

TIPS FOR CARING FOR A LOVE ONE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Alzheimer's disease, also known as senile dementia, is a loss of brain function that occurs over time. Memory, thinking, and behavior are the most apparently affected traits of Alzheimer's. As Alzheimer's progresses, your loved one's ability to function independently may decrease. The following tips are encouraged to lessen the transitional difficulties that may result, and to enhance comfort as dependence increases:

1. Establish a routine that places more difficult tasks at times of the day when your loved one is less irritable. Predictable routines make the day less confusing for those struggling with Alzheimer's disease.
2. Abide by "Patience is a Virtue," as things will take longer, and scheduling should account for this need for extra time so that your loved one does not experience the added stress of feeling hurried. Flexibility is crucial.
3. Allow your loved one to be as independent as possible – enablement is an important approach to help your loved one feel involved.
4. Provide simple, one step at a time instructions with limited choices to decrease confusion. For instance, offer two meal choices instead of asking "What would you like to eat?"
5. Reducing distractions will help your loved one focus on the task at hand – for example, during mealtimes, limit conversation and turn off the television.

Creating a safe environment is also very important for those affected by Alzheimer's disease. Simple things such as avoiding throw rugs and extension cords can prevent falls. Installation of locks and grab bars can also increase the safety of your loved one.

If you have a family member with Alzheimer's disease or have some question regarding the disease please call us at Personal Health Partners at **800.327.7272**.

