

Managing Caregiver Stress

A caregiver is anyone who gives care and help to another individual, including a child, spouse, parent, sibling, friend, or some other family member. The reasons for the care may include health, disability, injury, or age concerns.

Caregivers provide many different kinds of help:

- Cooking, cleaning, or helping another person with household responsibilities
- Providing daily assistance with activities such as personal care, dressing, etc.
- Accompanying the person to doctors' visits or therapy appointments



Photo Credit: Ya-Web Design

Caregivers may experience caregiver stress, which is a normal response to physical or emotional challenges that occur when demands on the caregiver are out of balance with the caregiver's resources for coping with that stress.

SYMPTOMS OF CAREGIVER STRESS

PHYSICAL

- Tiredness
- Fast heartbeat
- Headaches
- Muscle aches
- Sleep disturbances
- Stomach ailments

MENTAL

- Difficulty concentrating
- Mental avoidance

FINANCIAL

- Financial hardship, as caring for someone may require paying for medication or therapy and managing those costs can be stressful

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL

- Unhealthy use of drugs or alcohol or social isolation (can occur due to time spent taking care of someone)

EMOTIONAL

Caregivers often have a range of feelings about addressing the needs of their loved ones, including:

- Helplessness
- Loneliness
- Embarrassment or shame
- Self-doubt
- Guilt
- Depression
- Fear
- Anger
- Anxiety

SPIRITUAL

- Difficulty finding meaning in life

HOW TO MANAGE CAREGIVER STRESS

R E S T O R E

R
elaxation

Find time daily to rest, read a book, etc.

E
xercise

Daily exercise reduces stress and releases positive chemicals into the brain.

S
ilence/S
pirituality

Connect daily with your higher power in moments of silence.

T
ime

Take time out of your day just for yourself.

O
thers

Connect with other people in your social circle daily for support and love.

R
espiration

Take slow, deep breaths from your diaphragm. Practice daily deep breathing exercises.

E
at

Eat a healthy diet, and avoid alcohol, caffeine, and cigarettes. Eat fruits and vegetables.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

- **Caregivers Association of Trinidad and Tobago (Support Group)**
WhatsApp: 1-868-310-2742
Email: ashamungal@gmail.com

- **Parenting TT (Parent Education, Talks, Workshops, Parent Empowerment)**
Address: Lp#66 Meade Extension, El Dorado
Phone: 1-868-662-8264, 289-IPTT (1788)
Email: parentingtt@gmail.com
Website: www.parentingtt.org

- **National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Programme (Treatment and Rehabilitation, Public Education)**
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services
Address: #62 Abercromby Street, Port of Spain
Tel: 1-868-627-3506/3527
Fax: 1-868-627-4471
Email: nadapp@tstt.net.tt

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