



**island health**

Geriatric Specialty Services

## **THE WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS AND DEPRESSION**

### ***Sleep disturbance:***

Difficulty falling asleep or remaining asleep; waking up early in the morning  
feeling anxious or irritable; unable to stop worrying or ruminating

### ***Appetite changes:***

Unusual over-eating or loss of appetite; significant weight gain or loss

### ***Increased medication or alcohol usage:***

Overuse of sleeping pills, painkillers, alcohol or caffeine

### ***Mood changes:***

Uncharacteristic short-temperedness, crying or agitation; expressionless face  
or flat tone of voice; recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

### ***Physical problems:***

Decreased resistance to illness; delay or neglect of vital physical needs, poor  
nutrition

### ***Chronic fatigue:***

Loss of energy; decreased motivation, concentration and attention; unending  
sense of tiredness

### ***Rough handling:***

Marked impatience when giving care; hitting, pushing or yelling when frustrated  
or angered; neglecting vital care tasks

**From: Wendy Lustbader and Nancy R. Hooyman, *Taking Care of Aging Family Members* (New York: The Free Press, 1994). Copyright © 1994 by Wendy lustbader and Nancy Hooyman: copyright © 1986 by The Free Press**

Caregiver Handout Geriatric Outpatient Clinic K. Gallagher July 2006 /Reformatted Dec 2013