

# DEMENTIA CONVERSATIONS

Driving, Doctor Visits,  
Legal & Financial Planning

alzheimer's  association®

## TIPS FOR MAKING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS EASIER

When someone is showing signs of dementia, it's time to talk. Often, conversations with family about dementia and their changing behaviors can be challenging and uncomfortable. Common difficult conversations are about:



Going to the doctor



Deciding when to stop driving



Making legal and financial plans

### BE PREPARED

1. **Sooner is better than later** — don't wait for a crisis.
2. **Develop a plan** to gently position the discussion for a positive outcome.
3. **Take notes** about the changes you see in the person's behavior.
4. **Practice** in advance.
5. **Try to be relaxed** and comfortable when you have the discussion.

Here are some tips for breaking the ice with your family so you can reduce the stress that accompanies the disease and get the support you and your family need.



### Going to the doctor

CONVERSATION TIPS



Use words that are most comfortable for the person



Suggest Medicare's free Annual Wellness Visit



Pair an enjoyable outing with the doctor's visit



Invite family to communicate concerns and questions to the doctor



If still reluctant, try using a "therapeutic fib"

### Talking Points

For more information and resources visit: [alz.org/doctorvisit](https://alz.org/doctorvisit)

"I'm noticing that you're forgetting more things lately. Let's talk with the doctor about it to see what we can do."

"Let's make an appointment for your Annual Wellness Visit and we can go out to lunch afterward."

"The doctor needs to see you before she/he can renew your prescriptions."



## Deciding when to stop driving

CONVERSATION TIPS



Plan ahead before an accident occurs



Express your concern about specific changes you noticed



Appeal to the person's sense of responsibility and concern for others



Offer alternate plans for transportation



Incorporate the voice of an esteemed professional and have empathy

### Talking Points

For more information and resources visit: [alz.org/drivingcenter](http://alz.org/drivingcenter)

"Would you want to know if I noticed any changes in your driving?"

"Last month, I noticed some scratches on the side of the car. I'm worried and I want to talk about it with you."

"I know that you wouldn't want an accident to happen — or for you or someone else to get hurt."



## Making legal and financial plans

CONVERSATION TIPS



Begin by explaining that you are in this together



Start by asking questions and gathering documents



Explain that these are standard plans that need to be made as we get older



Break the conversation into parts, and try different times and locations



Involve others as needed

### Talking Points

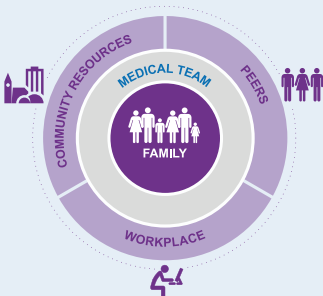
For more information and resources visit: [alz.org/elearning](http://alz.org/elearning)

"We need to make plans so I can be sure you're cared for in the ways that you want."

"By getting all this necessary paperwork done now, we can relax and focus on enjoying time together. We don't want to have to make plans in a crisis."

"We are updating all of our family legal documents and we want to make sure you are included. It will help us find your documents in case of an emergency."

## MAKE THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION® A KEY PART OF YOUR CARE TEAM!



### You are not alone. The Alzheimer's Association is here to help.

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900) is staffed with master clinicians ready to provide care consultation and support at any hour of the day. Across the country, our network of local chapters offers education programs and support groups in your community. In addition, our award-winning website, [alz.org](http://alz.org)®, is a robust resource for those with the disease and their caregivers at any point in their journey.