Caregivers are incredibly selfless people, putting the needs of others above their own.

But, what happens when they need a vacation or have to take some time off?

Respite care is the solution. It is the ideal way to give the caregiver a break while ensuring appropriate care for a loved one.

“Ideally respite care should be utilized before the caregiver becomes exhausted or starts feeling overwhelmed,” says Annette Akerman, a registered nurse and Regional Director of Operations for The Alden Network. “We do recommend that regularly scheduled respite stays should be planned to avoid burnout and stress.”

3 Types of Respite Care

There are three types of respite care. The first is in-home care that includes assistance with basic daily tasks, help with meals, and light housekeeping. The second option is adult daycare in a center among other adults, with planned daily activities. The third version takes place in a rehabilitation-skilled nursing facility or memory care center.

Care for the Caregiver

Respite care allows caregivers to exercise oft-neglected self-care. Stress reduction, renewed energy, mood improvement and time for socialization all ease the caregiver’s mind, body and spirit.

“These caregivers deserve to enjoy life, because they are caring for their loved ones 24/7,” reminds Akerman. “It’s a never-ending job.”

Care Facility Amenities

Respite care centers are designed for comfort and plenty of socialization. The Alden Network care centers have Wi-Fi throughout, and iPads and laptops are available for use. Books and games are also on hand to make the stay more enjoyable.

Nursing staff consider any type of care the patient may need during a stay. They assess daily living habits, medications, and other medical care needs so they know they can fulfill all necessary actions.

Memory care centers have specialized programming to reduce any confusion for patients facing cognitive issues. They are located in secure neighborhoods so patients can still be mobile.

“We have programming built around the early, mid and end stage of memory decline,” explains Akerman. Music, art, aroma and pet therapy are available for memory-challenged patients.

How to Get Started

The first step is to tour the facility so you can meet the staff and check out the programming. It’s the perfect chance to ask questions and alleviate any concerns you have about placing your loved one in respite care.

Pack for your loved one to have a cozy time while away. Comfortable clothes and shoes are key to enjoying activities and getting around. Toiletries are provided, but preferred items should be sent with. Books and hobbies help pass the time. Personal items are encouraged to make the space more “homey” during the stay.
Contact the Alden Network at 800-291-5900 to get more information on the appropriate location for care.

*To listen to an interview with Annette Akerman, a registered nurse and Regional Director of Operations for The Alden Network, please follow this link:
https://radiomd.com/alden/item/37020