



Home Safety Strategies for Early Stage Dementia

Amy Miller, LCSW
 Jefferson Center
 Senior Reach Program Coordinator




Agenda

- Activities of Daily Living
- Financial Safety
- Physical Safety
- Transportation Safety
- Emotional Safety




Activities of Daily Living

- Eating & Nutrition
 - Cooking
 - Eating enough
 - Spoilage
- Tips
 - Simplify recipes
 - Use crockpots
 - Routine
 - Grocery Shopping
 - Cleaning out the fridge
 - Labeling items

Financial Safety



- Tips
 - Involve a trusted person to review mail, bank accounts, and legal documents
 - Set up automatic bill payments or involve a trusted person in paying bills
 - Close credit cards that you no longer use
 - Complete a Power of Attorney
 - Remove your name from telemarketer lists
 - Review your credit report annually
 - Notify your bank, set up alerts
 - Consult with an attorney



Financial Safety



Five Red Flags

- They contacted you
- They want the conversation to remain confidential
- You must act with urgency and immediacy!
- If it sounds too good to be true, it is.
- You need to wire money or send money using gift cards



Physical Safety Tips

- Falls
 - Put grab bars in the bathroom
 - Stairs
 - Good lighting
 - Handrails
 - Contrast Strip
 - Anti-slip material
 - Remove rugs
 - Lighting



Photo Credit: GuideOne Insurance



Medications

- Tips
 - Use a pill box organizer
 - Develop a routine
 - Use a checklist, calendar, or app to track
 - Automatic medication dispensers
 - Utilizing home health services



Physical Safety

- Natural Disasters
 - Develop a safety plan
 - Who can assist?
 - Where can you stay?
 - How will you get there?
 - Take into account specific needs like durable medical equipment, oxygen, medications
 - Evacuate early, if possible
 - Have a copy of your medical records, and have extra medication on hand if possible
 - Prepare an emergency kit



Physical Safety

- Hobbies
 - Woodworking, hunting, etc.
 - Consider modifying the activity
 - Enjoy your hobby with a companion
 - Think of other hobbies that you'd enjoy if engaging in your current hobbies becomes unsafe



Transportation Safety

- Driving
- Public transportation
- Wandering
 - 60%
 - MedicAlert + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return



Emotional Safety

- Depression
 - 40% of people with dementia have depression
- Suicidal thoughts
- Isolation



Emotional Safety

- Tips
 - Talk to your doctor or a licensed mental health professional about any feelings of depression or thoughts of suicide
 - Do your best to stay connected to your friends
 - Find new activities and people that you can relate to
 - Alzheimer's Association Early Stage Programs



For more information

- Financial Safety
 - AARP Elder Watch
 - District Attorney Fraud Hotline
 - Jeffco/Gilpin: 303-271-6980
 - Denver: 720-913-9179
 - Colorado Attorney General: 800-222-4444
 - www.stopfraudcolorado.gov



For more information

- Physical Safety & Activities of Daily Living
 - Consult with a physical therapist or occupational therapist
 - Brothers Redevelopment: Home Modifications
 - Accessible Systems



For more information

- Transportation Safety
 - Driving evaluations:
 - Drive with Confidence: 303-908-6322
 - DriveABLE (Boulder, Co. Springs, Woodland Park):
 - <https://www.driveable.com/index.php/get-an-assessment/licensed-sites>
 - CAN Adaptive Driving Solutions (Fort Collins & Littleton): 970-493-6667
 - VA
 - Other transportation options: Check with your local Area Agency on Aging or local Alzheimer's Association office
 - MedicAlert+Safe Return ID bracelet

For more information

- Planning for natural disasters
 - American Red Cross
 - National Hurricane Center
 - Ready.gov



For more information

- Emotional Support Resources
 - Alzconnected.org
 - 24/7 Helpline: 800-272-3900
 - Senior Reach (Adams, Jefferson, Clear Creek, Boulder, Broomfield, Gilpin, & La Plata counties): 866-217-5808
 - Rocky Mountain Neurobehavioral Associates
 - www.mountainneuro.com
 - Alzheimer's Association Early Stage Programs



Thank you!

Amy Miller, LCSW
 Jefferson Center
 Senior Reach Program Coordinator
amym@jcmh.org
 720-595-0880
