Top tips for dementia caregivers

If you’re caring for someone with dementia, you may find it difficult to make time for yourself. But looking after your health and wellbeing is one of the best things you can do for yourself and the person you’re caring for. Read our top tips to find out how.

**Diet**

Just over 32% of carers are at risk of poor nutrition

- Eat a well balanced diet that includes plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Housework and gardening can count as exercise – as long as you start to breathe faster and feel warmer.
- If possible, exercise with your loved one. Try going for walks together.
- Whatever type of exercise you do, make sure you have fun while doing it.
- Go for skimmed milk and low fat spreads, cheese or yoghurts.

**Exercise**

74% of caregivers are concerned about maintaining their health

- Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supports you correctly.
- Try to make some time to relax and wind down before going to bed. Steer clear of caffeine rich drinks before going to bed.
- If you’re pushed for time, try sleeping while the person you are caring for is sleeping – even if this means a daytime nap.

**Sleep**

Up to 74% of carers have difficulties sleeping

- Everyone deserves a break – never feel guilty for wanting to take some time out.
- Do something you enjoy. See a friend, have some alone time or follow a hobby.
- If you need a hand, short-term care options, such as respite care, can help you find the time to take a much needed break.

**Breaks**

59% of carers looking after someone in the late stages of dementia feel they are ‘on duty’ 24 hours each day

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**Support**

52% of carers felt they aren’t getting enough support

- Don’t be afraid to ask for support whenever you need it.
- Attend a local support group where you can share tips, ideas and advice with people in the same situation.
- Even if it’s just for a couple of hours, try to accept any help that’s offered from friends or family.

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**Sources**