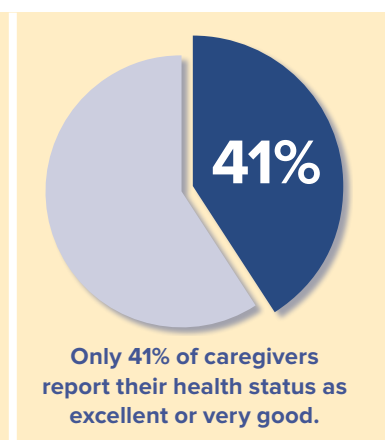
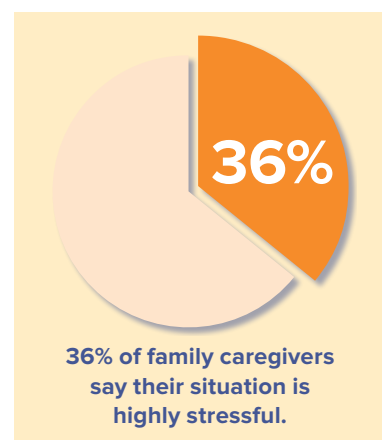


## Caregivers Are in Need of Care

The health of caregivers in the United States is declining and very troubling. **36%** of family caregivers say their situation is highly stressful. Although many feel the role has given them a greater sense of purpose or meaning (51%), these positive emotions are often intermingled with feelings of anxiety and stress. **Only 41%** of caregivers report their health status as excellent or very good, and a great percentage report being in fair or poor health. One in four find it difficult to take care of their own health (23%) and a similar proportion report caregiving has made their own health worse (23%). How can caregivers obtain the support they so desperately need?



### Getting the Support You Need as a Caregiver

To be the best you can be for yourself and your loved one, you must understand that you can't do it alone. Caregiving is often the responsibility of one family member who feels isolated and overwhelmed. However, there are resources available to make your caregiving load lighter.

- Make an appointment with your Primary Care Physician (PCP).** Tell your PCP that you're a caregiver. Discuss your physical and emotional concerns. Not sleeping well? Lower back pain from lifting or turning your loved one? Anxiety or depression? Discussing your concerns will not only help you, but the loved one you're caring for
- Incorporate virtual appointments into your care plan.** Virtual visits with your Primary Care or Mental Health Provider will lessen the need to leave your loved one to travel to the health care facility
- Consult your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Magellan.** Your **EAP** can assist you in navigating life's challenges and provide various resources and tools. Service is provided to employees and immediate household members. No enrollment is required
- Join a support group.** Talking with other family caregivers can lift your spirits and help you think through solutions to various problems if you feel alone in your struggle. Caregiver support groups are not only in person — you can find many support groups online and through your social media networks
- Take a break.** If you don't have family or community support, explore other options through the **National Respite Locator**. This online service can help you find adult day care centers and home care services in your area
- Dependent Day Care FSA.** If you're caring for a loved one who cannot stay alone while you're at work, did you know Dependent Day Care FSA funds cover eligible senior day care **Dependent Day Care FSA**
- Tap into caregiving support agencies and resources.** The **National Eldercare Locator**, a U.S. Administration on Aging service, can help you find caregiving support. You also may contact the **Illinois Department on Aging**



Offer to run errands. Offering to relieve the caregiver of a seemingly simple or mundane task will provide a breath of fresh air and relief to a caregiver.

### I'm Not a Caregiver. How Can I Support Someone Who Is?

- Give your friend or family member a break.** Offer to sit with their loved one for a few hours occasionally so they can go the doctor, take a walk or exercise, or simply take an afternoon nap
- Offer to run errands.** Simple tasks like grocery shopping, filling prescriptions, dog walking or taking the dog to the groomer are time-consuming. Offering to relieve the caregiver of a seemingly simple or mundane task will provide a breath of fresh air and relief to a caregiver that's sure to be appreciated
- Send a care package.** Caregivers often feel isolated and unappreciated. A care package that says, "You're doing a great job" — filled with simple items like a gift card for a manicure, pedicure or food delivery from a local restaurant — is a gesture that will lift their spirits
- Organize a Meal Train.** A meal train is a network of family members or friends who band together to schedule, prepare and deliver meals for someone who needs a little extra help. Meal trains can run for a week or two, or longer if the recipient needs more sustained assistance

Although caregiving often falls upon the shoulders of one or two family members, there are countless resources available that will provide the much-needed support every caregiver needs. Don't travel this road alone...help is available for you.