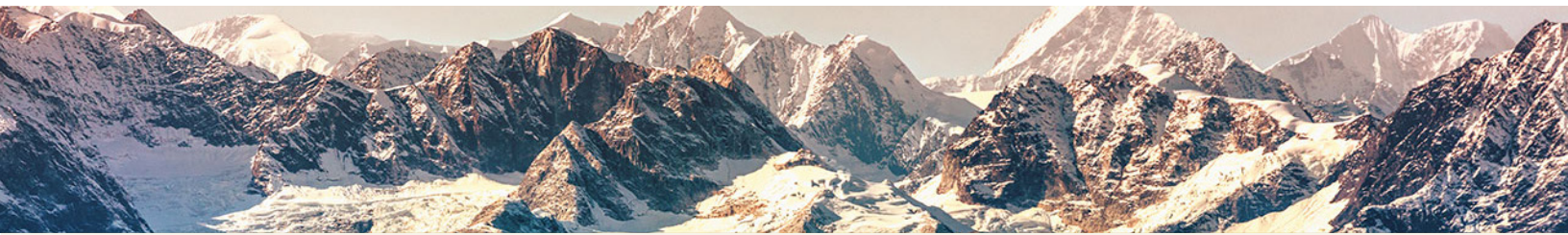


December 2023

# The Empowered Care Partner



## Together With You on Your Ceresti-Care Partner Journey



### FEATURED ARTICLE

## Spending the Holidays Together

*The holidays are here again, and like many family care partners, you may feel overwhelmed with added responsibilities.*

This time of year can be stressful for anyone, but family care partners may be particularly stretched thin as they juggle tasks associated with being a care partner alongside the demands of the holiday season.

With the right mindset and a few helpful tips, however, it is possible for care partners to navigate the holidays more easily. *Here are some things you can do:*

**Prioritize self-care:** It's essential for care partners to take care of themselves, especially during the holidays when stress levels can skyrocket. Take time for activities such as meditation, yoga, or reading. Prioritize sleep, allow yourself time to socialize, and strive for a healthier diet and a more consistent exercise routine.

**Set realistic expectations:** As a family care partner, you may often put a lot of pressure on yourself to make the holidays perfect for your loved one, friends, and other family members. However, it's important to remember that no one has a perfect holiday, and that's okay. Set realistic expectations for what you can accomplish and let go of any unnecessary stress.

**Ask for help:** Don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family. Consider delegating tasks, such as grocery shopping or meal preparation, to others. If possible, hire a professional caregiver to provide respite care so that you can take some time off for yourself.

**Simplify holiday traditions:** Consider simplifying holiday traditions by reducing the number of activities or events you participate in. Focus on the ones that are most meaningful. For example, instead of hosting a big holiday dinner, consider having a potluck or ordering in from a restaurant.

## FEATURED ARTICLE

Continued from Page 1

**Be more present:** Finally, remember to be present and enjoy the time you have with your loved ones. Don't let stress and worry overshadow the joy of the holiday season. Take time to appreciate the moments you have together and create new memories.

While the holidays can be a challenging time for all family care partners, they can also be a time of joy and celebration. With the right mindset and a few helpful strategies, you can enjoy the holidays, rather than feeling exhausted or overwhelmed. Prioritizing self-care, setting realistic expectations, asking for help, simplifying holiday traditions, and being present are all key to enjoying a stress-free holiday season.

Resources are available to help support you through the holiday season and beyond. Take advantage of any local respite care services that may be available, which can be especially helpful during the busy holiday season. Local support groups, online forums, and professional caregiver organizations can all provide valuable information and support.

***Always remember that your Ceresti coach is available for support by typing a message on your tablet or texting from your cell phone.***

***From all of us at Ceresti, happy holidays to you and your family!***

By Marilyn Abrahamson - Brain-Health Education Specialist at Ceresti Health.



---

For more information about the brain and how to keep it healthy, explore **Ceresti's Brain Health Education portal**. If this is your first time, go to [brainhealth.ceresti.com](https://brainhealth.ceresti.com) and use the code **GIVECARE** to register.

---

## TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR RISK FACTORS

### BRAIN-HEALTH IS FOR EVERYONE!

#### **Brain health is an essential part of overall health.**

Knowing what you need to do to reduce your risks of developing a memory disorder is the *first powerful step* in prevention. And, studies show that engaging in the *most effective* activities can even help stave off cognitive decline associated with aging.

