

PARTNERS, PARENTS & FAMILY

Supporting someone with FND

Carers and family are often the first to notice flares — and the first to feel helpless. This sheet is for partners, parents, friends and anyone supporting a person with FND.

What helps most

- Believe them. Symptoms can look different day to day; that is common in FND
- Ask “what would help right now?” instead of guessing
- Help with practical tasks on crash days without taking over every decision
- Learn their safety plan (when to call 999 / 111)
- Go to key appointments if invited — take notes, not control

What often makes things harder

Watch for

- Arguing about whether symptoms are “real”
- Pushing activity on a clear crash day
- Speaking for them in every appointment
- Ignoring your own sleep, work and health

Try instead

- “I believe you — let’s take this in steps”
- Agree a bad-day plan in advance
- Offer choices, not ultimatums
- Build your own support (friends, GP, carer groups)

Looking after yourself

Supporting someone with fluctuating neurological symptoms is real work. You are allowed to rest, ask for help, and keep medical care for your own health. If you feel unsafe or overwhelmed, contact your GP or local carer support.

Safety first

Call 999 for a suspected stroke, first seizure, severe breathing difficulty or other medical emergency. For urgent concerns that are not an emergency, contact NHS 111 where available or your local urgent-care service. Do not assume new or different symptoms are FND.

Continue overleaf for practical next steps, a personal plan and sources →

FOR CARERS · NEXT STEPS

Agree help before a difficult day

Discuss which tasks the person wants help with and what they prefer to do themselves. Agree how to offer assistance during episodes, where the safety plan is kept and who else can step in. Revisit the arrangement when symptoms or circumstances change; support should preserve choice and dignity.

Ask for support for your own needs

Tell your GP that you are caring for someone. Ask the local authority or relevant social care service about a carer's assessment or equivalent support. The NHS assessment information listed below applies to England; arrangements differ elsewhere in the UK. You do not need to wait until you are exhausted to ask.

Plan for interruptions

Keep key contact details somewhere accessible and discuss what happens if you are ill or unavailable. Ask a professional about safe moving and handling instead of risking injury. If caring is affecting sleep, health, work or relationships, describe those effects when requesting support. Young carers should involve a trusted adult or appropriate support service.

My next steps — discuss with your care team

Someone who could help if I am unavailable

Support I need for my own wellbeing

Sources and further reading

- NHS: carer's assessments (England)
www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/
- Neurosymptoms: occupational therapy
neurosymbols.org/en/treatment/occupational-therapy/

More practical help: For carers topic · What is FND? · Support groups