Caregivers Burnout Syndrome: Support Yourself While Caring For A Loved One

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Abstract
A caregiver is someone who looks after another person who is in need, such as a child, an elderly parent, a spouse or partner, a family, a friend, or a coworker. Caregiver stress is caused by the cognitive and emotional strain of caring for others. Stress levels in caregivers are much higher than in non-caregivers. The quantity of care required by an old, sick, or disabled family member may overwhelm some caretakers. Anyone can experience caregiver stress, but women carers are more likely than males to report stress and other health issues. Furthermore, certain women are at a larger risk than others. Additionally, certain women are at a higher risk of developing health problems as a result of caregiver stress. Informal caregivers are family members and friends who provide care to their loved ones without receiving any financial compensation. Formal carers are volunteers or paid care providers linked to a service system, whereas informal carers are family members and friends who provide care to their loved ones without receiving any financial compensation. As a result of the arduous duty of caring for others, caregivers experience stress and strain, which can have a significant impact on their physical, psychological, and social lives, reducing their quality of life (QOL). As a result, caregivers are at danger of getting mental illnesses. The burden of caregiving has been linked to poor physical and emotional health. Caregiving has been linked to psychological issues such as depression and poor physical and mental health of caregivers, according to research. According to a new study, caregiving is linked to anguish, worry, stress, and depression.

Keywords
Caregiver, Stress, Physical, Psychological and Quality of life

Imprint

INTRODUCTION:

A caregiver is someone who lives with, spends time with, observes, cares for, assists, and supports a sufferer physically, emotionally, and socially. Providing care has become a part of millions of people’s everyday lives around the world, regardless of their language, culture, or nation. Patients, aged or disabled family members, spouses, or friends are all looked after by millions of carers. The responsibility to care for the patient becomes a one-way, addictive, intense, and long-term obligation that consumes the caregiver’s life as the primary caregiver becomes increasingly involved in the patient’s daily routine. The caregiving position is a sporadic one that demands vigilance, effort, and effort.

Caregivers’ physiological, mental, and financial problems, as well as the patient’s loss of function and the caregiver’s lack of leisure time, all have an adverse effect on the caregivers’ ability to ensure optimum care. [3] While the fact that the majority of carers are unprepared for their duties and provide care with little or no support despite being in a deplorable state, more than a third of them continue to provide intensive care to others. According to research, the physical condition of the family caregiver influences the decision to place a sick relative in a long-term care facility. Medical advancements, shorter hospital stays, restricted release planning, and the spread of home care devices have increased the costs and responsibilities placed on families, who are now expected to shoulder greater tasks.

Providing care has a negative influence on the mental health of the family caregiver. [3] Caregivers of older family members or mentally ill folks have increased levels of stress, anxiety, sadness, and other mental health problems. The most important aspect in any caregiver’s path is love. We provide care for someone we love who is dealing with an illness or a loss of function in some way, either physically or emotion-ally. Many caretakers find themselves in the position over time. It’s unusual for a family to be fully prepared to handle all of the complexities of caring for a loved one. The physical, emotional, and frequently financial
burdens that come with caring for a loved one who has been diagnosed with cancer, dementia, or other serious illness. [3]

Caregivers burnout syndrome is induced by providing constant care to a chronic patient without interruption. Physical, mental, and financial problems among caregivers, as well as the patient's loss of function and lack of free time, all have a negative impact on caregivers' well-being. Caregivers of people with chronic mental illnesses face a number of issues. Caregivers may experience emotional weariness and depression. [2]

Caregiver burnout syndrome, often known as caregiver stress, is a disorder characterized by unconscious chatter, weariness, hostility, and guilt. If the individual is being cared for by problems such as faecal incontinence, hostility, sleep disturbance, roaming, and/or memory, the person is expected to experience a severe case of caregiver stress. Symptoms such as weariness, gastrointestinal issues, insomnia, and depression are common concerns among caregivers. Unceasing caregiver stress can harm a caregiver's physical health, resulting in increased blood pressure, hyperglycemia, a compromised immune system. Many physically unwell caretakers do not seek treatment because they are unaware of their emotional and physical exhaustion. This sort of burnout is known as “Caregiver burnout syndrome,” yet it is not officially recognized anywhere on the planet. [2]

Self-care is a form of love, and few people know how to practice it, especially when it is most needed. We neglect to manage our own well-being when we are caring for others. According to the report, when parents are on an aircraft and emergency instructions are being presented, they are informed that in the event of an emergency, they should put on their oxygen mask first, then tend to their child. This comparison also applies to the caregiver. The first rule of caring (and life) should be to take care of yourself on a daily basis. We define self-care as engaging in behaviors that are soothing, relaxing, and revitalizing to yours.

