

## Caregivers and Exercise—Take Time for Yourself

**Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. Finding some time for regular exercise can be very important to your overall physical and mental well-being.**

### Physical activity can help you:

- Increase your energy level so you can keep up with your daily caregiving activities.
- Reduce feelings of depression and stress, while improving your mood and overall well-being.
- Maintain and improve your physical strength and fitness.
- Manage and prevent chronic diseases and conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis.
- Improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function, such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks and plan activities.

### Some ways for caregivers to be physically active:

- Take exercise breaks throughout the day. Try three 10-minute “mini-workouts” instead of 30 minutes all at once.
- Make an appointment with yourself to exercise. Set aside specific times and days of the week for physical activity.
- Exercise with a friend and get the added benefit of emotional support.
- Ask for help at home so you can exercise.
- If possible, find ways to be active with the person you’re caring for. Both of you can benefit from physical activity!



### Quick Tip

Pick an activity you really enjoy to make exercise something you *want* to do, not *have* to do.

### VISIT

[www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life](http://www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life)

- Read more tips for adding physical activity to your day.
- Print useful tools.
- Order a free exercise guide or DVD.
- Share your exercise story.



National Institute on Aging

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