

Recommendations for Family Caregivers in light of the Corona Epidemic

Providing support for older adults is often challenging. However, in these anxious and uncertain times, providing support for older adults who are at risk of developing diseases with more severe symptoms may be even more challenging. For this reason we would like to give you some tools for coping with the situation, tailored to the different needs that you and those you support may have. Every family is different. Every family is an entire world of memories, experiences, strengths, and needs, therefore no one way or recommendation is suitable for everyone. You know your older adult family member best, but we can help by providing you with a number of guideline and principles for action and coping:

1 Normal reaction to an abnormal situation

In a state of uncertainty it is important to legitimize feelings of fear, worry, confusion, and mood swings. Try to be patient with the extreme reactions and behaviors of the older adult.

2 The Ministry of Health posts updated guidelines daily – stay updated

Make sure that the older adult and other family members follow them as much as possible (Paste the following link in your browser): www.health.gov.il/English/Pages/HomePage.aspx

3 A little less exposure to the news

Following the news may add stress and increase anxiety. Maintain a low dosage of news bulletins and report any new information to the older adult calmly and within reason.

4 Take care of yourself

In times of stress, you are required to serve as a role model for your family members, but you cannot be entirely immune. You can, and should, share that you are also anxious, but that you are coping with your fears. Keep your strength up as much as possible. Forgive yourself.

5 Maintain constant contact with the older adult

Use digital means such as the telephone, WhatsApp or Skype to stay in touch and provide support. Encourage other family members and grandchildren to keep in touch with the older adult in the same way.

6 Stick to routine as much as possible

In times of stress we need boundaries and order. Without them we may experience anxiety and confusion, so it is important to stick to routine as much as possible. Be aware of the continuous changes in guidelines and try to plan a routine for every scenario.



Do not forget the paid caregivers - ask how they and their families are doing.

Here are some hotlines to assist family caregivers of older adults:

- **The 118 hotline – the Ministry of Social Affairs information and assistance hotline** is available 24/7 for questions regarding welfare services for older adults and their families, especially with regard to coping with the coronavirus. The hotline is updated periodically according to Ministry of Health and National Security Council guidelines.
- **National Insurance Institute hotline for older adults and their families** *9696
- **Caregivers Israel** – information and support by WattsApp for caregivers 055.999.33.11
- **Yad L'Tomech** – support by the Yad Sarah Association for family caregivers 02-644.46.78
- **Yad Sarah's Corona Line** – home delivery of medical equipment at a cost of NIS 60 02-644.46.39
- **Tzippora Fried Alzheimer Support Center** – for caregivers of people living with dementia 073.395.68.07
- **EMDA** – support for families of people living with dementia *8889 or 03-534.12.74
- **Ezer Mizion** – information and support hotline for family caregivers: 1.800.80.20.30
- **Alzheimer Center 24/7 hotline** 03-559.93.33
- **NATAL** – designated line for coronavirus related stress and anxiety 073.236.33.80