*But how do you know what the most effective activities are?*

#### **That's where Ceresti's robust Brain Health Programs come in.**

**1- Ceresti's Brain Health Education Portal:** As a Ceresti care partner, you've got the tools you need at your fingertips. These educational tools can help you, your loved one, and your family have healthier, and better-functioning brains - along with strategies to reduce your risks of developing dementia!

Begin by visiting the Ceresti Brain Health Education Portal at [brainhealth.ceresti.com](http://brainhealth.ceresti.com). On your first visit to the portal, use the code **GIVECARE** to register - *and get ready to explore!*

**2- Ceresti's Caregiver Brain-Health course.** This course has everything - *mindset training, lifestyle education, strategies, methods and techniques for memory and attention, and skills training* to make everyday tasks easier to manage.

**Despite its name, the Caregiver Brain Health course is not just for you... do these lessons with your loved one and you can both develop a healthier and better-functioning brain together!**

As a companion to this course, you'll also receive a dedicated **Caregiver Brain-Health Notebook** to help you stay organized and motivated throughout the course. Once you begin, you'll hear from your dedicated brain health coach who will answer all your brain health questions and support you along your brain health journey.

**3- BrainHQ:** Ceresti offers the **BrainHQ brain fitness app** right on your tablet so you can effectively do a brain workout whenever you want to! BrainHQ is your own personal brain gym where you can exercise your memory, attention, brain speed, people skills, intelligence, and way-finding skills.

Each level in BrainHQ takes less than 5 minutes so you can do whatever works for your schedule.

If you'd like BrainHQ on your tablet, make a request by contacting your Ceresti Coach. If you've already got BrainHQ installed on your tablet, you can find it in your Daily Plan every day. Tap the button with your name on it and start working out your brain!

**Brain health is for everyone...** no matter who you are. As a Ceresti care partner, take advantage of everything Ceresti offers - the Brain Health Education Portal, the Caregiver Brain Health Course, and the BrainHQ brain fitness app on your tablet.

*Your brain will thank you!*



# Recognizing Change and Knowing What to Do - Why it's Important

As a family care partner, you are an unsung hero. Each and every day, you offer essential support for your loved one, often without formal training or recognition. One of your most critical tasks – *and a skill we strive to help you sharpen as a Ceresti Care Partner* - is recognizing when your loved one's condition changes. This can be a daunting task, but it's essential to ensure that your loved one receives appropriate and prompt medical care when change happens.

There are several signs that you should look for to recognize a change in your loved one's medical condition. To give you a more structured playbook to follow, we've divided these signs of change into three categories:

- **Physical signs** include changes in appetite, weight, or energy levels. A sudden loss of appetite or unexplained weight loss could indicate a medical problem, such as a digestive issue. Likewise, a sudden decrease in energy levels or increased fatigue could signal an underlying health condition, such as anemia or heart disease.
- **Cognitive signs** are changes in mental function, such as memory loss or disorientation. It is not uncommon for older adults to experience some degree of cognitive decline as they age. However, sudden or significant changes in mental function with confusion or difficulty with communication (speech and language) could indicate a medical problem, such as a stroke or a medication side effect.
- **Behavioral signs** are changes in personality, outlook, behavior, or mood. For example, a normally outgoing person who suddenly becomes withdrawn could be experiencing depression or anxiety. The same could be said for someone who is normally happy and upbeat but becomes sullen and negative. Likewise, aggressive or violent behavior could indicate an underlying medical condition, such as dementia or a brain injury.

Be aware that *some medical conditions may not present with any visible signs or symptoms*. Therefore, it's important to be vigilant in monitoring your loved one's health and take note of any changes, even if they seem insignificant.

Once you recognize a change in your loved one's medical condition, be sure to take action quickly so they receive appropriate and prompt medical care. This may include making an appointment with their primary care physician, contacting a specialist, or taking them to the emergency room, if that's warranted.

When seeking medical care, be prepared to provide the physician with a detailed account of your loved one's symptoms and describe any changes you have observed. You should also bring a list of all medications your loved one is taking, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements.

After a medical episode and treatment, it's also important to ensure your loved one receives appropriate follow-up care. This may include helping to schedule additional appointments, arranging for home health services, or even considering long-term care options.

Recognizing a change in your loved one's medical condition is an essential skill for any family care partner. By monitoring your loved one's physical, cognitive, and behavioral health, and knowing how to appropriately respond to those changes, you can promptly and accurately identify potential medical problems and help them get treated and resolved as quickly, and painlessly as possible.

**As a Ceresti Care Partner, our goal is to ensure that you have the knowledge and confidence to provide your loved one with the best possible care and support so you both can stay happy and healthy well into 2024 and beyond!**