

Northwest Ohio Chapter

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Holiday Travel Can be Safe and Enjoyable with Tips from the Alzheimer's Association

TOLEDO, OH—Dec. 3, 2021— Many families are planning holiday travel this year, and trips within a state or long-distance can be stressful for the more than six million Americans currently living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers.

While the symptoms of this progressive brain disease may make travel more difficult, it does not mean families can't travel with a loved one with dementia and participate in holiday festivities. The Alzheimer's Association offers a number of easy tips to help ensure a safe and smooth trip when traveling with a person living with dementia.

"Whether taking a short trip to see friends and family or traveling a far distance for the holidays, it's important to consider the challenges and benefits of travel for a person with dementia," said Julia Pechlivanos, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association Northwest Ohio Chapter. "In the early stages of dementia, a person may still enjoy traveling. As the disease progresses, travel may become too overwhelming. It's important to take that into consideration when making plans."

Families and caregivers should also think about the needs, abilities, safety and preferences of the person with dementia. The following things should be considered:

- Go with the option that provides the most comfort and the least anxiety.
- Stick with the familiar and travel to known destinations that involve as few changes in daily routine as possible.
- Visit places that were familiar before the onset of dementia.
- Keep in mind that there may come a time when traveling is too disorienting or stressful for the person with dementia.

The Alzheimer's Association also offers these travel tips:

- Changes in the environment can trigger wandering. Even for a person in the early stages, new environments may be more difficult to navigate. When possible, avoid places that are highly congested, which can trigger disorientation and confusion. Provide supervision at all times; do not leave a person with dementia alone.
- Have a bag of essentials with you at all times that includes medications, your travel itinerary, a comfortable change of clothes, water, snacks and activities.

- Pack necessary medications, up-to-date medical information, a list of emergency contacts and photocopies of important legal documents.

The Alzheimer's Association Helpline is available 24/7 at 800.272.3900 for families who are traveling for the holidays or anyone needing assistance. Individuals can also find travel tips and resources at alz.org/travel.

About the Alzheimer's Association®

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's®. Visit www.alz.org or call our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.

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