Caregivers frequently express that maintaining their own well-being and health concerns while caring for a loved one is extremely tough. While many people equate self-care with sleeping, eating, and grooming, it also includes identifying the activities and needs that nourish and energize you. [4]

Caregiver stress can manifest itself in a variety of ways. For example, one minute you may be upset and angry, and the next you may feel helpless. It is possible that you will make an error when administering drugs. You could also participate in dangerous habits like smoking or drinking too much alcohol. [4] Others include
- Emotionally drained
- Feeling abandoned
- Napping too much or too little
- Gaining or losing a massive amount of weight
- Having a constant feeling of exhaustion.

Caregivers are affected in many ways by stress, including

Anxiety and depression. Anxiety and depression symptoms affect female caregivers more than male caregivers. Anxiety and melancholy can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke, among other health problems. [1]

Immune system. Caregivers who are stressed may have lower immune systems and spend more day's sick with the cold or flu than non-caregivers. Vaccines, such as flu vaccinations, can be rendered ineffective by a weakened immune system. In addition, recovery from surgery may take longer.

Obesity. More women than males acquire weight as a result of stress. Obesity increases the chances of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, among other health issues. [6]

There's a higher probability of having chronic illnesses. High stress levels, particularly when combined with depression, may raise your risk of acquiring health issues such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, hypertension, or arthritis. [6]

The Caregiver Self-Care Plan

Accepting that looking for assistance is normal is the first step, followed by describing the type of support you require.

The next step is to look for help in your immediate area. [1]

1. Recognize that seeking assistance is a common occurrence.

People who are concerned about others have the option of asking how they may help themselves, but just a small percentage of caregivers do so. During the caregiving phase, caregivers can take a break from caring for their loved ones, for instance, a week off. Caretakers must seek assistance if they believe it is important to protect their emotional and somatic health.
It’s critical to stress to the caregiver that seeking help is not a show of weakness. It should also be stated that getting aid for the caregiver is crucial and possible. The first step in this process is to determine the level of assistance required by the caregiver. [2].

2. **Figure out what kind of help you’ll need.**

Determining what kind of help you need is a key step that can be difficult at first. Care, like any other job, entails a variety of tasks with the same priority. The most important thing to remember is to keep track of everything you do, even the seemingly insignificant details.

3. **Look for help in your immediate area**

Caregivers’ support services differ by country and culture. Families in several countries are legally liable for the care of their elderly relatives. Caregivers in the United Kingdom now have access to need assessments, support services, and flexible working hours as a result of new law. In other nations, a paid caregiver is hired. [2]

As a result, it is critical to support carers by having nurses visit them in their homes. Caregivers in the community are often undervalued and under supported by their families. Caregivers, on the other hand, have needs to be respected, to participate in social situations, to have financial support, and to have their needs met. As a result, nurses should provide carers with knowledge on the issues they require during the care process. The caregiver can deliver effective and proper care to his or her patient thanks to the nurse’s knowledge and support. [2]

**LOVE YOURSELF**

1. **Start small.**

Once you’ve decided on one or two areas where you want to work, make it a point to start small. A minor modification in your daily routine or a habit can help you gain a fresh perspective on all of your responsibilities.

2. **Keep a self-care routine.**

Make a habit for yourself that you are proud of. Guard and cherish what you have, whether it’s a morning stroll, an exercise programme, or a cup of tea at a specific hour. This is critical, and you will quickly understand that prioritizing what you need to accomplish in order to be more available to provide care is perfectly acceptable. [8]

3. **Listen to your senses**

Listening to what our senses are telling us is a crucial place to start when it comes to figuring out what can be most valuable to your self-care. Allow yourself to be moved by what you see, feel, hear, taste, and touch. Go outside and find something beautiful to you, listen to music, sit and breathe for five minutes, hug someone, an animal, or even a tree, or eat something comforting and soothing. All of these are things you can do to look after yourself.

4. **Consult a therapist or a support group**

Caregivers can seek help from a variety of therapists and support groups. These are crucial connections that can help you in your path of caregiving, whether in person or online.

A trained therapist can assist you in processing your emotions, establishing boundaries, and improving communication with your partner and other family members. A support group can also help with these concerns, but the focus may be more broad. Having someone work with you particularly on the issues you’re encountering can rapidly provide a lot of calm.

