

# “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.

