



## How Can I Support My Loved One?

Someone close to you has just had a heart attack, stroke or heart procedure. To help you and your loved one handle your feelings, it's good to be aware of them and to share them with people you trust. Talk with family members, friends, people where you worship and your health care professionals.

You and your loved one may also benefit from joining a support group for patients and their families. Support groups can help you both:

- Realize you're not alone
  - Learn about additional coping skills
  - Talk openly about your feelings
  - Improve your understanding of a condition and how to manage it
  - Reduce your stress and anxiety
- Praise your loved one for progress in their recovery.
  - Take a CPR class and learn the warning signs of heart attack and stroke.
  - Make sure important medical, insurance, legal and financial documents are organized and easy to find.

### What could change and how can I deal with it?

As you take on a caregiving role, you may have less time to yourself. One of the most important things you can do for yourself and your loved one is to make time and space for yourself. Caregiving can be hard, so find time to take a break, rest and get some sleep.

If you are a caregiver to your spouse or partner, you or your partner may be a little anxious about sex. It's important to talk openly about your feelings with each other. Avoid rushing into sex to prove things are "back to normal." Take your time and ease back into sexual activity.



American  
Heart  
Association.