



# **Age Positive Conference**

Kauffman Foundation Conference Center

Kansas City, MO

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

## **Self-Care for the Caregiver**

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9:45 am to 10:45 am



# What Is a Caregiver?

Someone who is providing care for another person in need



# Who Are Caregivers?

- 36% of adult Americans, unpaid
- Number expected to increase
- Mostly women
- 3 in 5 have paid employment elsewhere



# What Is Caregiver Stress?

- Anxiety resulting from emotional and physical strain of caregiving



# Who Gets Caregiver Stress?

- Anyone
- If care needs are constant, such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia
- Caring for a spouse, especially women



# What Are the Signs of Caregiver Stress?

(cont'd)

- Feeling helpless and angry
- Making mistakes in medication and care
- Turning to alcohol, food, and smoking
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Feeling alone, isolated, or abandoned
- Sleeping too much or not enough



# What Are the Signs of Caregiver Stress?

(cont'd)

- Losing or gaining weight
- Feeling tired most of the time
- Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy
- Becoming easily irritated or angered
- Feeling worried or sad often
- Having headaches or body aches often



## How Does Caregiver Stress Affect Health?

- Depression and anxiety, increasing risk of heart attack and stroke
- Weakened immune system
- Overweight, increasing risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes
- More chronic diseases, such as diabetes, cancer, arthritis, heart disease
- Short-term memory loss, especially among caregivers of Alzheimer's patients





## How to Avoid or Relieve Caregiver Stress

- Attend classes on caregiving: ask your doctor or contact your Area Agency on Aging
- Find adult daycare and respite services
- Ask for help
- Join a caregiver support group



# How to Avoid or Relieve Caregiver Stress

(cont'd)

- Be organized
- Connect with friends and loved ones
- Do things you enjoy
- Eat healthily, sleep, and exercise daily
- Meditate and pray
- Get regular check-ups



# What Community Resources Are Available?

- Meal delivery
- Psychotherapy
- Nursing or physical therapy
- Housekeeping, cooking, or companionship
- Home modifications, such as installing ramps or hand railings
- Legal and financial services
- Respite care



# Where Can I Find Resources?

- [Area Agency on Aging](#)
- [National Eldercare Locator](#)
- Ask your librarian



# How Can I Pay for Resources?

- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Private insurance
- Check [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) for insurance



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