Caregiver stress

What are warning signs of caregiver stress?

Taking care of a person with Alzheimer's disease can cause a high level of stress. Too much stress can lower the quality of care you provide, and impact your health and the health of the person with Alzheimer's disease you care for. If you are feeling overwhelmed or if you have any of the warning signs in the table below, consider talking to your doctor and getting additional support.

Warning signs of caregiver stress	
Denial	– Denial about Alzheimer's disease and its effect on the person *"Dad isn't bad, this will just get better"*
Anger	– Angry at the person with Alzheimer's disease or frustration with what he or she can't do *"I think he is just being lazy and doesn't want to shower"*
Withdrawing from social interactions	– You don't want to stay in touch with friends and be part of social activities that you normally did *"I just don't want to go out anymore"*
Anxiety	– Anxious about the future or just facing a new day *"What is going to happen when I can't give her the care she needs?"*
Depression	– If you feel sad or hopeless most of the time *"I just can't do it anymore"*
Exhaustion	– So exhausted that it is hard to finish a complete list of daily tasks *"I am just too exhausted to do this"*
Sleeplessness	– You wake up in the middle of the night, have nightmares, or worry about a never-ending list of concerns *"I'm too tired to do this"*
Irritability and emotional reactions	– Causes moodiness and triggers a negative response or action *"Leave me alone!"* or *"I cried this morning when I had run out of dish soap"*
Lack of concentration	– Trouble focusing and completing complex tasks *"I just can't do the Sudoku puzzles anymore"*
Health problems	– Caregiving takes a mental and physical toll *"I just always seem to be sick and can't shake it off"*

What are some ways to lower stress?

All caregivers will have some stress. There are a few suggestions to help to lower stress in the table below. If you feel your stress is overwhelming or if you have any of the warning signs in the above table, it is important to talk to your doctor.

Strategies to help to lower stress	
Learn as much as you can	– The better informed you are, the less scary some of the changes can be – Look for community and Alzheimer Society's resources available to you
Get help and support	– Get support for you and the person you care for – Asking for help early can make it easier for you, especially as the person with the condition worsens

Use relaxation techniques	– Try stress reduction techniques:
	  – Visualization (mentally picturing a place or situation that is peaceful and calm)
	  – Meditation (which can be as simple as dedicating 15 minutes a day to letting go of all stressful thoughts)
	  – Breathing exercises (slowing your breathing and focusing on taking deep breaths)
	  – Muscle relaxation (tightening and then relaxing each muscle group, starting at one end of your body and working your way to the other end)

Eat well, keep active and get plenty of rest	– It is important for you to eat healthy meals and keep active – Try to get 30 minutes of exercise each day – Sleep is very important for stress level and can help you recharge – Taking care of yourself will help with your energy and will help to keep you healthy
Make legal and financial plans	– Having a plan early can help to lower the stress level because you will know exactly what to do as the person's symptoms get worse

Produced by Teva Canada

At Teva, we care deeply about the well-being of the patients, caregivers and communities who rely on us. From our role as a global leader in generic and brand-name medicines to the innovative solutions we create for our healthcare partners, we offer a unique perspective on health—here in Canada and around the world.

We are committed to working with our pharmacy partners to help make the care journey easier for you.

Visit **TevaCanada.com/Caregivers** for more resources and support.

© 2021 Teva Canada Limited

This information is not intended as a substitute for advice from a healthcare professional familiar with your unique facts. Always seek the advice of your healthcare professional with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or treatment options.