



Caregivers and The Sandwich Generation

Tony Linares, MD
RVP, Medical Director
Anthem National Accounts



Today's Doc Talk Agenda

- **People with chronic illness are living longer today**
- **Are you part of the sandwich generation?**
- **What does it mean to be a caregiver?**
- **Why is it so stressful?**
- **How can you take care of yourself?**
- **Resources available for Caregivers**

Cancer impacts so many...

- **50%** of all men and **33%** of all women in America will get cancer during their lifetime.¹
- Based on rates from 2007-2009, **41.2%** of men and women born today will be diagnosed with cancer at some time during their lifetime.²
- **73%** of cancer survivors are living five years or longer after a diagnosis.²

¹ American Cancer Society: Questions People Ask About Cancer. <http://cancer.org/cancer/cancerbasics/questions-people-ask-about-cancer> (January 25, 2013)

² National Cancer Institute: Cancer. <http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/all.html#survival> (accessed February 2013)

Alzheimer Disease and other dementias

Facts you should know⁷

- Affects **5.3 million people** and ranks sixth in U.S. overall causes of death.
- It accounts for **60% to 80%** of all dementia-related cases.
- About **11 million** U.S. family members will provide unpaid care for a loved one with Alzheimer disease.
- **40% of caregivers** report high or very high stress levels.
- Alzheimer cases are **expected to triple** over the next 25 years.
- Other **common causes** of dementia include Parkinson's and Huntington's Disease, some types of multiple sclerosis, stroke, traumatic brain injuries, HIV and chronic alcohol or drug use.⁸

Who is in the sandwich generation?

“Sandwich generation” – men and women caught in the middle of caring for growing children and their aging parents or other aging relatives^{1,2}

How did it happen?²

- Average life expectancy is increasing
- More people have chronic conditions
- Couples have children later in life
- Families, primarily women, provide care for their children and their aging parents





What does it mean to be a caregiver?

Caregiving:

- **Providing unpaid help for the physical and emotional needs of another person.**
- **It can range from part-time to 24-hour care, depending on their condition.¹**
 - What kind of help is needed
 - How much hands-on care is needed
 - Who has the primary responsibility



Who are the Caregivers and at What Cost?

A study in caregiving³

Percentage of men and women providing care for an aging parent:



Men: 3% in 1994; 17% in 2008



Women: 9% in 1994; 28% in 2008

- Financial toll on caregivers 50 or older who leave the work force early to care for a parent:



Averages \$303,880 per person in lost wages, pensions and Social Security benefits over their lifetime



For women, \$324,044, with \$142,693 in lost wages; \$131,351 in lost Social Security benefits, and \$50,000 in lost pension benefits or matching contributions to defined –benefit plans

Workforce challenges for Caregivers

- **65 million** people in the U.S. will provide on average 20 hours of care for an aged or ill family member or friend any given year.
- **73%** of caregivers are working full time or part time and juggling work/life balance issues.
- Many caregivers will face **career and personal challenges**, including economic constraints or the need to cut working hours.
- A 2010 study showed that **caregivers are more likely to report their health as fair or poor**. They also are more likely to have a chronic condition like depression, diabetes, hypertension or pulmonary disease.
- The study also showed that **caregivers are reluctant to talk about their needs** for fear they may lose their jobs.



A Caregiver's Health is also Impacted

Health toll on caregivers³

- More-common health problems were depression, hypertension, diabetes and lung-related diseases
- Higher rates of stress, and more likely to smoke or drink alcoholic beverages
- Less likely to get preventive screenings, including mammograms



Why is it so stressful?

Caregivers experience a wide range of feelings.¹

- Sadness and grief
- Fear and worry
- Anger
- Guilt
- Fatigue
- Isolation





Why is it so stressful?

Sadness and grief

- Knowing that someone you love is in poor health and getting worse, and seeing it happen before your eyes can be difficult.¹





Why is it so stressful?

Fear and worry

- When you are taking care of someone whose health is failing, you may be overcome by worries and fear.¹





Why is it so stressful?

Anger

- No matter how much you love someone, dealing with a loved one who is sick can be frustrating.¹

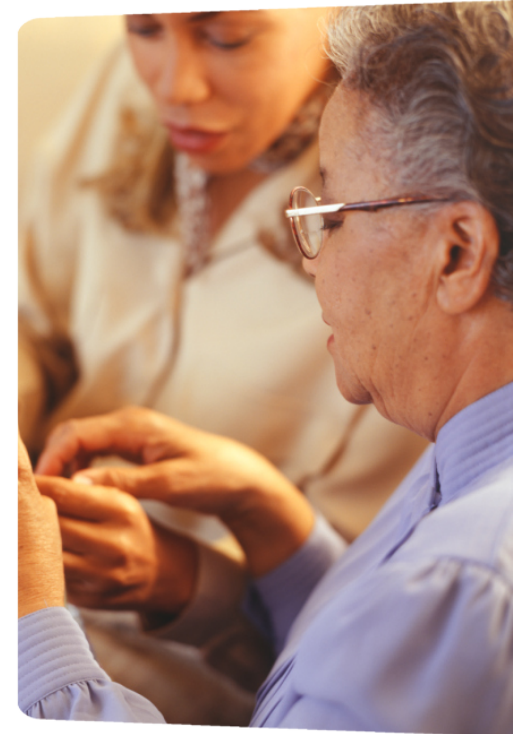




Why is it so stressful?

Guilt

- Caregivers can feel guilty about many things, including spending less time with their children and not doing enough to make the person receiving care happier.¹





Why is it so stressful?

Fatigue

- A person can do only so many things or be pulled in so many directions before it leads to fatigue.¹



Why is it so stressful?

Isolation

- Studies have shown that caregivers experience a significant loss in the free time they have.¹





How can you take care of yourself?

1. **Make your boundaries clear.**^{1,2,4}

- Set limits on what you will do.
- You can't be expected to do it all.
- Ask for help from other family members.
- Look for community resources to help with some parts of caregiving.



How can you take care of yourself?

2.

Discuss your concerns openly.^{1,2,4}

- Talk with your parent about his or her wishes and priorities.
- Don't leave younger kids out of the discussion.
- Don't assume it's best for your parent to move in with you.
- If your parent does move in with you, set up clear house rules.



How can you take care of yourself?

3.

Consider long-term financial plans.^{1,2,4}

- Speak up and ask questions when you need to.
- You still have children to care for. Can you pay a housekeeper while you're trying to save money for your son's college?
- Talk about different care options with everyone.
- If a parent can't manage his or her own affairs, you need to know his or her financial situation.



How can you take care of yourself?

4.

Take advantage of community services.^{1,2,4}

- They are there for you to use.
- Contact your local Area Agency on Aging or Division of Aging Office.
- Respite care is often available for caregivers.
- Organized support groups are often helpful in dealing with the stress of caregiving.
- Always ask your employer about EAP services



How can you take care of yourself?

5. **Maintain important relationships with family and friends.**^{1,2,4}

- Life changes and your parents' ability to live on their own can happen suddenly or can develop over time.
- Get others involved in key decisions as soon as possible – the sooner the better.
- Friends are often willing to help with things like shopping, yard work or small chores.



How can you take care of yourself?

6.

Care for yourself emotionally and physically.^{1,2,4}

- It's not a luxury – it's a must. You can't help someone if you're run down.
- Don't feel guilty about taking care of yourself.
- **Tips from the American Psychological Association on managing stress:**
 - Identify what is causing the stress.
 - Find healthy ways to manage stress.
 - Eat right; get enough sleep; drink plenty of water; get regular exercise (like walking, yoga or something else you enjoy).

**There are many
ways to care
for others.**

**Additional Guidance and
Resources for Caregivers**





How can you help your aging relative?

- **Talk about finances and legal matters.**^{1,2}
 - Financial decisions
 - Durable power of attorney
 - Durable power of attorney health care
 - Advanced directives (living wills)

- **Talk about when it is best to stop driving.**⁵



How can you help your aging relative?

- Talk about palliative care.⁶
- Talk about hospice care.⁶
- Talk about and arrange for emergency support.¹
- Talk about independent living centers, if that is an option.
- Talk about who the family spokesperson is for ongoing medical needs, including hospitalization and nursing home placement.

Caregiver Resources - Links

Workplace Transitions

- <http://workplacetransitions.org/research>

Family Medical Leave Act

- <https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>

Caregiver Action Network

- <http://caregiveraction.org/>

Help for Cancer Caregivers

- <http://www.helpforcancercaregivers.org/>

Support for Caregivers (American Cancer Society)

- <http://www.cancer.org/treatment/caregivers/index>

Additional Resources to Consider

- Your Employee Assistance Program
- The 36 Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People with Alzheimer, Dementia and Memory Loss – Nancy Mace
- AARP Caregiving Resource Center – aarp.org/caregivers
- The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine – palliativedoctors.org
- The Center to Advance Palliative Care – getpalliativecare.org
- National Council on Aging – ncoa.org
- Resources to help family and caregivers cope with aging, disability and eldercare issues – Carestation.agis.com

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