

# Family Caregivers Self Care During the Holidays

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# Sources of Holiday Stress

- Before we begin, I want to take some time to bring into awareness the types or sources of stress that present during the holidays they include some the following
- Increased demands on our time (shopping, meal preparation, holiday parties on top of everyday life)
- Reminder of the resentments we may have towards some family members. (family that we don't feel are pulling their weight) or having to spend time with family that is annoying
- Shifting and changing traditions (Family visits may need to be limited, difference in opinion about vaccinations, loved ones with compromised immunity and/or memory impairments)
- Increased health issues related to changes in the weather, flu season
- Financial concerns
- Holiday expectations not meeting reality
- Loneliness some caregivers report increased feelings of loneliness during the holidays
- Crowds-long lines, increased traffic

# Tenants of Self Care

- Regular Check-ups
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Sleep
- Socialization
- Spirituality
- Over-all Mental Health

# What happens when we neglect our stress?

- Increased health problems
- Disrupted relationships
- Depression
- Decreased quality in care
- Burn out.

# What is burnout?

- Caregiver burn out is a physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. Caregiving takes a heavy toll on anyone; and it is a 24-hour job for some. Recognizing the signs of symptoms leading to burn out is key to preventing it.

# Self-Care: Action Plan

- An action plan is something you want to do
- It's realistic and reachable, in other words something that can be accomplished in the next couple of days
- Behavior specific
- It answers the following questions
  - What are you going to do
  - How much are you going to do?
  - When are you going to do it?
  - How often will you do it?
- Lastly, you self-assess your level of confidence to achieve your plan on a scale between 1-10
- Self-care tips (holiday version)
  - Calling a loved one
  - Watching a Christmas movie
  - Nurturing creativity while decorating for the holidays