



# A Caregiver's Guide To Heart Health

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Caregiving for a loved one takes time and dedication, and helping them manage their health is a big responsibility. Becoming a caregiver to an individual with any health need, such as a heart condition, may involve guiding your family member through the medical system, helping them make informed decisions about their treatment, and supporting their healthy lifestyle.

## What Does It Mean To Be A Caregiver?

Being a caregiver can look and feel different for everyone. Some caregivers live in the care recipient's home and care for them around the clock. Others might spend several hours a day caring for their family member, taking them to appointments, or helping them with their personal needs. Still, others might be long-distance caregivers who provide financial aid and remote support.

No matter what kind of caregiver you are, it's important to know you're not alone. As you'll discover in this guide, one of the most important ways to provide consistent care to your family member is to create a network of support to give you relief and assistance as needed.



## I Feel Overwhelmed By My Role As A Caregiver. What Should I Do?

From figuring out finances to navigating the emotional labor the role can require, becoming a family caregiver can be difficult. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the transition, that's natural. According to the [AARP](#), 63 million Americans are unpaid family caregivers as of 2025. Since [1 in 20 adults aged 20 and older](#) in the US is living with heart disease, managing a loved one's heart health should be a consideration for caregivers.

As you continue on your journey as a caregiver, remember that others have been in your shoes – and many are willing to share their experience and insights with you. Don't be afraid to reach out to local support groups, senior centers, doctors, family, and friends to help support the care recipient while balancing your needs.

## What Resources Are There For Caregivers?

To support you with your new responsibilities, we've compiled a comprehensive guide to tackling some issues that often cause stress for family caregivers. This resource is divided into the following five sections:



### Time Management Tips For Caregivers

Learn 10 tested tips for managing your time while caring for someone else.



### How Kaneka Ubiquinol® Can Support Your Family Member: What to Know

Useful information about how Kaneka Ubiquinol® promotes overall health for adults of all ages and with varying health needs, including heart health — thanks to its antioxidant properties.



### Getting Started Checklist

Streamline the transition by taking care of the most crucial financial, legal, and health-related items.



### Organizational Toolkit

Organize the care recipient's medical history, doctor contact information, and track daily needs to keep you and your team on the same page.



### Questions To Ask Your Loved One's Doctor

Make sure you have all the information you need to care for your family member, now and in the future.

This guide is meant to support both new and seasoned caregivers with tools and tips that can help you stay organized and balanced. In the following sections, you'll find many links to organizations and resources to help you find the support you need. In addition to the resources outlined here, it's a good idea to ask your doctor, local community, and your own network about the support offered in your area.



# 10 Time Management Tips For Caregivers

As a caregiver, it can feel like there's never enough time. Between caring for someone, supporting your family and children, working, and making time for yourself, 24 hours can pass by in a flash – and leave you wishing you had a few more hours in your day. While we can't add time to the clock, we can give you a few tips to help you refine your time management skills and get the biggest return on your time.



### Start With A Time Audit

Between appointments, commuting, work, chores, and everything else, days can become a blur. In these cases, there can sometimes be a difference between what we perceive is taking up our time and what actually is. For example, scrolling social media for 30 minutes a day might not seem like it's taking up too much time, but over the course of a year, that adds up to almost 23 8-hour workdays.

To get an accurate idea of how you spend your time, track your activities and how much time each task takes during the next week. You might prefer to bring a pen and paper with you to track your time, or you can use a digital or app format. No matter how you choose to track your time, make sure you spend your week as you normally would so you can get a clear understanding of your daily activities. Once you have an accurate idea of where you're spending your time, you can see what tasks to cut down on and where you should ask for additional help.

### Create A Care Team

If you're a primary caregiver, it doesn't mean you have to be the only caregiver. Take some time to see who can lend you a hand with some of your daily, weekly, or monthly tasks. Start by asking local relatives or close friends. Be direct about what you need and get creative with how they can help. Maybe your brother can handle your mom's doctor visits, or your teenager can take her to a movie to give you some much-needed time off. If you need additional support, check out local senior centers or adult day programs to see how they can help.

### Define Responsibilities

Once your care team is assembled, make sure everyone is clear about their responsibilities. This ensures that nothing falls through the cracks and helps reduce time wasted due to two people doing the same task twice. For example, your sister might be responsible for fulfilling your mom's prescriptions, while you might check that your mom takes her medication and alert your sister when it's time to reorder.

