

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

(http://www.seniorlink.com/articles/A19_N4_Respite.html)

Caring for an aging parent can be a round-the-clock job. It's no surprise that caregivers feel burned out from the constant physical and emotional demands of providing care to an elder. Respite care—temporary relief from the routine of care giving—is essential to help caregivers rejuvenate. What's more, it can be instrumental in continuing to care for an elder at home.

Respite care services range from in-home care (like companion services, home health aides and private duty nurses), to adult day care, to overnight stays in an assisted living residence or nursing home. You may take advantage of respite services for just a few hours to run errands or go to a movie, or you may use overnight respite to spend a long-weekend with your spouse or take an extended vacation.

Be sure to involve your parent in the decision to use respite services. If they are reluctant to accept these services, it may help to explain that you're the one who needs the assistance. Your parent might be more willing to comply if s/he knows the services are for your benefit. Use the first time as a trial run for everyone to test out the services. The elder also may feel more comfortable knowing the respite service is time limited (for example, three hours on Wednesday afternoons).