

## Being a Caregiver

Understanding your role and its responsibilities is the first step toward being an effective caregiver. Use these tips to get started.

### TRY THIS

**Understand your role.** Caregivers do a lot. They communicate, make decisions, and support the patient.

**Communicate openly and often.** Talk with your loved one about how you can help, and be honest when you need extra support.

**Think about the impact on your life.** Plan for these changes, like taking time off from work or being away from home a lot.

**Keep records.** Thorough records of appointments, treatments, and medications can help you file health insurance claims.

### CHECK THIS OUT

**Visit** the Springboard page Being a Caregiver. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/get-support/being-a-caregiver>

**Read** about what caregivers do. <https://goo.gl/2UGFct>

**Read** these publications for caregivers. <https://go.usa.gov/xRf3J>

**Learn** how to keep records. <https://goo.gl/W4eEVG>

<https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/>

## Care for Your Body

Caring for someone else's health doesn't mean you shouldn't take time to care for yourself. Make your health a priority, too.

### TRY THIS

**Use a calendar or set reminders on your phone.** Don't forget to take your medications, and don't miss your own check-ups or other appointments.

**Prioritize healthy habits.** A balanced diet, plenty of exercise, and a good night's sleep will keep you healthy and help keep your energy up.

**Sign up for HealthyYouTXT.** Try a text message program to help you eat better, get active, or manage your weight. <https://smokefree.gov/healthyoutxt-programs>

### CHECK THIS OUT

**Visit** the Springboard page Care for Your Body. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/get-support/care-for-your-body>

**Read** these recommendations for physical activity (<https://goo.gl/jCAo1x>) and nutrition (<https://goo.gl/8LKgJH>).

<https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/>

## Care for Your Mind

Caregivers need to take care of their emotional and mental health to avoid burnout and handle stress in healthy ways.

### TRY THIS

**Get support.** Consider a support group or counseling for dealing with tough times.

**Take time for yourself.** Give yourself opportunities to recharge to help you avoid burnout.

**Get active.** Physical activity can help you stay calm and focused and manage depression, anxiety, and sleep problems.

### CHECK THIS OUT

**Visit** the Springboard page Care for Your Mind. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/get-support/care-for-your-mind>

**Read** about taking care of yourself (<https://go.usa.gov/xRfbz>) and getting help in caring (<https://goo.gl/eXpLpL>) for your loved one.

**Watch** Springboard's mindfulness & relaxation videos. <https://goo.gl/oSWkBE>

<https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/>

## Finding Meaning & Purpose

Connecting with the meaning and purpose of caregiving can help you cope with distress and reframe the caregiving experience into something positive.

### TRY THIS

**Change the way you think about caregiving.** Think about people who have taken care of you in the past and the role model you're being for others.

**Focus on what you can control.** Choose how you handle the caregiving role and how you face challenges.

**Practice self-care.** Make time to take care of your body, mind, and soul.

### CHECK THIS OUT

**Visit** the Springboard page Finding Meaning & Purpose. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/get-support/finding-meaning-and-purpose>

**Watch** videos of guided mindfulness and relaxation exercises. <https://goo.gl/oSWkBE>

<https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/>

# After Treatment Ends

The end of treatment doesn't always mean the end of caregiving. Manage this transition and the emotional challenges that might come with it.

## TRY THIS

**Discuss follow-up care.** Your loved one may or may not need you to help with follow-up care.

**Think of yourself, too.** Catch up on the things you might've missed out on like check-ups, exercise, and the activities you love.

**Process your feelings.** Some caregivers find it harder to deal with their emotions after treatment. Find ways to manage these feelings so they don't become a problem.

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## CHECK THIS OUT

**Visit** the Springboard page After Treatment Ends. <https://survivorship.cancer.gov/springboard/get-support/after-treatment-ends>

**Read** the *Facing Forward* (<https://go.usa.gov/xRfDq>) booklet from the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society's Life After Treatment Guide (<https://goo.gl/K2PD5i>).