### Plan "Me" Time Early & Often

When you're in charge of taking care of everyone else, "me time" is usually the first thing that gets cut from your schedule. But, just as we don't expect cars to run on empty, you can't run on fumes, either. Taking the time to care for yourself ensures you have the energy to take better care of others. Arrange backup or respite care and book a class, do a family activity, get a massage, or whatever will fuel you back up.

Some people might want to schedule a little bit of self-care time each day, while others might prefer a larger chunk of time weekly or monthly. Daily self-care can be anything from getting a good night's sleep to practicing a few minutes of meditation to start and end each day. Weekly or monthly activities usually include longer activities, like an exercise class or massage. Even if you can't spend much time or money caring for yourself, try to think about how you can make daily tasks more enjoyable. Pick a soap with a scent you love and focus on how good the hot water in your shower feels. Or, pick out your favorite songs and queue them up during your daily commute. The key here is to do something nourishing for yourself, so you can better support others in your life.



### Plan Your Week

Planning ahead saves time in the long run. Take a few minutes each weekend to review the next week's plans with your care team. This can help reduce gaps in coverage and give you a clear idea of what responsibilities to delegate that week. An added bonus? A solid plan can also lower daily stress around your loved one's care.



### Make A To-Do List, Prioritize, and Plan

To-do lists are a great way to provide structure and decrease your anxiety around remembering everything you want to accomplish. A list is a visual reminder to keep you on track and help you prioritize your time. It can be helpful to prioritize different tasks into buckets, like "today's needs," "this week's priorities," "want to do this week," and even "maybe someday." It can be helpful to limit yourself to 3-5 tasks a day to make your list more manageable and help you see where you should really focus your effort and time.

Feel like you're caught in an endless to-do list? You're not alone. One way to make your to-do list more achievable is to write down the ultimate goal, what actions need to be taken, and when you'll do them. Having a plan to complete your task can ease anxiety around your to-do list and make it easier for you to complete tasks in bite-sized pieces.



### Time Block

[Parkinson's Law](#) states that work expands to fill the time you've blocked off for a task. For example, imagine you're answering emails for your parent. Depending on the number of emails, this could take several hours, or even all day! Instead of letting the job take "as much time as it needs," set a time limit and stick to it. In this example, give yourself one hour to answer emails, starting with the most urgent or important ones.

If you find yourself consistently setting time blocks and needing additional time, take a moment to re-evaluate your workflow. You might need to block off more time for that task in the future or delegate a task to someone else.



### Organize Your Physical Space

Organization and decluttering can help reduce stress, make it easier to find what you need, and even help you focus. If you're spending a lot of your time in a disorganized space, take small steps to declutter and organize. Start with a manageable area, like a drawer or cabinet. The pleasure of seeing an organized space provides positive feedback to your brain, which can keep you motivated to take on larger spaces.

It can also be helpful to implement structures in your life to keep disorganization at bay, like a "touch it once" rule. This rule means that before setting an item down, you'll take an extra minute to put it where it belongs. This type of structure helps your space stay more organized and keeps "tidying up" from becoming a huge task.

If the care recipient has a lot of items to declutter, or this prospect seems overwhelming, don't be afraid to seek help. Professional organizers can help put an organizational plan in place. Some can even set up the system for you, so you can focus on other things!



### Avoid Multitasking

It might seem like you're getting a lot done when you're multitasking, but the truth is, our brains are designed to focus on one task at a time. When we think we're multitasking, we're actually switching back and forth between tasks, making us less efficient and more likely to make mistakes. Instead of multitasking, choose to take on one task at a time. It might take some practice to rewire your habits and focus on the singular task at hand, but over time, you'll end up being more efficient.

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### **Let Good Enough Be Good Enough**

When you're caring for others, don't expect to do everything perfectly. You're likely caring for multiple people and wearing many hats, so don't make yourself feel that everything has to be perfect. You don't have to complete every task in one pass, cook a homemade meal every night, or ensure your house is spotless each day. You are doing a lot, so give yourself a break where you can.

Managing your time as a family caregiver isn't always easy, but following these tips should help. Some tips might work better for you than others, so as you try different techniques, focus on what's most helpful. It's all about trying different techniques and tools until you uncover sustainable ways to support your family and schedule, so don't be afraid to change things up if something isn't working for you or your family!

