

In recognition of caregivers’ vital role, consider one of the following ways that you can help a caregiver today:

- *Send a card of appreciation or a bouquet of flowers to brighten up their day.*
- *Help him/her decorate their home for the holidays.*
- *Offer comic relief. Invite them to a local comedy club, share your favorite funny movie to view, or provide them an amusing audio book to listen to.*
- *Offer to prepare a dinner so they can just relax and enjoy the day.*
- *Just say thank you!*

Random acts of kindness can encourage overwhelmed caregivers, free them up to do other things, or even give them personal time to relax and rejuvenate.

