A self-care guide for caregivers

ASURIS NORTHWEST HEALTH
Life changes when someone you love is seriously ill or injured. You probably feel anxious, afraid, overwhelmed and angry. That’s totally normal. And that’s why we’re here to help.

Get one-on-one support

You don’t have to care for your loved one alone. An Asuris case manager is ready to support you, whether you have Asuris coverage or not.

A case manager is an advocate for you and your family. Someone who knows how to navigate the health care system. Someone who listens. Someone dedicated to helping you and your loved one get the best care possible.

Count on us

Your case manager will:

Support you, whether you need a tissue, a good listener or something else.

Explain what your loved one’s Asuris plan covers and translate health insurance jargon.

Help you find in-network providers, get pre-authorization for services, schedule appointments and coordinate care.

Connect you to free or low-cost community resources, like support groups.

“My case manager was super. She took all the phone calls, authorization stuff and general annoyances off my shoulders. She was a real advocate. She demonstrated to me that I was not in it alone.” — Asuris member

To learn more about how we can help, call us at 1 (866) 543-5765.
Ways to care for yourself

Taking care of a loved one is a difficult, taxing job. Please remember to take care of yourself, too. Here are some things you can try.

1. **Remember: Self-care is not selfish.** You’ll be better equipped to care for your loved one if you’re meeting your own basic needs, too. Try to eat well, exercise and get enough sleep.

2. **Do the best you can.** You might worry that you’re not doing enough or not doing things the right way. Don’t sell yourself short. You’re only one person, and chances are you’re doing a lot better than you think.

3. **Let people help you.** Other relatives, friends and even your neighbors and coworkers probably want to help. They just might not know how. Tell them what you need, whether it’s groceries, someone to mow the lawn or something else.

4. **Get support for end-of-life conversations.** It’s hard to think and talk about death. The Conversation Project can help with everything from gathering your thoughts to completing an advance directive with your loved one. Visit the conversationproject.org.

5. **Reach out to other caregivers.** According to AARP, about 45 million Americans are caring for a loved one. Know that you’re not alone and that empathy from others going through the same thing can be very healing.

6. **Communicate with doctors openly.** Write questions to take to appointments so you can cover everything that’s important to you. Ask the doctor to clarify if you don’t understand something, so you don’t feel frustrated or confused. Tell providers how much or how little you want to know about your loved one’s care. It’s okay to have boundaries.

7. **Take regular breaks—and lots of deep breaths.** Even a few minutes away can help you recharge.

8. **Watch for red flags and get help if you need it.** Know the signs of anxiety and depression and monitor how you’re feeling. The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a reliable resource. Visit them at nami.org. They can even help you find a therapist if you’re struggling with how you’re feeling.

9. **Think ahead to reduce stress.** Organize medical information and put it all in a safe place that’s easy to get to quickly. Take steps to ensure that you have the authority to discuss your loved one’s care and benefits on their behalf. Talk to your Asuris case manager or call the Customer Service number on your loved one’s Asuris member ID card for extra peace of mind.

10. **Give yourself credit.** You’re doing an incredibly hard thing. Be kind to yourself.
For additional help

Visit the Family Caregiver Alliance at caregiver.org for information on support groups and more. Or reach out to hospitals and churches in your area. They may sponsor support groups, too.

We’re only a call away
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