1. identify stress

10 common signs of caregiver stress

1 **Denial** about the disease and its effect on the person who has been diagnosed.
I know Mamma is going to get better.

2 **Anger** at the person with Alzheimer's disease or frustration that he or she can't do the things they used to be able to do.
He knows how to get dressed — he's just being stubborn.

3 **Social withdrawal** from friends and activities that used to make you feel good.
I don't feel like getting together with the neighbors anymore.

4 **Anxiety** about the future and facing another day.
What happens when he needs more care than I can provide?

5 **Depression** that breaks your spirit and affects your ability to cope.
I just don't care anymore.

6 **Exhaustion** that makes it nearly impossible to complete necessary everyday tasks.
I'm too tired for this.

7 **Sleeplessness** caused by a never-ending list of concerns.
What if she wanders out of the house or falls and hurts herself?

8 **Irritability** that leads to moodiness and triggers negative responses and reactions.
Leave me alone!

9 **Lack of concentration** that makes it difficult to do familiar tasks.
I was so busy, I forgot my appointment.

10 **Health problems** that begin to take a mental and physical toll.
I can't remember the last time I felt good.

Support available all day, every day

If you experience any of these signs, contact our **24/7 Helpline** at **800.272.3900**.

2. reduce stress

Learn about Alzheimer's disease

The more you know about the disease and what to expect, the more prepared and less stressed you can be. Visit our robust Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregiver Center at **alz.org/care** to get information on all stages of the disease. Topics include everything from behaviors and daily care to legal documents and potential costs. Free education workshops are available in your community (**alz.org/crf**) and online (**alz.org/training**).

Take care of yourself

One of the most important things you can do as a caregiver, is to take care of yourself. Try to eat healthy foods, exercise and get plenty of rest. Accept offers for help so you can take a break from your caregiving responsibilities to enjoy time alone or with friends. Visit your doctor for regular checkups. It's also important to keep a positive attitude and know that you're doing the best you can, and that the care you provide makes a difference.

3. be prepared

Take care of yourself

A care team is the group of people who you and the person with dementia can partner with and rely on to provide help, support and connection throughout the course of the disease. Consider including friends, family, doctors, neighbors and anyone else who might be able to assist. Having a team in place can help minimize stress and feelings of being overwhelmed for you and the person with the disease.

Make legal and financial plans

Making legal and financial plans early on can enable the person with dementia to participate and provide comfort to the entire family. Consider the following when making plans:

- Current and future health and long-term care needs.
- Costs you may face throughout the course of the disease and resources to cover them.
- Advance directives for health care, including decisions about end-of-life care.
- Property and other assets.

Learn about care services

Respite care

Respite care provides a caregiver with a break, or respite, by allowing another individual to assume caregiving responsibilities for a limited period of time. It gives you time for rest and relief from daily concerns and gives the person with dementia a chance to interact with others. Common types include adult day services, home care and residential respite.

Residential care

Residential care refers to care that includes housing and support services. The two main types, based on the stage of the disease, include:

- Assisted living facilities, which combine housing and personalized support services.
- Skilled nursing (mid- to high-level) facilities, some of which include specialized dementia care.

Hospice services

For those near the end of life, hospice programs provide comfort care and support to the person with the disease and his or her family.