Driving information and contract

Driving requires the ability to react quickly to a variety of circumstances. Because of this, a person living with Alzheimer's will, at some point, be unable to drive. Planning ahead can help ease the transition.

Plan early for driving retirement.

- Plan to discuss how retirement from driving will be handled before it becomes an issue.
- Be sympathetic as you address the topic because retiring from driving and the perceived loss of independence is difficult for many.
- Visit the Alzheimer's Association[®] Dementia and Driving Resource Center (alz.org/driving), created with support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, for helpful information and tools.
- Keep a written record of your observations to share with the person living with Alzheimer's, family members and health care professionals.

Tips to help the person with dementia retire from driving.

- Transition driving responsibilities to others. Tell the person you will drive, arrange for someone else to drive or arrange a taxi service or special transportation services for older adults.
- Find ways to reduce the person's need to drive. Have prescription medicines, groceries or meals delivered.
- Solicit the support of others. Ask your physician to advise the person not to
 drive. Involving your physician in a family conference on driving may be
 more effective than trying to persuade the person not to drive by yourself. Ask
 the physician to write a letter or prescription stating that the person with
 Alzheimer's must not drive. You can then use the document to remind your
 family member what's been decided.
- Ask a respected family authority figure or your attorney to reinforce the message about not driving. When the person is still in the early stage of Alzheimer's, ask them to sign a driving contract (see page 3) that gives you his or her permission to help them stop driving when the time comes.

What if the person is reluctant to retire from driving?

- Experiment with ways to distract the person from driving. Mention that someone else should drive because the route has changed, driving conditions are dangerous, or you want to give him or her a chance to sit back, rest and enjoy the scenery.
- You may also want to arrange for another person to sit in the back seat to
 distract the person while someone else drives. If the disease is in an advanced
 stage or there is a history of anger and aggressiveness, it's best not to drive
 alone with the person.

- If the person with dementia wanders, he or she can also do so and get lost by car. Be prepared for a wandering incident and enroll the person in MedicAlert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return®, a 24-hour nationwide emergency response service for individuals with Alzheimer's or other dementias who wander or have a medical emergency.
- As the disease progresses, when the person is no longer able to make decisions, substitute his or her driver's license with a photo identification card. However, do not assume that taking away a driver's license prevents driving. The person may not remember that he or she no longer has a license or even that a license is legally required to drive.

What if the person refuses to stop?

If the person insists on driving, consider the following steps as a last resort:

- Control access to the car keys. Designate one person who will do all of the driving and give that individual exclusive access to the car keys.
- Disable the car. Remove the distributor cap, battery or starter wire. Ask a mechanic to install a "kill wire" that will prevent the car from starting unless the switch is thrown. Or give the person a set of keys that looks like his or her old set, but does not work to start the car.
- Consider selling the car. This may allow you to save enough in insurance premiums, gas and maintenance costs to pay for public transportation, including taxi rides.

Resources

Alzheimer's Association Dementia and Driving Resource Center alz.org/driving

MedicAlert + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return alz.org/safety

Driving contract (see page 3)

Driving contract	
I,	
(name of person living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia) under the nature of Alzheimer's disease or dementia, there will come a dar longer safe for me to drive. The purpose of this document is for me directions for what I would like to happen when I cannot drive any	y when it is no to share my
I am aware that due to Alzheimer's or dementia, I may not be able to I am no longer driving safely. In that case, I have asked the following to tell me that it is no longer safe for me to drive.	_
I understand that I may forget that I cannot drive anymore and may driving. If this happens, please know that I support all actions taken removing or disabling my car, to help ensure my safety and the safe	n, including
Signature of person living with Alzheimer's or dementia	Date
I,	
(person appointed above) commit to telling	
(name of person living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia) where safe for him/her to drive. I commit to taking whatever actions are not time on to help ensure his/her safety and the safety of others, as he/	ecessary from that
Signature of person appointed above	Date
Signature of person living with Alzheimer's or dementia	 Date
TS-0022 Undated April 2017	