



WHAT IS RESPITE CARE?

An Oaks Senior Living Guide



What is Respite Care?

Everyone needs a break from time to time. As a family caregiver, no matter how much you love and care for your parent or loved one, you need to make time to take care of yourself. Whether it is exercising, running your own personal errands, or simply enjoying a quiet evening to yourself, you need and deserve that time. This is where respite care can help!



In short, respite care is a way for family caregivers to obtain a break from his or her day-to-day responsibilities while ensuring that their

loved one is cared for properly. This temporary relief allows caregivers the opportunity to reset and recharge while having peace of mind in knowing that the senior they care for is receiving the necessary level of attention.



Respite (noun): "An interval of rest or relief" (Merriam-Webster).

Respite (adjective): "Providing or being temporary care in relief of a primary caregiver" (Merriam-Webster).



"Seeking respite care can help ease the burden of family caregiving and help to relieve stress, restore your energy, and promote balance in your life." -HelpGuide



*The two main
principles of
respite care:
sharing
caregiving
duties and
taking a break
for yourself*

Comparing Types of Respite Care

Just like all types of caregiving, respite care has many variations and levels of care. Respite care could be as informal as a friend or relative visiting with your loved one while you go to the grocery store. On the other hand, respite care could be as elaborate as a trained professional caring for your loved one on a regular, scheduled basis.

Some of these caregivers travel to your home, but there are senior living communities, like Oaks Senior Living, that offer varying levels of respite care services.

First, take a look at the varying levels of respite care.



| Levels of Respite Care



COMPANION

The companion level of caregiving is most likely the level of care your loved one would receive from another family member or friend. He or she could come to your home and visit with your parent or loved one while you run an errand.

The companion caregiver keeps the care recipient company and ensures his or her safety. This variation of respite caregiving does not require specialized training as the caregiver is not performing any health-related tasks.

PERSONAL CARE

These respite caregivers provide your loved one assistance with daily activities such as:

- Getting dressed
- Using the restroom
- Bathing
- Taking medications
- Exercising

The personal care level of respite care allows you to feel more at ease knowing that your loved one can go about the day just as he or she would if you were there to assist with these essential activities.

HOMEMAKER SERVICE

Homemaker, or maid service, levels of respite care assist in household tasks, which could include:

- Meal preparation
- Laundry
- Shopping
- House Keeping

SKILLED PROFESSION

This level of care is required when your senior parent or loved one needs a higher level of care and attention. This caregiver will need to have "more specialized training and expertise" (HelpGuide). Skilled health care professionals are able to assist with medical needs and services.

Two Main Types of Respite Care

In-Home Care

If you care for your loved one at home, it is possible to receive respite care services within your home. Depending on your loved one's care needs, this may be the most realistic and helpful choice. For in-home respite care, the caregiver will travel to your home and perform whatever level of care you have previously worked out while you take a well-deserved break.

All levels of respite care are available in-home and allow your loved one to remain in a comfortable and familiar space.



Community-Based Care

At times, your loved one may want to get out of the house while you run your personal errands, or your loved one may need care for a longer period of time. If either of these is the case, there are senior living communities that offer respite care, including Oaks Senior Living communities throughout Georgia and South Carolina.



"No matter the length of stay, your loved one becomes part of our family and receives the same great care and amenities provided to residents." - Oaks Senior Living

What Makes Oaks Senior Living Respite Care Services Unique?

We use an approach that is based on a person-centered lifestyle and enables seniors to socialize in ways that he or she may not be able to on a regular basis.

Benefits of Respite Care for the Caregiver

It is unrealistic to believe that you can juggle your caregiving responsibilities, work, family or children, and maintain your own personal needs, around the clock. Everyone needs help. Respite care is a tool available to you, the caregiver, that is meant to assist you in creating a healthy balance in your life.

If you do not know where to find respite care, the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center provides a free, interactive map to aid in your search for respite care resources near you.

"Asking for help is a sign of strength" - ARCH National



Respite Network and Resource Center



Provides Downtime and Reduces Stress

Caring for a senior parent or loved one can quickly become all-consuming, leading to stress. In fact, "caregivers have a 23% higher level of stress hormones" (Today's Care Giver).

You need downtime to yourself in order to decompress. Respite care provides a way for you to get the alone time that you need to manage your stress levels.

Taking Care of Your Own Health

It is all too common that when one cares for a senior parent or loved one, he or she neglects his or her own health. They do not visit the doctor as often as they should, eating habits worsen, and exercise becomes an afterthought. If you do not make time to care for yourself, you will not be able to care for someone else.

Respite care grants you the necessary time to tend to your own health and well-being.



Prevents Burnout and Exhaustion

Powering through day after day is not helping anyone. You will become chronically exhausted, your moods could shift rapidly, and you may become short-tempered. Even though you may not realize it at first, it's likely that the people around you have.

There is nothing to feel guilty about utilizing respite care for something as simple as spending a quiet evening by yourself. Return to your caregiving duties, feeling refreshed and reenergized. You and your loved one will notice the difference.

BENEFITS OF RESPITE CARE FOR THE SENIOR IN YOUR LIFE

Socialization

Older adults receiving care can begin to feel isolated. It is imperative to not only your health but also to your loved one's health that he or she receives proper socialization. Spending time with only one person inhibits him or her off from engaging and connecting with different people. Respite care can encourage your senior parent or loved one to form new relationships and friendships.

Hobbies and Activities

It is never too late to discover new hobbies or interests! Many communities that offer respite care schedule activities such as crafts, gardening, games, and other entertainment.

Another Set of Eyes

When you provide care for a loved one daily, it is easy to get into a routine and just go through the motions. When this is done, signs of newly developing issues can be overlooked.

Respite care brings a fresh set of eyes into the care of your senior parent or loved one. The respite care provider can notice changes in health more quickly because he or she is not with the senior on a daily basis. This could help catch signs of a developing condition early to prevent a further health issue.



THE TAKE AWAY

Seeking help is healthy for you and your senior parent or loved one, and utilizing respite care benefits both of you in many ways. Be honest with yourself and your loved one in finding a balance of caregiving that works for everyone involved in the care plan.



Contact Oaks Senior Living or visit our website to learn more about our respite care services and senior living communities throughout Georgia and South Carolina.

For additional caregiving information and tips, visit our Oaks Senior Living blog.