



Respite care

Time for yourself

If you're the main carer of the person you're looking after, an occasional break from your caring responsibilities is a must. This is known as respite care.

Carers can use respite care to take a holiday or a break, or time off if they're ill themselves. You might take a break for a week, one morning a week, or just occasionally.

Respite care can include:

- Residential or nursing care, where the person you're looking after goes for a short stay in a residential or nursing home.
- Day-sitting services, where someone comes into your home during the day to care for the person you look after.
- Night-sitting services, where someone comes to your home to care for the person you look after, letting you get a good night's sleep.

- Daycare, where the person you're looking after goes to a day centre or takes part in activities away from home.
- Holidays by yourself or with the person you care for.

How can I get it?

You may be offered free respite care through the social services department of your local authority.

Respite care is provided by your local authority after you've had a carer's assessment, or by the local authority of the person you care for after they've had a community care assessment. Make sure that both of you are assessed. The local authority will consider what help you need and decide which care services it will provide to help you.

Local authorities charge for some services and they will be able to tell you about this. Some local authorities provide vouchers that can be exchanged for services, others may offer you direct payments to be spent on care services.

If you're finding it difficult to get respite care, your local carers centre or Crossroads Care branch can give you information about local support. Crossroads Care is a national network that provides trained carer support workers, enabling carers to get a break.

If you want to find local carers' services or have questions about your financial situation, benefits, working or require practical advice, call our free, confidential helpline on 0808 802 02 02 or visit www.nhs.uk/carersdirect.

Carers Direct is a free national service. We offer information, advice and support for people who care for someone else.

Our comprehensive website has over 1,000 articles, 12 videos and a host of web tools to help you make decisions about your caring role. If you prefer to talk to someone about what options are available to you, our helpline advisors are on hand seven days a week, and in confidence, to do just that.

Call free on 0808 802 02 02*
or go to www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Carers Direct

*All calls from UK landlines and mobile phones are free. Lines are open 8am to 9pm, Monday to Friday, and 11am to 4pm on weekends and bank holidays. Textphone users should call 18001 0808 802 02 02. To use our call back service, in English and other languages, please go to www.carersdirectenquiry.nhs.uk/callback/carers.aspx