Strategies for Providing Middle Stage Alzheimer’s Disease Care

1. Try to be patient.

2. Speak slowly and clearly, using short sentences. Always repeat instructions the same way. Break down instructions to single actions or steps. Be consistent.

3. Remember you are caring for an adult; do not treat the person with Alzheimer’s like a child.

4. Be calm if the person appears to hallucinate or believes it is a different time or place. Accept what is said pleasantly. Do not argue. If necessary, divert the person with another topic.

5. Conversations about long ago may help the person become involved with what can be remembered. Listen for cues to continue the conversation even if speech is rambling.

6. Try your best to continue social contacts. One or two visitors at a time is important for your mental health and well-being and can provide stimulation for you both without causing distress. Continue to accept any invitations to small parties or low key events.

7. If the person with the disease asks about his or her condition, explain as plainly and simply as possible that the person has a disease that affects memory and that you will work it out together. Many may know that something is wrong. They need to know that you love them and accept them as they are today.

8. Do not “baby” or wait on the person with Alzheimer’s disease unnecessarily. Allow the person to do as much as possible even if it is not done perfectly.

9. Do provide love and a lot of hugs. Touch and closeness is an important need for you both.

10. Select activities that might connect with the person’s talents, history, or experiences. Be willing to try new activities.

11. Discourage driving. If unsuccessful, get the doctor’s help in revoking the driving license. The car may need to be “lost” or the car may need to be sold, moved or temporarily disabled.

12. Place labels, pictures or signs on doors and drawers to help the person locate or put away items on their own for as long as possible.

13. “Hide” doors or areas that the person should avoid by “disguising” them with curtains, large plants, strategically placed furniture, etc.

14. Don’t encourage smoking or drinking — these affect health, behavior, and safety.

15. For safety and to prevent injury, be aware of accessibility to stoves, heaters and other heat sources. Check water temperature settings and hot food or drinks.

16. Monitor all access to the outside. Safety locks on outside doors may be necessary to prevent the person from wandering outside.

17. Be aware that with Alzheimer’s disease, a person may be able to find their way along a familiar route on one day and then become lost on the next. Register the person in the Safe Return program.

18. Look for potential hazards for falls or accidents low footstools, area rugs, excess clutter, firearms, tools, etc.

19. Continually assess the overall safety of the person’s environment. Remember that the person will continue to change - abilities and judgment will decline. Plans for future care should be addressed ahead of time.

20. Remember to use observation to find clues for the reasons for difficult behaviors. Look for patterns in time of day, location, people involved, weather, etc. as possible “triggers”.
How to Contact the Alzheimer’s Association – Heart of America Chapter
1.800.272.3900 • alz.org/kansascity

The Heart of America Chapter provides programs and services in 66 counties in Kansas and Missouri. These programs and services are made possible thanks to generous donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Contributions and donations allow the Chapter to provide supportive services, including care consultations, free of charge to individuals and families.