



How to Support Someone Caring for Another

Many of us know someone who is a caregiver. Do you know someone who spends time providing physical, emotional or practical support to a family member or friend? Many caregivers feel alone, helpless, confused, unprepared, tired and unable to provide for the needs of their family member or friend. Often, people caring for another need help and do not know how to ask for it.

There are many ways to help support a caregiver...

Caring Connections
a program of the
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

For more information about caregiving, please call Caring Connections at 1-800-658-8898, email us at consumers@nhpco.org or visit us at www.caringinfo.org

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Ask the caregiver how they are doing

- ☞ Let them know you respect their privacy, but care about them and want to offer support and a listening ear.

Reach out to caregivers with a touch, a hug, or other physical expression of support

- ☞ Supportive human contact is important and can be very meaningful to someone who is caregiving and experiencing the many losses that accompany being a caregiver. However it is always important to check with the caregiver to make sure they are okay with being touched.

Spend time with the person who is sick or injured

- ☞ Family caregivers are often the only link the care receiver has with the outside world. Offering to spend time with the person can be a gift to both the care receiver and caregiver. Bring a book or newspaper to read aloud, a game to play, photos to share or just a friendly ear for a conversation.

Offer specific help

- ☞ Saying "call me if you need me" is vague and may not appear to be a sincere offer for help. Often caregivers do not want to be a bother or may not feel they have the time to make a call, as it is one more thing for them to do. Be specific, ask the caregiver if you can go shopping, make a phone call, cook a meal or sit with the person who is ill. By offering to do something specific, you are communicating that you are really willing to help the caregiver.

Tell the caregiver it is okay to take a break from their caregiving role

- ☞ You can let them know that it is okay to take time to renew themselves; they deserve it and need to care for themselves in order to continue providing care.