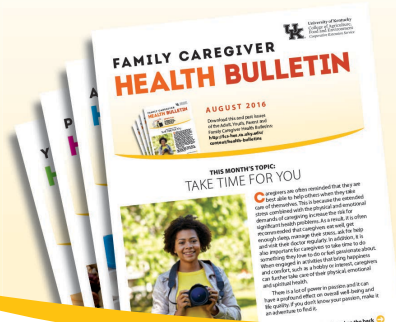


# FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN



DECEMBER 2017

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: RESPIRE CARE FOR THE HOLIDAYS



**W**hile the holidays can be a time of joy and celebration, they can also be tagged with mayhem — including holiday parties and gatherings, last-minute shopping, traveling and even unpredictable weather. The added holiday chaos or stress affects you, your family and the loved one to whom you provide care, especially when your loved one cannot travel or be left alone. Respite care is one solution that can help families avoid the negative impact of holiday anxiety and stress.

### What is respite care?

Respite care is temporary care that allows a caregiver time off from caregiving duties. It can be arranged for a few hours a week so that a caregiver can run errands or attend a function or last for weeks at a

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# Call your local Extension Agent or Area Agency on Aging for more information on respite in your area.

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time, which could allow a caregiver time to travel or to take care of things at home or work. Because caregiving can be a 24-hour job, respite is important because there are times when caregivers have to meet additional obligations or desires. Respite is also important because it can provide caregivers some temporary relief from the direct stress often associated with care. Not only does respite allow you to leave or get something done that you could not otherwise have done, it can also be an opportunity for caregivers to restore energy and balance.

### Who offers respite?

Respite care comes in several forms to help families find the right situation for their needs. To find the appropriate care, you can ask friends or family who may step in for you temporarily or know someone who can. You may also want or need to call an outside professional provider. Professional providers who come into your home often work with agencies and will likely have completed a background check. Circumstances may be such that your loved one needs to stay overnight in a facility offering respite services. Various long-term care facilities and even some hospitals will provide overnight and extended respite. You can also mix and match services. A family member, for example, may help a couple days a week, and a professional caregiver can be hired for the other days. It is always good to interview perspective caregiving candidates to help you find the right provider. Call your local Extension Agent or Area Agency on Aging for more information on respite in your area.

### Benefits of respite on caregivers

- Provides peace of mind
- Helps caregivers manage life's demands
- Reduces stress
- Restores energy and balance

### Benefits of respite on care receivers

- Provides opportunities to socialize with other people

- Allows access to round-the-clock care, including medical treatment

### What does respite cost?

While respite costs can vary from state to state, in most cases, respite care is privately paid as it is generally not covered by insurance or Medicare. Some disease-specific organizations, such as the Alzheimer's Association and M.S. Society, provide funding to assist with respite care. Contact your local aging services for more information on funding sources in your area. You may also want to talk to your family about the value of respite's benefits and together work to help cover care costs. MetLife's Mature Market Institute Study of Long-Term Care Costs released the following nationwide averages regarding various respite service:

- Home Care provided by an agency: \$21/hour
- Companion/homemaker services provided by an agency: \$19/hour
- Adult Day Care: \$67/day (note: adult day services vary widely in cost depending on who offers it)
- Assisted Living: \$106/day (\$3,293/month)

Understanding that you need help or a break from caregiving is part of being a good and loving caregiver. And while it can be overwhelming to find someone to take over your duties, respite has many forms which can help you find the right option for your situation. The range of options can help you put together a sensible and affordable plan that can benefit both you and your loved one.

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**FAMILY CAREGIVER  
HEALTH BULLETIN**

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