

Are you caring for a loved one?  
We can help.



Our caregiver resources support your loved one—and you



# We support caregivers and their loved ones

Being a caregiver for a loved one or family member is already challenging enough. Why not choose a health care plan that makes both of your lives easier?

Kaiser Permanente understands the demands on a caregiver and provides the support you need to stay on top of your loved one's care. Every part of their care—health plan, doctors, pharmacists, specialists, diagnostics, even medical facilities—is designed to work together in the best interest of their health. That's just one reason our award-winning<sup>1</sup> doctors and the quality of the care they deliver have been recognized as one of the top-rated health plans in the region.<sup>2</sup>

## Our integrated system of care is built around your loved one's health needs

At Kaiser Permanente, all of your friend's or family member's doctors—personal physician, specialists, pharmacist—work together on a single care team. This coordinated, seamless approach can result in better health outcomes.

The care team supports your loved one's health by:

- Consulting with one another to develop a care plan tailored to their specific needs
- Sharing information via a digital health record, so they can see test results, prescriptions, and more, freeing you from having to carry records from doctor to doctor
- Managing your loved one's care by making appointments or finding referrals

<sup>1</sup>The physicians who practice at Kaiser Permanente are recognized as Top Doctors in *Northern Virginia Magazine* (2024), *Arlington Magazine* (2023), *Baltimore Magazine* (2023), *Bethesda Magazine* (2023), and *Washingtonian Magazine* (2023).

<sup>2</sup>In the NCQA Commercial Health Plan Ratings 2023, our commercial plan is rated 5 out of 5, the highest rating in the region.

## We recruit highly skilled doctors

As a caregiver, you want your friend or family member to get the best care possible—which means having top-notch doctors you can trust. The Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group (MAPMG) is the largest multispecialty group in the region, and they exclusively treat Kaiser Permanente members. We have 1,800+ physicians in the region, with hundreds recognized as Top Doctors<sup>1</sup> every year in local publications. This means you can feel confident in the breadth of their skill, knowledge, and experience and in the care they provide to your loved one.

Kaiser Permanente only recruits physicians from the top medical schools in the country. Even then, just 1 in 5 applicants becomes a Permanente physician. Every Permanente doctor is board-certified, and their skills and manner with patients are rigorously vetted before joining MAPMG—so you can be assured that your loved one is getting the quality of care they deserve.



## Your loved one has access to care how, when, and where they need it

Caregivers have lots of responsibilities: nurse, financial advisor, cook, house cleaner, not to mention driver. At Kaiser Permanente, we offer innovative, convenient ways for your loved one to access care that make life easier for them and for you. Most of our 35+ medical centers throughout the region have doctors, labs, X-ray, and pharmacy in one location, so you can cover their care needs in one trip. We're also a pioneer in virtual care, so they can get many services right from home. Simply set up a profile to act on their behalf on [kp.org](https://www.kp.org), where you can help them to:

- Connect with a physician by phone or video visit<sup>6</sup> 24/7
- Get email consultations with their primary care doctor
- Call our 24/7 nurse advice line
- Have certain conditions monitored remotely
- Get medications delivered by mail, usually within 3 to 5 days



# Setting you up for success as a caregiver

Besides choosing Kaiser Permanente's integrated system of care as your loved one's partner in health, we've got many other tips and resources that can help you be a successful caregiver.



## Prepare the home where your loved one will be cared for

### Set up basic needs on the first floor

When prepping your home for your loved one, it's important to establish what they'll need and ensure that these things are accessible on the first floor whenever possible. This will simplify your work as a caregiver, and also allow your loved one to retain some level of independence in accessing their room and bathroom.

### Remove potential hazards

Eliminating hazards like rugs or cords in the home is a crucial step when preparing to care for a loved one as they can pose significant risks, especially if the patient has limited mobility or uses assistive devices like wheelchairs or walkers. By removing rugs and securing cords out of high-traffic areas, you can create a safer and more accessible environment that reduces the likelihood of trips and falls.

### Make modifications to bedroom and bathroom

Simple modifications like bed rails and accessible lighting will help with patient mobility, safety, and independence. Positioning the bed properly allows easy access for the caregiver and medical equipment, and placing the bed in a corner adds a layer of protection against falls in the middle of the night.

Bathrooms can also pose challenges for those with limited mobility. If your home doesn't allow first-floor bathroom access, consider investing in a stair lift if you're unable to renovate. Altering the shower with a walkway entry and investing in non-slip grab bars for the bath and toilet would also be welcome renovations, coupled with rubber shower mats and a raised toilet seat. These relatively small modifications make a big difference.

### Remodel if needed

It may be necessary to invest in larger remodeling projects like installing ramps or widening hallways for your loved one's mobility and safety. If your insurance provides limited resources for these modifications, do your research. While every locality has different resources and eligibility requirements, check with local non-profit organizations, government housing agencies, and community-based services as they may provide assistance with home modifications and low-interest loans.

