

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## November is NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

Now is the time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It is an opportunity to raise awareness of caregiving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers.

More than 54 million people, or one in five Americans, serve as unpaid family caregivers. These people comfort their elderly and/or ill companions, coordinate their care, help them bathe, clean their houses, and shop for them. While caregivers find the experience rewarding, it can also be frustrating and take a toll on their emotional and physical wellbeing. Over half of caregivers report elevated levels of depression and anxiety, worsened physical health, and higher use of psychoactive medications.

These tips are a good reminder for caregivers and those who are close to caregivers.

- 1. Seek support**—Ask family members for help and include them in caregiving decisions. Consider joining a support group to discuss your worries and concerns with others who understand.
- 2. Share the tasks**—When family or friends offer to lend a hand, be ready with specific ideas. Make a weekly list and share that list with others to help with shopping, housecleaning, etc.
- 3. Take care of yourself**—Be sure to schedule and go to your medical checkups. Eat a healthy diet, exercise, and get enough sleep.
- 4. Make time for activities you enjoy**—Don't neglect the things in your life that need attention. Read, listen to music, paint, play a game, etc.
- 5. Plan for respite care**—Respite services provide someone who can stay with your family member while you get away for a few hours or days. Time off can help you manage your stress and be a better caretaker.

Help is available. Contact EAP at 866-327-4762 or go online to [eap.calhr.ca.gov](http://eap.calhr.ca.gov) for helpful resources.

Sources: CDC, Healthwise