# Getting Started As A Caregiver: A Checklist

Becoming a family caregiver is a significant life change. Not only are you learning to care for a family member in a new way, but you may also be dealing with a role reversal of caring for someone who used to care for you. The logistical and emotional changes can be overwhelming, so we've put together a checklist to help you ease into the role and understand how to get started.



**This checklist is geared towards those new to caregiving. However, if you've been a caregiver for a while, it's a good idea to go through this checklist to make sure your bases are covered. You may find some helpful resources or planning tools that you haven't put into place yet!**

### Understand Your Family Member's Health

Before you can plan what being a family caregiver will be like for you and your family, you'll need a good idea of your loved one's health conditions and current and future treatment recommendations.

- Ensure you have the contact information for your loved one's doctors
- Accompany the care recipient to their next doctor's visit. Be ready to ask the provider and take notes on the following:
  - The care recipient's diagnosis
  - Treatment options
  - Medication and supplement recommendations
  - Any tests or recurring visits
  - Diet recommendations
  - Exercise and physical therapy recommendations
- Write down your loved one's medications and what they need to take on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis
- If you're worried about your family member taking their medications, develop a routine to ensure they're taking the medications they need at the correct times
- Look into autofill options for prescription medications or schedule refills for the same day each month
- Learn about long-term health risks related to their diagnosis and get training in how to recognize certain conditions, like a heart attack or stroke
- Understand your family member's schedule, including exercise and eating recommendations. For example, what time is your mom used to eating her meals? Does she snack? How many times a day does she go on walks? Does she have weekly exercise classes?
- If needed, do a home audit to set it up for the care recipient's safety. Consider:
  - Removing rugs or putting non-slip mats underneath
  - Creating an accessible bathroom
  - Easy-to-reach lighting, night lights, or sensor-activated lights around the home
  - Adding hand rails or accessibility equipment to staircases and hallways

### Meet With Your Family/Support Team

Once you have an idea of all the specific healthcare needs your loved one might have, it's time to assemble your care team and delegate responsibilities. Caregiving takes a mental and emotional toll, so building a support system early helps set you up for long-term sustainability.

- Form your team (including family, friends, colleagues, clubs, etc.)
- Plan a meeting with your support team to determine:
  - What kind of immediate care is needed and wanted now?
  - What kind of care is needed in the future?
  - As a team, what are your individual strengths? What roles and responsibilities can be assigned that play to each person's strengths?
  - How will everyone stay on the same page? Will you have monthly meetings? Set up a group chat? Use an email chain with everyone attached?
- Create an emergency plan for your loved one's care in case something happens to you.

### Financial Planning

Family caregiving can have a big impact on a family's finances. To plan for your family's future, it can help to:

- Check insurance policies and coverage, including:
  - What's covered under your loved one's medical benefits?
  - Are their current doctors and procedures covered? What about future procedures recommended by their doctor?
  - What are the costs of copays, and how often will you have to pay them?
- Explore the [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#). As a family caregiver, you might be entitled to take a leave of absence under FMLA to help you transition
- See if your family is eligible for [Benefits CheckUp](#), a service by the [National Council on Aging](#) that helps you find programs which might pay for medication, health care, or other essential services
- Find out if you qualify for any tax reductions. The IRS has some information on [family caregiver tax breaks](#), as does the [AARP](#). Speaking to a professional tax accountant will give you the most accurate information about your particular circumstance
- If you're a low-income individual, contact your state's Medicaid program to see if you qualify for support through the [Medicaid Cash & Counseling program](#), which can pay you for the time you spend providing care
- Speak to a financial planner to set up a budget, investments, or other long-term insurance options to offset the cost of caregiving
- If the care recipient's condition has affected their ability to work, research [Social Security Disability Insurance](#) to see if they're eligible to receive monthly payments

### Legal Planning

Depending on the care recipient's condition, you might need to help keep track of their legal affairs and plan for their future:

- Make sure your loved one has a power of attorney (POA) for both health care and financial affairs if they become incapacitated
- Locate and organize important documents, like:
  - Birth certificate
  - Marriage certificate
  - Citizenship papers
  - Death certificate of a spouse or parent
  - Divorce decree
  - Power of attorney
  - Deeds to property
  - Deeds to cemetery plots
  - Military discharge papers
  - Insurance policies
  - Pension benefits
- Become an authorized user on your loved one's accounts so you can pay their bills if needed
- Organize your family members' monthly and yearly bills so you can anticipate expenses



As you transition to becoming a family caregiver, remember you aren't alone. Seek professionals to help you navigate this change and simplify the financial and legal processes. You can also connect with organizations that offer caregiver support, like the [National Council of Aging](#), the [National Family Caregiver Support Program](#), and local respite care services.

# Caregiving Planning Tools

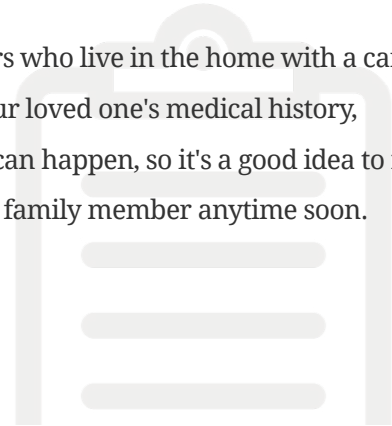
As a caregiver, you have a lot on your plate. You might be keeping track of your family member's medications, doctor's appointments, and meals while working, caring for your children, and managing your household. We've created a set of tools to help you keep it all together:



## Quick Reference Guide

The quick reference guide is perfect for seasoned caregivers or caregivers who live in the home with a care recipient. The purpose of this guide is to share the information about your loved one's medical history, needs, and routine in case you are unable to provide care. Emergencies can happen, so it's a good idea to fill this guide out, even if you aren't planning to spend time away from your family member anytime soon.

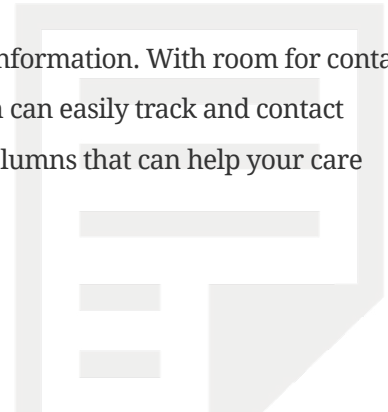
[View the Editable Template](#)



## Provider List Template

The provider list template is an editable spreadsheet to organize doctor information. With room for contact information, specialities, and hours of operation, you and your care team can easily track and contact doctors as needed. Since the template is editable, feel free to add other columns that can help your care team stay in sync.

[View the Editable Template](#)

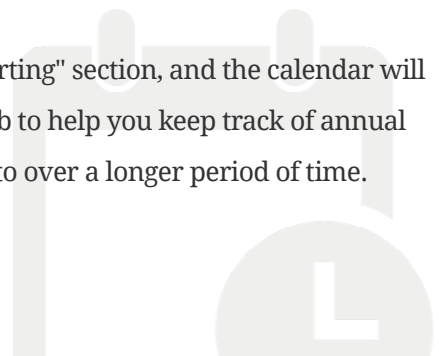


## Weekly Caregiver Planner

If you visit your loved one to provide care or need a universal place to closely track their medication, activities, and symptoms, our weekly planner can help. The purpose of this template is to give you one universal place to plan and track the care recipient's health.

If you use the editable Google Doc, simply edit the date in the "week starting" section, and the calendar will automatically update itself. This version also has a "Yearly Planning" tab to help you keep track of annual appointments, monthly prescriptions, or other notes you need to refer to over a longer period of time.

[View the Editable Template](#)



# Questions to ask your loved one's doctor

Meeting with your family member's doctor is important to understand how to support their health goals. To help you get a full picture of their needs, we've compiled a list of helpful questions to ask their doctor or care team.



### Diagnosis

- What's my family member's condition?
- How is the condition diagnosed?
- What are the causes?
- What are the treatment options?
- What are the most effective treatment options?
- Are there any common complications we should know about?
- What are our options if the diagnosis gets worse?
- What symptoms should I watch for?
- These are symptoms I'm observing/my loved one is reporting. Should I be concerned?
- I found this information online. Is it accurate?
- What's the big picture with the diagnosis? What will the care recipient's life look like in 6 months/a year/beyond?

