

# Balancing work & caregiving

Many people have to care for a loved one and work outside the home. Doing both of these things can be challenging.

If you're having trouble with your dual role, you're not alone. There are some things you can do to help make things easier.

First, try to take care of yourself. Find time for exercise, relaxation or getting out. Self-care is important for caregivers!



## Be open with your supervisor

Having a talk with your supervisor may help relieve stress. You can get your challenges out in the open.

Find out if they have suggestions that could help you. Maybe you have some ideas of how you can get your job done while still meeting your caregiving responsibilities. If so, share them!

## Check into policies and programs

Your workplace may have some policies or programs that can help you. Some examples include:

- **Employee assistance programs.** Many employers have resources to help their employees deal with challenges. They may have counseling services or can help you find services in your community.
- **Flexibility with hours.** Depending on your job, you may be able to work different hours. Talk with your supervisor or human resources department if this would work for you.
- **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).** Under FMLA, some employees are able to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a loved one. You have to meet certain qualifications for this, so ask your human resources department about the details.

## Consider other options

Caregiving can be difficult. Some people find that they need to use some caregiving services. These services can be life-changing if you work and need some extra help. You may want to check out:

- **Local Area Agency on Aging.** This organization can help you locate programs and services that can help you. Go to [www.acl.gov](http://www.acl.gov) to learn about U.S. programs for aging people.
- **Adult day care.** These centers can provide social interaction for your loved one while you work. Some of them may also provide meals, personal care and medical care.
- **Help from others.** Some people ask for caregiving help from a neighbor, family member or friend. You may also hire a nurse or home care aide to come in and help when needed.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians