



Exercise for Carers

Many carers find it difficult to find time to exercise. However, you need to be fit and healthy to cope with the stresses of caring. If the carer can't care, both parties suffer.

As little as 30 minutes of moderate activity everyday will help you keep going with the physical and emotional demands of caring for someone.

Being active will improve your resilience and energy levels, promote better sleep, and reduce stress and depression – all enabling you to feel stronger while caring for your loved one. Exercise also helps build your immune system which protects against common health problems and helps maintain a healthy weight.

Always see your doctor before starting any new exercise program.

There are limitless different ways to exercise; it's just a matter of finding what works for you. Even if you don't find the time for exercise, you can:

- 💡 Take the stairs instead of the lift or escalator
- 💡 Park a bit further away and walk to your destination
- 💡 Walk to the next bus or tram stop if you're early
- 💡 Stand up rather than sit down

Getting started is probably the most difficult part. Here are some ideas that might help:

- 💡 Find an activity you love. The more fun you have, the more benefit you'll get.
- 💡 Start small by doing some quick exercises at home – stretches, walking up and down stairs. Or do exercises during the ad break while watching TV.
- 💡 Set time aside for yourself to do something active. Begin with 10 minutes a day and slowly build up to 30 minutes or more.
- 💡 Try to incorporate exercise into your daily activities.
- 💡 Doing housework to music can motivate you to move more quickly and thereby make a chore into a workout.
- 💡 Maintain consistency and try to make exercise a habit. Keeping up the motivation to continue exercising can also be difficult.
- 💡 Don't be too hard on yourself. If you don't make a session or need to cut one short, you can always reschedule.
- 💡 If you feel like missing your scheduled exercise, think about how good you will feel after you've done it!
- 💡 Get your exercise gear prepared early or if you are going in the morning – lay it out before you go to sleep.
- 💡 Book in a time with a friend so you are committed and have accountability.
- 💡 Get up 45 minutes earlier or walk during your lunch break. Play games with the kids or make up an active game with the family so everyone is involved. Be creative.
- 💡 If you take your loved one to an exercise or activity, join in or do something active that you enjoy at that time. Don't just sit around and wait.

You are an extremely valuable member of the community. You are needed, and you need to take care of yourself.