### Testing & Surgeries

- Are tests necessary? If so, when should we schedule them?
- What will the tests show?
- How should we prepare for the tests?
- How quickly will we get the results?
- How conclusive are the results from this test?

### Surgery

- Why are you recommending surgery?
- How is the surgery performed?
- Are there alternatives to surgery? What is the outlook of these alternatives?
- When should the surgery be performed?
- What risks are associated with this type of surgery?
- What doctors/hospitals do you recommend for this operation?
- What's the average recovery time, and what does recovery look like? What kind of limitations will my family member have post-surgery?
- What is your experience with performing or recommending this surgery?

### Medications & Supplements

- Should my loved one be taking any medications to alleviate their condition or symptoms?
- What are the names of the medications you recommend?
- What does the medication do? What benefit does it provide?
- Are there any risks or side effects?
- How long should they take the medication (weeks, months, years)?
- Are there any concerns with taking this medication long-term?
- How frequently should they take this medication (several times a day, once a day)?
- Does the medication interact with any other medications my family member is taking?
- Should my loved one avoid any other drugs, foods, or activities while taking this medication?
- Is there a generic version available?
- Do you recommend heart-healthy vitamins and supplements like [Ubiquinol](#)?

## Lifestyle

- Should the care recipient make any lifestyle changes? If so, why?
- How should we prepare for these lifestyle changes?
- Should my loved one avoid certain types of food?
- Are there any foods my family member should eat more of?
- How often should my loved one exercise? What type of exercise should they do?
- Are there any exercises that are not safe?

## Expenses & Recordkeeping

- What costs can we expect?
- Will insurance cover the cost of treatment or testing?
- How can we reduce costs?
- Can I get a copy of the records?
- Can you provide written instructions for my family member's treatment and medications?
- Is there an online portal where notes and recommendations are stored for us to access?
- How can I reach you if we have follow-up questions?

# Appendix



## Care Overview Template

**How To Use This Tool:** Make a copy of this sheet. Then fill in the tables with relevant information for the care team. It's good practice to update this sheet periodically with new medications, health conditions, or notes. Keeping an updated record ensures your care team can step in and support you at any time.

Daily Routine Overview	
<p><b>Medications &amp; Supplements</b> (Include dosage information)</p>	
<p><b>Physical Therapy/Exercise</b> (What kind of exercise/physical therapy should they do? How often? Are there any mobility restrictions?)</p>	
<p><b>Appointments</b> (Are there any recurring weekly or monthly appointments your care team should note?)</p>	
<p><b>Activities/Social/Lifestyle</b> (Are there recurring activities your loved one enjoys? When and where do they take place?)</p>	
<p><b>Notes</b></p>	
Dietary Log/Restrictions	
<p><b>Meal Preferences</b> (What time do they eat? Do they have snacks? Do they need to take any medications before/during/after meals?)</p>	
<p><b>Dietary Restrictions</b> (Note restrictions of certain food/alcohol etc. with their medications or condition)</p>	
<p><b>Notes</b></p>	

Healthcare Notes	
<p><b>Diagnosis</b> (Include the medical name and some information about normal and abnormal signs and symptoms)</p>	
<p><b>Other diagnoses/health conditions/allergies</b> (Consider any conditions/impairments or medical equipment a care team should know about, even if it's unrelated to the individual's heart health)</p>	
<p><b>Doctor names, specialties, and phone numbers</b></p>	
<p><b>Other</b></p>	
<p><b>Prescriptions Needing Refills</b> (Note any prescriptions not on automatic refill and how often they should be filled)</p>	
<p><b>Emergency Contact Information</b> (Provide your information and a backup individual to be contacted if you are unavailable)</p>	
<p><b>Notes</b></p>	

Yearly Planning Template												
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<b>PRESCRIPTION REFILLS</b>												
<b>DOCTOR VISITS</b>												
<b>SPECIAL EVENTS</b>												
<b>NOTES</b>												

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Weekly Calendar Template

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Dietary Log/Restrictions							
Meal Planning	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
	Snacks	Snacks	Snacks	Snacks	Snacks	Snacks	Snacks
Dietary Restrictions							
Notes							
Caregiver Notes							
Today's Priorities							
Prescriptions Needing refills							
Housekeeping							
Bills/Paperwork							
Additional Healthcare Notes							
Self-Care Commitment							

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