My husband has hepatic encephalopathy from cirrhosis. I am exhausted. Where can I find help?

November 13, 2018 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

For those who aren't familiar with this condition, hepatic encephalopathy (HE) is a brain disorder that develops when the liver is unable to remove ammonia and other toxins from the body. HE is associated with advanced cirrhosis, and it may cause impaired concentration, sleep disturbances, confusion or coma.

The burden of HE is heavy on those who are closest to the person living with this devastating condition. Caring for someone with cirrhosis is hard work and much harder when there is HE. Caregivers may experience interrupted sleep, engage in physically demanding tasks, and often set aside their own needs and wants. The stress of being a caregiver may harm the caregiver's own health.

Support and self-care are the backbone of successful caregiving. November is National Family Caregivers Month and an excellent time to learn how to take care of yourself so you don't burn out.

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