

Care Partner Burnout

What is Care Partner Burnout?

A state of complete exhaustion - physically, mentally, and/or emotionally - that can happen when a person dedicates all of their time and energy to caring for someone else.

Symptoms of Care Partner Burnout:

- feeling anxious, depressed, hopeless, and/or impatient
- feeling constantly exhausted
- avoiding people or isolating yourself
- being unable to complete simple tasks or make decisions
- feeling like you've lost control of your life
- losing interest in every day activities
- feeling irritable
- neglecting your own health and needs

Some care partners experience physical symptoms such as:

- body aches and pains
- frequent headaches
- fatigue
- changes in appetite level
- insomnia
- frequently getting sick or a weakened Immune system

Treatment and Prevention

Below is a list of suggestions that can help in reducing and preventing care partner burnout. Using any combination of these items may have a positive impact on your well-being as a care partner.

- Ask for help from friends and family
- Get support from friends and family
- Be honest with yourself about what you can and cannot handle. Delegate the tasks you cannot manage on your own.
- Talk with other caregivers and get connected with support groups
- Take small breaks during the day. Even short 10-minute breaks doing an activity you enjoy like gardening or painting can help ease some stress
- Attend social activities with friends and family
- Continue to take care of your own health
- Maintain healthy habits such as diet and exercise
- Maintain your sleep schedule
- Consider using various forms of respite care

The most important thing you can do to prevent burnout is to take time for yourself and prioritize your own mental well-being. This may take some planning and it may mean asking for help, but taking time for yourself is vital to your success and longevity as a care partner.