
Tips for Caregivers of Persons with Dementia

Keep things simple

- T Stick to a routine and don't rush the person
- T Clothing, appliances, and utensils should be familiar and easy to use
- T Provide simple choices of clothing and utensils

Provide instruction or explanation

- T Make sure you have the person's attention before you begin a task
- T Use actions to show how a task is to be done, breaking the task down into simpler steps
- T Avoid trying to do things that the person can't do

Promote activity and social contact

- T Encourage the person to do as much as possible on his/her own
- T Promote physical activity and limit inactivity
- T Avoid drinking after 6 p.m., and limit alcohol, tea, coffee, and cola at all times
- T Provide opportunities for brief social interactions with others
- T Avoid crowded or noisy places

Around the home

- T Safety first—use assistive devices, avoid loose rugs and other obstacles and clutter, provide adequate lighting suited to the time of day
- T Use clocks, calendars, labels, newspapers to help maintain orientation to time
- T Use colourful labels to code items
- T Install safety locks or alarms
- T Keep glare and noise to a minimum

Health issues

- T Use suitable hearing aids and glasses
- T Make sure the person takes medication as prescribed
- T Treat other medical conditions as necessary
- T Keep yourself informed about patient care and about available resources
- T Take care of your own mental and physical health

Deal with Problem Behaviours

- T You can try to reason with the person, but if that doesn't work, don't confront, argue, or debate with him or her
- T Stay calm and try to distract the person from problematic situations or behaviours
- T Keep a written record of problem behaviours, and avoid their triggers—discuss your observations with your doctor
- T Make sure the person carries identification
- T If wandering becomes a problem, register the person with the Alzheimer Society Wandering Registry (**1-800-616-8816**)

You may find the following websites useful:

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| Alzheimer Society | www.Alzheimer.ca |
| Caregiver Network Inc. | www.Caregiver.ca |

