



• ENRICHING ELDER LIVES •

MOSAIC

CAREGIVERS GUIDE



HOLIDAYS

THE FAMILY CAREGIVER'S GUIDE TO THE HOLIDAYS

It's holiday season, a wonderful time to celebrate with your loved ones. If you're a caregiver, we're sharing strategies on how to successfully navigate this festive time.



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about this

GUIDE

While caregiving can be engaging and fulfilling, it also can be stressful and demanding. The holiday season brings its own set of challenges. In this article, we'll offer valuable insights and practical tips to help you navigate this festive time of year with grace, compassion, and joy. From managing care routines to finding moments of respite and creating meaningful holiday traditions, we're here to support and empower you through the holiday season

PRE HOLIDAY PREP

The holidays are a good time to incorporate a little extra help in the home.

Even if you don't have a paid caregiver for the rest of the year, consider one for a couple of weeks. This can give you a little extra time and the freedom to leave the house and run errands, wrap gifts, and prepare holiday meals.



It may surprise you to learn that 53 million Americans – nearly one in five – serve as unpaid caregivers at home, according to the National Alliance for Caregiving. In addition, there are currently 1.3 million CNAs (certified nursing assistants) who work in long-term care, reports the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. These hardworking individuals help residents – or family members -- with the activities of daily living

SENIOR-FRIENDLY HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

Large holiday gatherings are lots of fun, but they also can be loud, long, and hectic. Take these steps to make it as easy as possible on your loved one.

Set up a side room where an elderly person can have one or two visitors at a time if the main area gets too loud.

Plan for your loved one to arrive an hour after the gathering begins and leave an hour before it ends.

Bring generations together by looking at photo albums, sharing stories. Photos are the best ways to engage with someone with memory loss.



Ensure there is senior-friendly seating. Make sure everything is on one floor and accessible.

Seat an older person in the center of the table rather than at the end. That will give him/ her access to the most conversation—and especially the grandkids!

Enlist your family's help to look out for senior family members, bring them plates of food, engage them in conversation, etc.

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Consider a group craft project with a holiday or community service theme.

Keep it simple and don't try to overdo it. Remember that companionship is the best gift you can give your loved one.

Incorporate the foods that your loved one remembers in the celebration, taking into consideration any dietary restrictions.



Don't forget medications and keep them safely away from children and pets.

Put the lights and holiday decorations inside the house rather than outside so your loved one can enjoy them.

Schedule holiday outings for off-peak hours. Keep your loved one warm and away from cold weather as much as possible.





CAREGIVER BURNOUT

KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CAREGIVER BURNOUT:

- Anger at your loved one; moodiness and irritability • Exhaustion, preventing you from completing daily tasks
- Sleeplessness, worrying about your loved one
- Anxiety about how you'll care for your loved one if he/she becomes worse
- Social withdrawal from the activities you used to enjoy

Remember that you're not in this alone. Reach out to family, friends and community resources. It could be as simple as arranging for someone to provide a meal or spend some time with your loved one.

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

EAT A HEALTHY, WELL-BALANCED DIET

It can be tempting to overindulge. Plan ahead for healthy treats. Maintain a healthy, well-balanced diet to feel your best.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

Physical activity is important for our health. Being physically active helps improve our balance and flexibility, reducing the risk of falls. Exercise strengthens our heart and lungs. It also helps reduce feelings of anxiety or depression. For all these reasons, it's good to schedule some sort of exercise daily even if it's just a short walk.

TAKE TIME TO YOURSELF TO RELAX

Even if you're a full-time, live-in caregiver, you need time for yourself to recharge. Schedule a time to read, meditate, take a hot bath, or simply relax. Even short 10-minute breaks throughout the day can help.

GET ENOUGH SLEEP

Sleep helps restore our bodies, reduce stress and decrease anxiety. Healthy adults need between 7-9 hours of sleep each night, according to the National Sleep Foundation. Make sure you're well rested.

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

You may have to stay at home, but you don't have to remain isolated. Schedule time to connect with others safely. Playing games over video chat or just catching up on a phone call will go a long way toward improving your mood.

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THANK YOU!

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Seashore Gardens Foundation DBA Mosaic is a trusted nonprofit leader in promoting and enhancing services and programs for the elderly. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life for the aged in Southern New Jersey.
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