

CARE FOR THE FAMILY CAREGIVER

EmblemHealth's Care for the Family Caregiver Program



Few jobs are as challenging as being an unpaid family caregiver—no matter how much you love the person in your care. But even if your responsibilities will never be easy, there are certainly ways to make them easier.

CARE FOR THE FAMILY CAREGIVER is an initiative of the Integrative Wellness department that provides information, resources and tools to help manage the challenges and stress of caregiving. Recognizing that family caregivers are the forgotten patients, the program seeks to address some of the needs of unpaid family caregivers, of whom there are some 44.5 million nationwide.

Often called the “silent patients,” family caregivers are largely ignored by the health care system, and thus are at risk for depression and illness. With an aging population, medical advances that keep people alive longer, shorter hospital stays, and sophisticated technology that allows sicker people to stay at home, the importance of family caregivers—and the demands on them—will only increase.

EmblemHealth's Web site offers a wealth of information including links about caregiving. To access the Web site, go to www.emblemhealth.com, click on “Health & Wellness” at the top menu bar, then go to “Family Caregiver” on the left bar. You'll find numerous links for New York City, regional and national resources.

For more information about EmblemHealth caregiving programs, please contact Gregory Johnson, creator of the Care for the Family Caregiver program, at **1-646-447-7651**.

10 Tips For Family Caregivers

1. Caregiving is a job and respite is your earned right. **Reward yourself** with respite breaks often.
2. **Watch out** for signs of depression, and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.
3. When people offer to help, **accept the offer** and suggest specific things that they can do.
4. **Educate yourself** about your loved one's condition and how to communicate effectively with doctors.
5. There's a difference between caring and doing. **Be open** to technologies and ideas that promote your loved one's independence.
6. **Trust your instincts.** Most of the time they'll lead you in the right direction.
7. Caregivers often do a lot of lifting, pushing, and pulling. **Be good to your back.**
8. Grieve for your losses, and then allow yourself to **dream new dreams.**
9. **Seek support** from other caregivers. There is great strength in knowing you are not alone.
10. **Stand up for your rights** as a caregiver and a citizen.

Source: National Family Caregivers Association

