

# Helpful Hints for Caregivers

Caring for a transplant patient is physically challenging and emotionally draining. Here are some tips from other caregivers on how to cope...

**Set up a support system for YOU!** Special friends, a support group, a spiritual advisor or counselor can sustain you emotionally during difficult times. Emotional support is just as important as caregiving help.

**Keep a journal and carry it with you.** Write down EVERYTHING – names, phone numbers, maps, instructions, questions and more. One day begins to blend into the next and remembering details will be hard. Remember to use the patient's ACES® Transplant Toolkit.

**Take time to recharge.** Eat well-balanced meals, exercise and take time to sleep. You won't be a good caregiver if you're exhausted or sick.

**Learn to delegate and accept help.** Family and friends WANT to help. Let them sign up to run errands, deliver meals, perform household chores and drive.

**Set up a system to update others** about your patient's progress, without having to talk to each individually. Delegate someone to post updates via email, Facebook, Lotsa Helping Hands, Twitter and other social networks on your patient's progress.

**Be politely assertive.** Make sure the medical team answers your questions and that your patient's needs are being met.

**Be flexible and patient.** Few things happen exactly as expected. Plan for delays, setbacks and surprises.

**Learn to focus on those things you CAN control,** rather than those things beyond your control.

**Try to maintain a sense of humor and a positive outlook.** Taking things one day at a time helps.

*Remember, caregivers need to play their ACES® tool Attitude, Compliance, Exercise and Support will help you as much as it helps your patient.*

