



Stages of care

Caregiving changes as time passes

Here are the five stages and what you may need to think about in each stage.

- 1 You're getting closer to your loved one needing care.** It's clear you'll need to start helping your family member or friend with daily tasks soon.
 - Talk to doctors, lawyers, the bank and a financial advisor to learn as much as you can about the situation.
 - Start researching care options you may need later on.
 - Include your loved one in plans and decisions about their care.

- 2 Care begins.** There may have been a turning point or serious illness for your loved one. They can't live independently anymore.
 - Learn about their condition and how to provide proper care.
 - Consider filing a Power of Attorney form so you can be included in medical discussions without violating HIPAA requirements.
 - Make decisions about care arrangements: For example, living at home or in a care facility, do they need household chore help or a home health aide.
 - Take care of yourself: Perhaps join a support group.



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3 You've been caring for several years.

You're involved in almost daily care, and it can take a toll.

- Set limits so you can still have a life outside of caregiving. Ask for help when you need it.
- Take breaks, and don't feel guilty about your own needs. Find community resources or neighbors who can help out.
- Develop a support system: Friends and family are great resources.
- Seek counseling if you need help understanding your feelings.

4 Your role is changing. Your loved one can't live at home, even with help.

- Look into assisted living, skilled nursing or hospice options.
- Think about and talk to your loved one about end of life care.
- Be proud of what you've accomplished, and allow yourself to grieve.
- See a professional counselor if you need help talking about grief.

5 You're no longer caregiving for your loved one. Now it's time to take care of yourself.

- Treasure your happy memories, and relearn how to enjoy "you" time.
- Get counseling to help you move on from your caregiver role. You've lost a loved person, and it's not uncommon to need help.



Need help finding resources in your loved one's community? Contact Aetna Resources For Living®.

Call **1-866-370-4842 (TTY: 711)**, Monday – Friday, 8 AM to 6 PM all time zones.

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