

Prioritizing self-care



HAE reality

Life with hereditary angioedema (HAE) can be overwhelming at times. Regular stresses may lead to unwelcome feelings like fear, anger, worry, or frustration. Luckily, there are strategies that may help.

Taking care of YOU

Below are some ideas to help care for your emotional *and* physical health.

➤ Acknowledge your feelings

While it won't make HAE disappear, accepting that you have a rare disease can be freeing. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to feel when you receive a diagnosis or face a challenge due to your HAE. You might experience a lot of strong feelings right away, while others can emerge over time.

➤ Take breaks

Recharging your internal batteries can be a helpful step. This can include breathing, movement (like stretching), meditation, taking regular breaks from screens, and making time to unwind at the end of each day by doing something relaxing (like reading a book or playing a game).

➤ Focus on what you can control

You may not have control over your diagnosis, but you can control other elements of your life, like eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and showing your love and care for the people who matter to you.

➤ Pause the negative self-talk

Try to be patient and kind to yourself when dealing with difficult situations or coping with changes. If your thoughts turn negative or critical, it can help to say something like, "I will choose to be kind to myself." Speak to yourself as you would speak to a friend if they were in the same situation. Ask for help and advice from a healthcare professional if you need to.

➤ Integrate moments of joy

What inspires joy is an individual experience. That inspiration can be found in many places. It may be helpful to create a self-care checklist of things that bring you joy, whether that's listening to music, doing something creative, spending time outdoors, reading a book, or even brightening up your space.

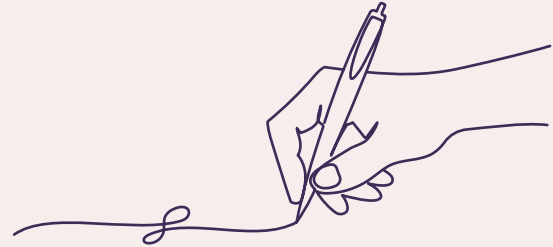


➤ **Connect with others**

It can be helpful to seek out others who offer encouragement and who you can trust with your concerns and feelings. If family and friends struggle to “get it,” other places to turn to include local support and advocacy groups.

Taking action

Starting your self-care journey can feel daunting. Here are some questions that could help you get started.



What are some simple ways I could recharge each week?

What are daily elements I can control that might improve my mental health?

When I start to have negative feelings, what phrase or mantra will I tell myself to help shift my thinking?

What elements should I include on my self-care checklist?