

5 TIPS

FOR CAREGIVERS

More than 5.5 million military caregivers provide care for service members and veterans throughout the country.

Being a caregiver for a service member or veteran is an important job and often a difficult one. You may manage and support all aspects of a warrior's life, from daily tasks to managing health care.

REAL WARRIORS • REAL BATTLES
REAL STRENGTH

USE THE FOLLOWING PRACTICAL TIPS AND REMINDERS TO BETTER CARE FOR YOUR WARRIOR AND YOURSELF:

1

Talk with your warrior's care team.

With your warrior's approval, come to medical appointments ready to ask any questions and take notes about possible changes in the care plan.

2

Stay organized.

Organization can help your caregiving role feel a bit more manageable. Use lists or logs from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (caregiver.va.gov/toolbox/toolbox_organized.asp) or a calendar to keep track of medication schedules and medical appointments.

3

Join a caregiver workshop.

Learn how to be a stronger caregiver. The VA offers "Building Better Caregivers," a free, six-week online workshop. To sign up, contact your local Caregiver Support Coordinator through the VA website (caregiver.va.gov).

4

Take time for yourself.

Being a caregiver can be tiring and stressful. Even if it's just a few minutes a day, make time to do something special for yourself. Respite care may also be available. This service provides short-term rest from caregiver duties to maintain your health and take time for yourself.

If you are caring for an active-duty service member, you may receive respite care up to eight hours a day for five days per calendar week.

If you are caring for a veteran, you may receive up to 30 days per calendar year.

5

Reach out if you need help.

It can be easy to get caught up in the daily routine and forget that you don't have to go it alone. Reach out to family members, friends or health care providers for help in supporting your service member or veteran.

Contact the Caregiver Support Line for free at **855-260-3274** to speak with a licensed professional or find a caregiver support coordinator (caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp) to learn about resources and VA benefits in your area.



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Your support helps your service member or veteran to live a better life, which can be deeply rewarding.

At the same time, this role can be challenging.

Know you are not alone.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR IMMEDIATE CARE:

Military Crisis Line

(militarycrisisline.net/chat)

Offers free, confidential support 24/7 for immediate assistance to those in crisis. Call **800-273-8255** and press **1** or chat online at militarycrisisline.net/chat

Psychological Health Resource Center

Call/chat with a trained health resource consultant confidentially for free, 24/7 by calling **866-966-1020** or by chatting online at realwarriors.net/livechat for assistance accessing care.

VA Caregiver Support Line


Call **855-260-3274** or visit caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp

Military Hospital or Clinic

Visit tricare.mil/mtf to find your nearest hospital or clinic to receive emergency and non-emergency care for both physical and invisible wounds covered by TRICARE.



 realwarriors.net

 **866-966-1020**

 facebook.com/realwarriors

 twitter.com/realwarriors

REAL WARRIORS ★ REAL BATTLES
REAL STRENGTH

MHS Military Health System
health.mil