# Get professional help for life care planning

Life care planning is essential for caregivers who are responsible for understanding and honoring their loved one's needs. Dr. Jaya Francis, an internal medicine specialist at Kaiser Permanente, emphasizes the importance of planning when taking on the role of a caregiver. "As a physician, I believe it's important for patients to have a say in their medical care. Every day, I help my patients make important decisions. I also encourage them to think about what they would want in situations when they're not able to make decisions for themselves," she says. Some factors to consider during life care planning include:

- **Assessing your loved one's needs:** Start by understanding their medical condition, medications, and any special requirements. This assessment will guide your caregiving plan.
- **Coordinating medical services:** Determine which services your health care provider offers and consider the logistics of your plan. Telehealth, for example, offers convenient consultations, which is especially helpful when caring for a sick loved one or a patient with limited mobility.
- **Financial planning:** Understanding insurance coverage and available resources is vital to ensure your loved one receives the best care without undue financial stress.
- **Legal and end-of-life planning:** Legal documents like advance directives will clarify your loved one's wishes, reducing emotional stress during critical moments.

## Life care planning resources

It's important for your loved one to make their wishes known regarding their future medical care and empower someone to make those decisions if they're not able. These are difficult conversations to have, but important for everyone's peace of mind. These learning resources will help make sure you have everything covered.

[Life care planning](#)

[Caregiver support: Talking about Advance Care Planning](#)

[Choosing a health care agent](#)

[Eldercare mediation](#)

[Care at the end of life](#)

[Caring for someone during their dying process](#)

[Medicare hospice benefit](#)

[The difference between hospice and palliative care](#)

# Support aging parents and children in the “sandwich generation”

The “sandwich generation” refers to middle-aged adults facing the unique challenge of caring for aging parents while also raising or supporting children. Caring for just one person can be difficult, but handling the needs of multiple generations adds even more to the caregiving role. And while challenges are inevitable, if you’re a part of this generation of caregivers, you’re not alone. You can take steps and leverage available resources to help your loved ones while also caring for yourself.

When you’re tasked with managing the diverse medical needs of both your aging parents and children, you may find yourself struggling just to handle it all. For many caregivers, this might include:

- Juggling doctor appointments
- Keeping track of medical records
- Coordinating with specialists
- Navigating complex health care systems

And as a primary caregiver in a multi-generational household, you can also find yourself handling additional responsibilities and demanding work at home. This can leave you physically and emotionally drained.

If you’re a dual caregiver, you can address these challenges by choosing Kaiser Permanente to support your entire family’s health. We make it easier for you to manage care for both parents and children by:

- Scheduling doctor visits on the same day in a single location when possible
- Featuring care services like lab, pharmacy, and X-ray in the same building, so you spend less time driving around to different locations
- Searching for referrals and specialists for your family members
- Keeping track of medical records via digital health record



# Prioritize your own well-being

When you're a caregiver, it's easy to become so focused on your loved one's needs that you neglect your own. But it's essential for you to prioritize your own well-being to ensure you can provide the best care for your family member or friend. Neglecting self-care can lead to burnout, stress, and physical health issues. These tips can help you stay on top of your wellness:

- Take regular breaks.
- Adopt stress-relief activities like regular walks, yoga, or meditation.
- Make time to see other friends and family.
- Schedule routine checkups to maintain your health.

## Ask for help

Asking for help when you need it is not about giving up or putting the burden on someone else, and it doesn't suggest that you don't care. Finding the courage to ask for help is about understanding how the quality of care you provide for someone else is directly impacted by the care you provide for yourself. Enlist family members and friends to help with household chores, running errands, meal preparation, childcare, and grocery shopping.

Self-care resources

When you're focused on providing care to a friend or family member, you can often forget your own needs. That can make it harder to give your all as a caregiver. Take advantage of these self-care resources to help maintain your own physical, mental, and emotional balance.

[3 tips to avoid caregiver burnout](#)

[Caregiving: Take care of yourself too](#)

[Stress management](#)

[Wellness resources](#)

[Practice self-compassion](#)

[Mental health and emotional wellness apps](#)

When you take care of yourself, you're in a much better position to care for your loved one.



# Caregiver resources

We're here to help you provide the best care you can to your loved one. From doctors and hospitals to finances and physical support, there's a lot you're accountable for. Here are tips, video guidance, and organizations to help you learn to handle these responsibilities, so you can give your all to your loved one.

[Caregiver support: You're not alone](#)

[Caregiving: Overview of personal care](#)

[Quick tips: Reducing the stress of caregiving](#)

[Hospital discharge planning](#)

[Financial, caregiver, and government assistance programs](#)

[Disease and injury prevention](#)

## Caregiver support organizations

[Family Caregiver Alliance](#)

[National Association of Area Agencies on Aging](#)

[Caregiver Action Network](#)

[AARP Caregiver Resource Center](#)

