

Health Matters

Family Doctors Offer Online Health Tips For Caregivers

(NAPSA)—If you're feeling stressed out, tired or unhealthy as a result of your caregiving duties, you are far from alone.

According to a recent survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), nearly three out of four caregivers who care for a family member or friend who is disabled, elderly or has physical or mental limitations said caregiving had at least some impact on their health. Nearly six in 10 caregivers said they lose sleep at least sometimes.

"Caring for a loved one is a tremendous responsibility, which can have a big impact on your own health and well-being," said Glen Stream, M.D., MBI, president of the AAFP. "Caregivers need to know that there are resources available to help them provide the necessary care while also keeping their own well-being in mind."

The AAFP's award-winning website, FamilyDoctor.org, offers practical tips for balancing work and caregiving, dealing with life-changing events, keeping older adults safe, improving communication with a relative with dementia, and depression in older adults.

Nearly two-thirds of caregivers surveyed said they were frustrated by having to go to multiple resources for information on a specific health issue. More than half of caregivers felt there was no single online resource for highly credible health information on caregiving.

These findings demonstrate that caregivers need a comprehensive clearinghouse of information. Understanding caregivers' need for timely and practical information, FamilyDoctor.org has signifi-



A national survey found that 72 percent of caregivers said caregiving impacts their own health. FamilyDoctor.org can help reduce the burden.

cantly expanded information on the Seniors page. All content is reviewed by family physicians.

"The scientifically accurate information found on FamilyDoctor.org empowers patients to make informed decisions," Stream said. "And information helps lead to more constructive discussions between patients and their physicians."

The survey found that nearly two-thirds of caregivers who manage the health of those for whom they provide care sought information from their physician or health care provider. Of those, 96 percent sought information from a primary care physician.

Family physicians care for all ages and are able to not only address the health care issues affecting the elderly, but also offer resources for caregivers to help maintain their quality of life.

"Family physicians provide a patient-centered medical home for their patients. They coordinate care across all settings, including doctors' offices, nursing homes, hospitals and many other services that make up our complex and confusing health care system," Stream said.

To learn more about caring for seniors, visit www.familydoctor.org.