

# Caring For Caregivers

## When Caring For A Loved One, The Biggest Health Risk Might Be You

(NAPSA)—One out of five adults is the designated caregiver for a loved one who can't manage alone. Caregiving is becoming a "normative" experience for American families, touching more households today than in the past. Yet many who fall within the escalating role of family caregiver fail to view themselves as such, thereby potentially putting themselves and the care receiver at risk. While trying to do it all, unacknowledged family caregivers can become overwhelmed, risking their own health. As this happens, the level of care they provide is also likely to suffer.

If you manage or provide direct assistance to a loved one who needs help with day-to-day activities because of a chronic condition, cognitive limitations or aging... you are a family caregiver.

Acknowledging your role, being open to solutions and understanding that seeking help is in the best interest of you and your loved one are important steps toward re-establishing a quality of life for all.

You are a family caregiver if you provide Activities of Daily Living (ADL) such as helping your care recipient with getting in and out of the bed and chairs, dressing, getting to and from the toilet, bathing, dealing with incontinence or diapers, and feeding.

You are also a family caregiver if you provide Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) such as providing transportation, housework, grocery shopping, preparing meals, arranging for outside services, managing finances and giving medications.



**Getting support and having a healthy mind, body and spirit are important for you and your loved one.**

Getting support and having a healthy mind, body and spirit are important in maintaining a rewarding caregiving relationship that benefits both the care receiver and caregiver. Signs that point to caregiver burnout may include appetite changes such as eating too much or too little. Depression may be evidenced by feelings of hopelessness or isolation, lack of energy, trouble sleeping and edginess. Signs of burnout may also include excessive use of alcohol or medications, impatient or neglectful treatment of the person for whom you are caring, difficulty concentrating, and missing appointments.

The National Family Caregivers Association and the National Alliance for Caregiving can provide new ideas and resources that can help you get help, feel better and do better. Visit [www.familycaregiving101.org](http://www.familycaregiving101.org), a non-profit Web site made possible by the generosity of Eisai Inc.