

Caregiving

Caregiving is one of the most difficult, exhausting and important roles you will ever perform and one that you may not have expected. Your loved one may no longer be able to participate in activities and now depends on you for help. Sometimes it's easier to take charge and make decisions, but it's always important to treat your loved one with respect and dignity.

What you can do:

- Be your loved one's advocate. If you or your loved one is unsure about a treatment or type of care being provided, speak up. Ask for further explanation or resources you can read together. Do not hesitate to get a second opinion.
- Give honest, compassionate answers to their questions, but try to avoid overly detailed questions and explanations.
- Your loved one may wish to discuss their fears, concerns or distress with someone else, encourage them to do so. Offer to contact a friend, counselor or chaplain and give them privacy.
- Whatever feelings they have—let them know that they have a right to feel that way; do not try to talk them out of their feelings.
- Help your loved one to maintain as much independence as able for as long as they can. They will most likely need help with activities of daily living and some tasks may be embarrassing. Ask before giving help to allow control wherever possible.
- Be flexible so you can make changes to fit reasonable requests.
- If your loved one loses their ability to hear or speak, find a means of communication that works for both of you such as writing, an alphabet board or nods/blinks for yes/no.
- Give medications as directed by their physician: the correct dosage at the right time.
- Never force your loved one to eat. Let your loved one eat what he/she wants.
- Encourage your loved one to prepare advance medical directives. ✕



Resources

www.caregiveraction.org/resources

www.caregiver.com

www.caregiverslibrary.org/caregiving

If you need additional resources or assistance with caregiving, contact Family LifeCare at 800-355-2817 or www.FamilyLifeCareIN.org.