

Are You Suffering from Caregiver Burnout?

All caregivers experience some degree of exhaustion and feelings of “I’ve had enough.” However, if these feelings are persistent they may escalate into caregiver burnout, which is described as “a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that may be accompanied by a change in attitude, from positive and caring to negative and unconcerned.” The symptoms of caregiver burnout are similar to those of stress and depression.

If you suspect you are suffering from caregiver burnout, ask yourself these questions:

Have I withdrawn from friends and family?

Have I lost interest in activities I used to enjoy?

Do I feel inadequate and helpless?

Am I easily irritated and angered?

Am I having difficulty concentrating and easily forgetting things?

Am I having difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much?

Have I experienced a change in appetite (either loss of appetite or overeating)?

Am I getting sick more often or having worsening symptoms of health conditions?

Do I ever have feelings of wanting to hurt myself or the person for whom I am caring?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, it’s time to talk to your own physician. In some cases, a physician may prescribe an antidepressant or recommend talking to a therapist. It’s also time to get help with your caregiving duties.