

Gift Giving

The spirit of the holidays fills the air, and you are consumed with perfect gift ideas as well as your caregiver duties. When someone asks what you want, you say something like, "Anything is fine!" You are too frazzled to really think about it. However, don't you deserve to receive something you'll truly appreciate? Caring for you is important, so here are some ideas of gifts to help you do that:

1. **Massage Chair** - No awkwardness of a stranger touching you, and you can use it any time. Massage chairs are often pricey, but to be able to come home and have all your tension rubbed away might just be worth it. Being a caregiver is stressful, and if you don't take time to manage that stress, it could take a toll on your physical and mental health.
2. **Home Décor** - Ask for decorations that you think would work to make your home brighter and more alive. Imagine returning to a happier, more beautiful home after a long, hard day. If the idea of that lifts your spirits, this is the perfect gift for you!
3. **Healthy Food Basket** - Just like any other gift basket, except it's filled with delicious, healthy foods. Ask the person buying to include quick and easy meals that you can eat in a rush and still feel good about. Research pre-made meals to find out which ones are the healthiest and most natural.

Dark chocolate and tea are also wonderful things to include in something like this, because both have antioxidants and many other benefits. Of course, it's also okay to have them throw in a few unhealthy treats for a pick me up! Just remember that in the long run, healthy eating will make you feel much better than sweet treats.

4. **Self-pampering Basket** - Another basket idea? Sure! Baskets are fantastic for a variety of fun little gifts. This basket will include anything you need to treat yourself to a bit of pampering. This could mean anything from a gentle, unscented lotion to put on after a shower, to a whole DIY spa kit. Whatever it is that makes you feel like a king or queen for at least a short time!
5. **Exercise Equipment** - This gift is not designed to make you feel guilty about not having time or money to join a gym. Exercise reduces stress levels and makes you an all-around happier and healthier person. Perhaps ask for a yoga mat, so that you can do some stretches when you wake up and before you go to bed. Or if you want to do something more aggressive, ask for something like a punching bag. It's great fun and a little different than your typical cardio workout! You could also ask for coupons for exercise classes, so you can get out and meet new people.

6. **Music** - This could mean a variety of things: tickets to a favorite band, a personalized CD, a new mp3 player, an iTunes gift card. It's really all about what makes you tick. Music can do amazing things for your mood.

If nothing else, the best gift is time. Ask someone to take the loved one you care for shopping, or whatever you need, so that you can have time to spend with friends and other family members. If all else fails, our campus has a wonderful winter respite care where you can bring your loved one for a short time, and rest assured they will receive the best possible care while you take time to yourself.