



## Improving Caregiver Self-Care

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### *Nutrition*

- Eat fruit and vegetables
- Limit junk food
- No fast food
- Choose healthy options
- Make food early
- Drink water

### *Regular Exercise*

- Take a 10-minute walk
- Get outside for fresh air
- Reduce stress with yoga and stretching

### *Stay Connected to Others*

- Connect with friends and family
- Join a caregiver support group
- Volunteer
- Participate in social (community, church) activities

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### *Stay Healthy*

- Get 7-9 hours of sleep
- Continue your medication
- Go to doctor appointments
- Do all regular screenings

### *Avoid Unhealthy Activities*

- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Tobacco
- Emotional eating
- Too much screen time

### *Do Things You Enjoy*

- Read
- Listen to music
- Watch a favorite movie
- Take a warm bath
- Garden
- Cook
- Color

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### *Take Care of Your Mental Health*

- Journal
- Practice daily gratitude
- Meditate
- Do breathing exercises
- Take breaks
- Set boundaries
- Prioritize tasks
- Ask for help
- Monitor your self-talk

### *Ask for and Accept Help*

- Have backup caregivers
- Tell people you trust how you feel
- Join a support group
- Find a mental health provider

### *More Ways I Can Care for Myself*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## Reduce Temporary Distractions Incompatible with Self-Care

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Tobacco
- Emotional eating
- Binge watching
- Excessive social media use
- Watching the news non-stop



## SELF-care

*Each of these can help to take control over what you can and buffer against stress!*

### • **S** = Sleep

- Give your mind time to relax before bed (e.g., meditation)
- Avoid exposure to news or social media right before bedtime
- If your mind feels active, try to refocus by writing down three things that you are grateful for from the day

### • **E** = Exercise – Move your body every day

- Movement and exercise release endorphins, your brain's natural painkillers, bringing around a sense of general well-being, in addition to being good for your lungs
- Try to get exercise each day, such as getting out in the sunshine and walking (while of course, remaining socially distant)

### • **L** = Leisure (something fun or social) & new routines

- Build fun, creative, or leisure activities into your daily routine
- Connect with friend and family virtually
- Create your "now normal" routine
- Give yourself a break – "bend" where you need to, even if it's different than normal routines

### • **F** = Food and Fluids

- Good nutrition and hydration are essential for adequate function of the immune system and can counterbalance the impact of stress – make sure you are eating and drinking regularly

*Adapted from kidshealth.org and Dr. Lillian Christon*