



Tips for dementia caregivers

Contact the Alzheimer's Association for Information and Support

The Alzheimer's Association in Ohio provides around-the-clock support for individuals dealing with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. The Association's 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900, is answered by trained specialists and our website at alz.org is the premier place for educational, support and community resource information for families, caregivers and individuals impacted by Alzheimer's disease.

Be on the Lookout for Changes in Behavior

For people living with dementia, increased confusion is often the first symptom of any illness. If a person living with dementia shows rapidly increased confusion, contact your health care provider for advice.

Provide Written Reminders to Reinforce the Importance of Hand Washing

Consider placing signs in the bathroom and elsewhere to remind people with dementia to wash their hands with soap for 20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can be a quick alternative to hand-washing if the person with dementia cannot get to a sink or wash his/her hands easily.

Engage in Different Activities at Home to Fill the Day

Think what your loved one can do and what they like to do. The Alzheimer's Association has a list of 50 activities at <https://www.alz.org/help-support/resources/kids-teens/50-activities> to keep them engaged.

Make Alternate Care Plans if You Become Sick

With adult day care, respite, etc. modified or cancelled in response to COVID19, make sure you have identified others to help with care.

Assess Your Home-Based Service Providers

If you are receiving services from a paid health care professional in your home, ensure that:

- A temperature check has been conducted before they enter the home. Their temperature needs to be under 100.4° F
- If they have been exposed to anyone who has tested positive, do not allow them into your home.
- Ask them to wash their hands upon arrival and regularly throughout their time in the home.
- Require that they wear a mask

Establish Procedures for Getting Updates About Your Loved One Living in a Facility

Because personal contact has been limited during this pandemic, ask the facility about telephone calls, video chats or even emails to check in. If your family member is unable to engage in calls or video chats, ask the facility to suggest other ways for you to get updates.

Stay Physically and Emotionally Strong

As a caregiver, you often find yourself with so many responsibilities that you neglect taking good care of yourself. But the best thing you can do for the person you are caring for is to take an occasional break, see the doctor if need be, eat well, get moving and find emotional support by joining one of the Alzheimer's Association Telephone Support Groups by calling 800.272.3900.



Tips for those living alone with Alzheimer's

The following tips will help you handle day-to-day challenges, maximize your independence and live a meaningful life.

If You Notice Cognitive Impairment, See a Doctor:

Communicating your symptoms to a doctor is critically important because there are other causes for cognitive impairment aside from dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Doctors may conduct tests before making a dementia or Alzheimer's diagnosis.

Get Educated

Know what to expect so that you are prepared for changes in your abilities. The Alzheimer's Association in Ohio provides around-the-clock support for individuals dealing with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Go to alz.org and click on "Help & Support" and "I Have Alzheimer's" for information. Call the Alzheimer's Association's 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900 to connect with your local Alzheimer's Association office.

Share Your Diagnosis with Those You Love

As the disease progresses, you will need the support of those who know and understand you. Concealing or denying your diagnosis will limit your ability to cope with the challenges ahead.

Maintain a Schedule or Routine

A daily routine can help you remember and manage tasks. Make a daily plan to keep track of the tasks you want to accomplish each day. Having a schedule can reduce the time you spend figuring out what needs to be done and when. A schedule also makes you more successful in accomplishing your goals and limiting mistakes.

Manage your Medications

Here are some suggestions: Set up a pill box each night for next-day use; set the alarm on your cell phone or schedule dosing around meal times; place a sticky note on a particular medication saying, "Do not take me" as a reminder it has already been taken.

Manage Fatigue

Many times, with dementia, a person is unable to focus later in the day. One coping strategy is to work on tasks that require mental alertness during the early morning hours.

Consider Enrolling in a 24/7 Wandering Support Service

A MedicAlert membership plan with Wandering Support helps first responders and families reconnect with individuals living with dementia who experience a medical emergency or have wandered. Go to alz.org for more information.



Tips for avoiding caregiver isolation

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease is hard — and can lead to feelings of stress, guilt, anger, sadness, depression — and isolation. You do not have to deal with this devastating disease by yourself. The Alzheimer's Association offers free in-person and virtual resources. The following are tips to help Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers avoid feeling isolated.

Educate Yourself about the Disease

It's important to understand the stages of Alzheimer's disease so you can understand if the behaviors your loved one exhibits are caused by the disease. Go to alz.org to learn about the symptoms, the stages of the disease, care planning and support resources. The Association also offers free local education programs.

Take a Break from Caregiving

Taking a break every now and then is important for both your emotional and physical health. Indulge in a small treat — find a quiet spot and close your eyes for five minutes, listen to an uplifting song, work on a crossword puzzle for ten minutes. A short break for yourself everyday can work wonders.

Let family and friends help you

Take others up on offers to help and ask for help when you need it. If people say, "Let me know if there is anything I can do," suggest that they bring over a casserole, help you clean the house or just spend time with your loved one so that you can go out for dinner or a movie. Go to alz.org and search for Care Team Calendar for a tool to help with dividing up tasks.

Investigate Opportunities for Respite Care and Adult Day Centers

Respite care allows you to recharge, take time for yourself, or run errands you've been putting off. The Alzheimer's Association can help you find resources in your city through our Community Resource Finder at alz.org/crf.

Build a Support Network

The Alzheimer's Association in Ohio has many telephone caregiver support groups.

Telephone support groups provide emotional, educational and social support for caregivers through regularly scheduled meetings. It helps individuals unable to travel to a meeting site, and they are led by trained facilitators. Call the Association's 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900 to find a group near you.

Contact Your Local Alzheimer's Association

One call can change your life. Our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900 is a lifeline for Ohio's 600,000 Alzheimer's caregivers. Let us help you. The Alzheimer's Association provides around-the-clock support for individuals dealing with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.