

# Caregiving: How to Prepare

After a few days in the hospital, Mom was well enough to leave the hospital, but not without help.

I didn't have time to prepare.

Instead, I did what I needed to do when I needed to do it.

For me, caregiving was "on-the-job training."

So here are some ideas for you to think about as you prepare yourself and your home for taking care of someone who's coming home from the hospital.

Before we left the hospital, we reviewed mom's care plan.

I wanted to understand what problems to watch for, like pain or signs of infection, and who I should call.

Plus, Mom came home with a surgical drain that a nurse taught us how to care for.

You, too, may need to learn how to do a treatment or use special medical equipment.

It can feel awkward at first.

With practice, it gets easier.

I kept track of her medicines so that I could help her remember to take them.

Keeping track also helped me see if any of the medicines were causing any side effects.

I added her medical appointments to my calendar so I could take her or arrange for someone else to take her.

I also kept a little journal of her diet and activity.

When she first came home, it was hard for her to eat, so I needed to be sure she was getting enough nutrition.

This is also how I let her care team know how she was doing.

Oh, and I also asked her care team a lot of questions.

At home, we made a few changes in our living arrangements.

For example, we made room for her walker.

And we installed handrails around the toilet and in the shower.

This program is for informational purposes only. Publisher disclaims all guarantees regarding the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of this video for medical decision making. For all health related issues please contact your healthcare provider.



# Caregiving: How to Prepare

I learned how to help her get in and out of the bed and the car safely.

Mom was comfortable in the bed at home, but you might need a hospital bed.

Looking back, I'm not sure how I did it.

It wasn't easy.

I made a few mistakes.

I was often overwhelmed, scared, and stressed.

And it was really hard on mom to give up her independence while we cared for her.

Remember, you don't have to do it alone.

The one thing I learned and want you to know now...

To take care of someone, you've got to take care of yourself first.

For me, that meant I said "yes" to offers of help.

And when Mom tried to do things for herself, I let her.

Even if it took extra time.

Caregiving is hard.

Do the best you can.

And be kind to yourself.