



November is National Family Caregivers Month. It is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country, recognizing the challenges that family caregivers face and how they manage them day and night.

“Caregiving can be a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week job,” states the Caregiver Action Network, which spearheads National Family Caregivers Month. “Providing care around the clock can crowd out other important areas of life.”

What challenges do family caregivers face, and how do they manage them day and night?

- **Morning:** The average family caregiver is a working mother of school-aged children. Mornings become a tricky balancing act of getting the kids ready for school, making sure your loved one has what they need for the day, and then getting yourself out the door for work.
- **Throughout the Day:** Up to 70 percent of the time, the family caregiver manages the medications. The more serious the condition, the more likely it is that the family caregiver manages the medications for the patient. This means ensuring their loved one is taking medication correctly and maintaining an up-to-date medication list.
- **During the Workday:** Six out of 10 family caregivers work full or part time in addition to juggling their caregiving responsibilities at home. Most say they have to cut back on working hours, take a leave of absence, or quit their job entirely.
- **Evening:** Evenings are for family time and mealtime. Nutrition is as important for caregivers as it is for their loved ones. Proper nutrition helps maintain strength, energy, stamina and a positive attitude.
- **Late at Night:** This might be the only time that family caregivers get a few minutes for themselves to rest and recharge. The chance to take a breather and re-energize is vital so they can be as good a caregiver tomorrow as they were today.
- **Middle of the Night:** If loved ones may need to go to the emergency room in the middle of the night on occasion, family caregivers should be prepared ahead of time with what they need to know and what they need to have with them.

The Caregiver Action Network (CAN) is the nation’s leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for the more than 90 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions, disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age. CAN serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers, from the parents of children with special needs and the families of wounded soldiers to a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS and adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer’s disease. The nonprofit organization provides education, peer support and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge.