



Me Time Monday™ Tip Sheet for Caregivers in support of the Healthy Monday Campaign

How Caregivers Can Give Themselves the Star Treatment

If you are a caregiver, you are a true superstar. As any star knows, you have to pamper yourself so you can continue to care for your loved one. Following are a few tips which will keep you performing your superstar role as caregiver:

- **Become sleeping beauty.** Chronic sleep deprivation can lead to a long list of health issues including high blood pressure, heart attack, obesity, depression and even serious accidents. The National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates 100,000 traffic accidents and 71,000 injuries are related to drowsiness during driving.
- **Create a Waterworld.** We have been told to drink eight glasses of eight ounces of water a day. Another measurement is to take half your body weight and drink that much water in ounces. So if you weigh 160 pounds, you want to drink at least 80 ounces of water a day. Staying hydrated can help alleviate chronic muscle and joint pain, lower back pain, headaches and constipation.
- **Screen test for de-stressing.** Cortisol is the stress hormone that increases abdominal fat making us want to eat more so we gain weight which stresses you out even more. To stop the vicious cycle, try deep breathing exercises. One method is to plug one nostril and breathe in deeply with the other, when you let it out, plug the other nostril. Continue as long as comfortable but you will be amazed at how relaxed you feel after a couple of minutes.
- **Let's do lunch.** Most caregivers are famous multi-taskers. Eating while in the car, at the sink, or on the run might seem efficient but can lead to bad digestion. Take even a few minutes in the middle of your day to stop the madness and just savor your food. Sit down, chew slowly, really taste the food and just enjoy. If you can not find the time at lunch, carry almonds or a piece of fruit in your purse and at some point – stop and have your healthy snack without doing anything else for 10 minutes.
- **Create your fantasy soundtrack.** Music can sometimes be the best therapy. Enlist your child, friend or co-worker to download songs onto your iPod or create a CD for your car. Choose songs that uplift you and put you in a place of feeling empowered and upbeat. Listen to your soundtrack going to and coming from your caregiving duties.

For more Me Time Monday tips from the Caregiving Club, visit: www.caregivingclub.com

For more information about the Healthy Mondays campaigns, visit: www.mondaycampaigns.org