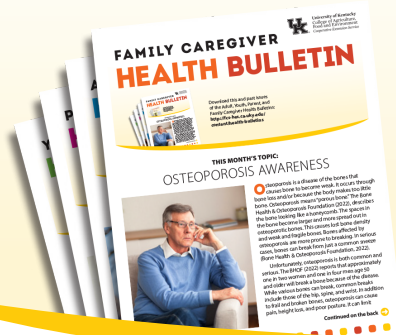


FAMILY CAREGIVER

HEALTH BULLETIN



APRIL 2025

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

BENEFIT-FINDING IS A POSITIVE FORM OF COPING WITH CAREGIVER STRESS



Caregiving can be rewarding. But it can also be stressful, even for the most resilient people. It is not uncommon for caregivers to have good benefits and negative stress at the same time. According to the Mayo Clinic, caregivers have higher levels of stress than non-caregivers. But the American Psychological Association reports that caregivers who feel more benefits than stress from caregiving report lower levels of depression and overall stress. This sensed level of satisfaction can have benefits even after caregiving has ended.

Finding the rewards of caregiving is a way of coping with the stressful circumstances. Those rewards might include:

- Strengthened relationships,
- A sense of purpose,

Continued on the next page 



Take a break. Everybody needs a break. Taking a break from caregiving can be one of the best things you do for yourself and your loved one. It gives everyone a reset.

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- Happiness at knowing your loved one is getting the right care,
- Modeling caregiving traditions for younger people, and/or
- Giving back to someone who may have cared for you or others.

According to the Mayo Clinic, caregivers report higher levels of emotional and physical stress than non-caregivers. When you're so focused on a loved one's care and well-being, it can be easy to miss the toll on your own health. Steady stress will harm overall health and well-being over time. When you're stressed, you are at greater risk for lack of sleep, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and feeling depressed or anxious. These lifestyles also increase your risk for chronic health conditions. As a result, caregivers need to care for themselves too.

Try these tips from the Mayo Clinic to help manage and lower caregiver stress:

- Ask for help
- Accept help
- Get in touch with the right resources (call your local Area Agency on Aging, national Eldercare Locator or the state Department for Aging and Independent Living)
- Join a support group (online or in-person) so you know you are not alone
- Focus on your strengths
- Eat a healthy diet
- Be physically active
- Sleep
- Seek sunshine
- Talk to your health-care professional

Take a break. Everybody needs a break. Taking a break from caregiving can be one of the best things you do for yourself and your loved one. It gives everyone a reset. There are many types of respite care including in-home respite, adult care centers, and short-term or



long-term care facilities. Family, friends, and neighbors can also help you take some time off.

Caregiving is an important role. Caregivers provide essential support to those who need it. In return, caregivers need self-care to protect their emotional and physical well-being.

Resources:

- **Area Agency on Aging:** <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dail/Pages/aaail.aspx>
- **Department for Aging and Independent Living:** <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dail>
- **ElderCare Locator:** <https://eldercare.acl.gov> or 1-800-677-1116

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- American Psychological Association. (2011). Positive aspects of caregiving. Retrieved February 21, 2025 from <https://www.apa.org/pi/about/publications/caregivers/faq/positive-aspects>
- Mayo Clinic. (2023). Caregiver stress: Tips for taking care of yourself. Retrieved February 21, 2025 from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/caregiver-stress/art-20044784>

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