Also, keep in mind that professional care groups can help you with other types of counselling. Hospice providers, for example, frequently provide specialist grief therapy. [9]

5. **Schedule days off and respite care.**

When you’re a caretaker, it’s critical to schedule time off. It’s what allows you to be truly present when you’re with someone you care about.

There are programmes and places that provide respite care for individuals who are caring for someone who requires round-the-clock care. Respite care can be provided at home, in specialist day-care centres, or in facilities that provide overnight accommodations. Respite care might be scheduled for a few hours, a day, a few days, or even a few weeks. [10]

6. **Be practical, know your limits.**

Ask for assistance if you require it. As a caregiver, you can seek for support from others, or if you’re having trouble navigating your loved one’s healthcare system, ask to talk with a Social Worker or Hospitalist. They have the ability to deliver excellent information and service, and they frequently do so. Make the effort to set up online bill payment so that you can save time in the future. [11]

7. **Be kind to yourself.**

You are a human being, and no one is flawless. It’s inevitable that errors will occur. When things get rough, slow down by:

- paying attention to what you’re doing and breathing deeply
• Speaking and thinking good thoughts about yourself
• Developing a gratitude practice
• Journaling
• Calling a friend

8. Reward yourself.
Make a point of doing something special for yourself when you take that well-earned vacation. Always remember that you deserve to spend time doing the things that make you happy and peaceful.
• Buying yourself flowers
• Getting some bodywork done, such as a massage or facial
• Practicing yoga
• Taking a nice walk somewhere you enjoy
• Curling up with a good book

9. Decrease your screen time.
Self-care is setting aside time to be away from electronic devices. If you spend too much of your spare time away from caregiving on your phone or computer, you may feel isolated from your friends and family, and it may become an unhealthy way of coping with stress. Reduce your screen time by turning off notifications, creating phone-free zones, and turning off your phone when you’re with friends or family. Going for a stroll instead of watching Netflix

10. Keep an exercise routine.
Make a weekly fitness programme if you don’t already have one. Moving around often, whether it’s for a 10-minute stroll or a fast jog to start your day, is a proven strategy to boost your mental and physical well-being. To keep motivated, try the following tips:
• Make a playlist of tunes for your exercise regimen
• Post sticky notes throughout your house telling you to get outside
• Find a workout friend and commit to a weekly run or hike

Caring for a loved one who has a serious illness can be physically and emotionally draining, and it can even result in burnout. Maintaining your own health and well-being is critical so that you can provide the greatest possible care to others.

HERE ARE TIPS FOR HANDLING SOME OF THE COMMON CHALLENGES FOR CAREGIVERS:
• Make time for yourself and your personal requirements. Keep an eye out for indicators of stress, such as irritability, loss of appetite, or problems sleeping, concentrating, or remembering things. Pay attention to mood swings, a lack of interest in routine activities, or an inability to complete routine duties.
• Consume a healthy, well-balanced diet. Every day, drink plenty of water.
• Get some exercise by going for a brief stroll every day or at least three times a week.
• Listen to calming music or guided relaxation CDs.
• Intersperse activities with short rest times. Make getting a good night’s sleep a priority.
• Set boundaries for yourself in terms of what you can and cannot do.
• Don’t put too much on your daily to-do list. Keep your expectations in check.
• Set aside a few hours many times a week for significant and fun activities.
• Enlist the help of family and friends for household tasks, meal preparation, babysitting, and grocery shopping.
• Talk to your family or other caregivers about how you’re feeling, or join a support group.
• Praise yourself: You do make a difference with the attention you give.

CONCLUSION
An increasing amount of evidence suggests that caring for a chronically ill individual can affect the caregiver’s physical, mental, and emotional health. As they strain to provide care for others, families’ health is threatened. As a result, caregiver health is quickly becoming a public health issue that requires more focused attention from health professionals, politicians, and caregivers themselves to ensure the health and safety of individuals who devote their lives to caring for others. Improving caregiver health requires expanding access to appropriate mental health therapies and medical care. Despite the fact that caring can have a detrimental impact on caregivers’ health and well-being, research shows that these effects can be minimized to some extent by: caregiver education and support programmes; evaluation of family caregiver needs leading to a care plan with support services. Caregiver respite, financial help to lessen the financial strain of caregiving, and primary care interventions to address caregiver requirements. Improved caregiver recognition and treatment of physical and psychological symptoms is a key public health concern that needs to be addressed. Maintaining our country’s long-term
care system necessitates maintaining family caregivers healthy and capable of delivering care, and as the population ages, this issue will only grow more pressing. Caregivers have experienced negative consequences due to the high demands of caregiving and a lack of resources.

REFERENCES