

# Ten Timely Tips for Family Caregivers

**Get help with tasks and chores early on in the illness** - your loved one will get used to having other people around the home.

2. **Involve other members of your family from the beginning** of the illness - even if you are the only one who sees the changes which are taking place - pass these on as information only - not as a debating issue.
3. **Access all the information you can about the illness and educate yourself as much as possible about its progression** - disease-specific organizations, your doctor, and the public library, for example, are sources of information.
4. **Recognize and learn to accept that anger, anxiety and guilt are normal feelings** given the situation you are experiencing - they come not only from being tired but also from the losses you are experiencing.
5. Join a support group as soon as you can - **You do not need to be alone on this journey.**
6. Every change in your loved one means more adaptation and change for you - **acknowledge that this gives you the right to feel off-balance some days.**
7. **Forgive yourself for not being perfect.** Caring for someone with a chronic or terminal illness turns your life inside out.
8. **Make friends with your family physician** and ask for time to speak with her/him alone - if you need to do so.
9. **Get regular physical check-ups, eat a balanced diet and try to take time out to express sadness, anger and helplessness.** Accept yourself for being human and try to do at least one thing that you enjoy every day.
10. **Take one day at a time while planning for the future.** Good planning means getting to know and implementing any legal and financial considerations, facility placement issues, or palliative care, and **BE KIND TO YOURSELF.**