



# Renal Diet HQ

## Nephrology News You Can Use



Hello, it's another wonderful March and we are bringing you our informative newsletter once again. In case you missed it, spring has sprung! Yet it's still snowing in some parts of the US.

Winter seems to bring out the doldrums, but even when spring is imminent, it can still be hard for loved ones and caregivers to find the joy in life if they are stressed. This month, we are taking an important look at the caregiver and how to reduce their stress.

One of the most important and vital roles are those of the caregivers in our society, and especially those responsible for people with CKD. The diet, the treatments and the related conditions make this disease a hard one to manage, and a lot of the responsibility falls on the shoulders of family members.

This month, we have some great tips. If you like to listen to information about CKD, check out the podcast on itunes at :

<http://www.renaldiethq.com/go/itunes>

And next month, we will have a great product that will help caregivers do their jobs even better. Catch you later.

**Our website:**  
[www.renaldiethq.com](http://www.renaldiethq.com)

## Reducing Caregiver Stress

When you are the caregiver for another person, whether a small child or adult, it can be easy to get overstressed. Running around constantly and making sure that every little thing is perfect for another individual can often result in the caregiver forgetting to take care of themselves.

Reducing caregiver stress is important not just for the caregiver, but for the patient as well. After all, you cannot properly take care of anyone else if you aren't being cared for properly as well.

### Symptoms That You Might Be Overstressed:

- \* **Constant Irritability** -- If you are severely burned out taking care of another person, you may find yourself feeling unintentionally resentful and irritable. Sometimes you may be able to keep those feelings at bay, but even when you are trying to hide your feelings they can sometimes show.
- \* **Fatigue** -- Feeling overly tired and worn down is a symptom of being overstressed. If you are feeling very fatigued, it is important to do something about it. You cannot take care of someone else if you cannot take care of yourself.
- \* **Headaches** -- Headaches can occur when you are overstressed. From faint throbs to blinding migraines, there is only one treatment for stress induced headaches- taking a break and getting some rest.

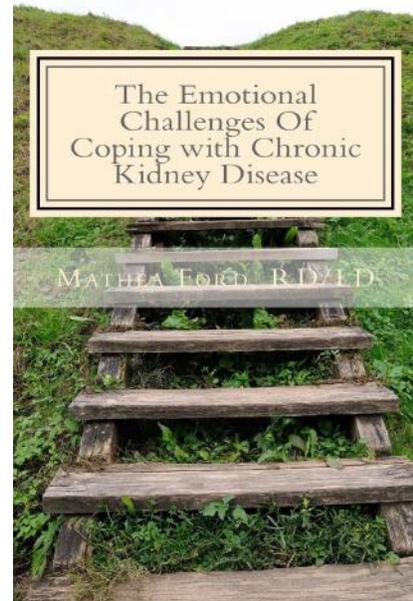
- \* **Trouble Sleeping** -- Often when you are troubled, over-involved, and overstressed, it can be hard to sleep at night. Your brain is on overdrive all day long, leaving night time the only time to play catch up. This results in not getting enough sleep, which can be dangerous to your health and normal daily function.
- \* **Problems Concentrating** -- When you are overstressed, especially on top of the fatigue, the sleeplessness, and the headaches, it is no wonder you might have trouble concentrating on even the simplest tasks.

### What to Do

If you are overstressed or burned out, you cannot properly take care of another individual. Do yourself a favor and do something about it.

- ◇ **Take a Break** -- Whenever you are able to safely do so, take a break. Whether it is just a five minute walk, a relaxing hot bath at the end of the day, a day off, or a vacation, take a break. Take a breath, get your bearings, and get back to it with a refreshed state of mind.
- ◇ **Ask For Help** -- If you are overstressed to the point of exhaustion, you are a danger to yourself as well as the person you are taking care of. Speak up and ask for help when you need to. Maybe there is a friend, family member, or someone else that can either help out for a little while, or take over until you are better able to care for yourself and others.
- ◇ **Slow Down** -- Sometimes it is easy to make a mountain out of a grain of sand. Try refocusing your life and taking things step by step. Unless there is an absolute emergency happening, slow down a little. Put some uplifting music on, or have a cup of tea. "Unfocus" a little.

Care giving is one of the most important jobs anyone can have, but you can't take proper care of someone else if you are overstressed. Take care of yourself as well.



Find our book at

<http://www.renaldiethq.com/go/RDHQbook7>

This book talks extensively about the emotional challenges of living with CKD.

**Coming April 15, 2014!**

<http://www.renaldiethq.com/go/caregiver>

#### **Guide to Caring for Renal Patients**

1. Informational guide to chronic kidney disease
2. Walk through the story of Mrs. Murray as she moves from stage 3 to dialysis with her family.
3. Learn more about complementary therapies such as reflexology and aromatherapy for CKD (what not to do!)
4. Worksheets and guides to keep you on track.
5. All of this packaged as a HOME STUDY GUIDE for you to learn from.

# Top Five Stress Reducing Activities

Care giving can be stressful, and it is so easy to get burned out. If you are overstressed and not taking proper care of yourself, it is hard to take proper care of someone else. You need to reduce stress.

Here are five stress reducing activities to help you be your best:

## Exercise

- ◆ Keeping fit and healthy has multiple advantages. Not only are you healthier overall, but you have more energy to complete the tasks before you. Getting regular exercise is a great way to combat fatigue, and is also a great outlet for releasing frustration.
- ◆ **Stretching** alone is a great stress relieving activity. When you stretch, you are helping to release tension and giving yourself a chance to breathe and unwind.
- ◆ **Yoga** is an excellent low impact exercise that can be done at any level of expertise. Yoga combines deep breathing exercises and methodical movements to improve balance and help tone the mind and body.

## Meditation

- ◆ Meditation can mean a lot of things. For some, it is simply closing your eyes and breathing deep for a few moments. For others, it can be something much deeper, focusing your mind and body to a point of tranquility. Prayer is often thought of as a type of meditation as well. Whatever works for you to help center yourself and release some of your burden.

Clinic Stamp

## Take a Break

- ◆ When you've reached your peak and are overstressed and burned out, it is a good idea to take a break. This could mean a short break or a long one, depending on what you are willing and able to do for yourself.
- ◆ **Walk it Off:** Go for a short walk around the block. Even five minutes can do wonders.
- ◆ **Spa Yourself:** Draw a hot bath and light an aromatherapy candle. Sit back and let yourself release the stress of the day. You would be amazed at the wonders a relaxing bath can do.
- ◆ If you are able, take a spa day and get a massage. Or treat yourself to a pedicure on an afternoon off. Any little thing to treat yourself and relax a little, to show yourself that you are worth a little extra time too.

## Laugh it Off

- ◆ Laughter, they say, is the best medicine. This is because laughing releases endorphins. So do something silly, listen to a comedy routine while you are working, or turn up some music and dance around. Anything to put a smile on your face and shake off the extra stress.

## Listen to Music

- ◆ Music has a way of soothing a broken heart, making you smile when you're upset, or relaxing the tension out of a stressful situation. Putting some music on in the background even while you work can cheer up the dullest day. Whatever music you like best, whether classical or country, pop or rock, turn it on and see what wonders it can do for your mood and stress levels.

When you are overstressed and overworked, you need to take care of you before you can take care of others. Follow these tips for stress relieving activities and see how much better you feel.



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