

COVID-19 & Caregiving

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Agenda

- 1 COVID-19 & Dementia
- 2 Tips for Caregivers
- 3 Alzheimer's Association Resources

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COVID-19 and Dementia

- New research has found that risk of contracting COVID-19 was twice as high for people living with dementia than those without it.
- The findings also illustrate well-known health disparities:
 - African Americans are disproportionately impacted by both Alzheimer's disease and COVID-19.
 - African Americans with dementia were three times as likely to contract COVID-19 compared to whites.

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COVID-19 and Dementia

Dementia symptoms can also put a person at higher risk to contract COVID-19.

A person living with dementia may forget to

- Wear a mask or keep the mask on
- Physically distance from others
- Frequently wash their hands



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COVID-19 Vaccines

- Vaccines are an important step in protecting the health and safety of individuals living with dementia.
- There are several vaccines available for qualifying groups including residents and staff of nursing homes and other long term care settings.
 - A significant percentage of residents in long-term care have been vaccinated.
- Consult with your health care provider about any questions related to an individual and the vaccine.



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COVID-19 Tips & Topic Sheets

www.alz.org/COVID19

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Tips for Dementia Caregivers

Most likely, dementia does not increase risk for COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the new coronavirus, just like dementia does not increase risk for flu. However, dementia-related behaviors, increased age, and common health conditions that often accompany dementia may increase risk.

For example, people with Alzheimer's disease and all other dementias may forget to wash their hands or take other recommended precautions to prevent illness. In addition, diseases like COVID-19 and the flu may worsen cognitive impairment due to dementia.

- [Tips for dementia caregivers at home](#)
- [Tips for dementia caregivers in assisted care](#)
- [Tips for individuals receiving home-based services](#)
- [Nursing facilities has an incidence of COVID-19](#)
- [Staying healthy](#)

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Tips for Caregivers at Home

Follow CDC Guidelines, and consider the following:

- Individuals living with dementia may need support to remember important hygienic practices:
- Consider placing signs as a reminder to wash hands with soap for 20 seconds
- Demonstrate thorough hand-washing
- Use hand sanitizer (minimum 60% alcohol) if someone cannot get to sink or wash hands easily



COVID-19: Tips for Dementia Caregivers at Home

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Tips for Caregivers at Home

- If rapid change in confusion occurs, contact health care provider
- Request prescriptions for greater number of days
- Put a plan in place should
 - the primary caregiver become ill
 - adult day care, respite, services etc. be modified or cancelled



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Tips for Caregivers using Home-Based Services

- Bringing anyone into your home increases the risk of spreading COVID-19, even if CDC guidance is followed.
- Ask the provider to explain their protocols to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including whether they have been vaccinated.
- Before allowing a healthcare professional into the home:
 - Check temperature - over 100.4 should be denied entry.
 - Ask: has the worker been exposed to anyone who has tested positive?
 - Request hand washing immediately & often.
 - Ask him or her to wear a mask.

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Tips for Community-Based Care

- Many adult day centers across the country have implemented CDC guidelines and are safely serving people living with dementia.
- However; out of home care options such as adult day care or drop-in centers may pose communal risk for individuals with dementia.
 - Risk is due to challenges with social distancing and other safety measures among individuals living with dementia
- Visit a specific center to determine your comfort level with the safety protocols of that center.



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Tips for Caregivers of Individuals in Residential Care

Given the ongoing risk of COVID-19 transmission, and the fact that dementia-related behaviors may increase risk, visitors and caregivers should make appropriate considerations and take additional safety precautions when visiting care communities.

- Before your visit
 - check the community's visitation policies
 - If you are unvaccinated, consider getting tested prior to visiting
- Postpone your visit if you have been exposed to anyone with the virus within 14 days
- Inform staff immediately if you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 14 days of your visit



COVID-19: Tips for Those With a Loved One in Assisted Living

alz.org/COVID19

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Tips for Caregivers of Individuals in Residential Care

During your visit, follow community guidelines for visitation.

- Limit your visit to approved areas only and avoid going into other parts of the community.
- Socially distance from others.
- Conduct visits outdoors when feasible
- Bring your own face mask, put it on before entering the care community and wear it at all times.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your face.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



COVID-19: Tips for Those With a Loved One in Assisted Living

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When Visitation is Not An Option:

If you are unable to visit a loved one in a residential community or the hospital due to incidence of COVID-19 or quarantine restrictions:

- Communicate via phone calls or video chat
- Provide your contact information to the staff or attending nurse, and ask that it be posted on a white board in the person's room
- Ask staff what type of communication is possible and how you can expect to receive updates



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Activities at Home

www.alz.org/care

- Create a simple daily plan
- Keep skills and abilities in mind
- Focus on enjoyment, not achievement
- Be mindful of exposure to upsetting content – news, TV shows, movies, etc.

Activities

A person living with Alzheimer's or another dementia may find it difficult to give up the activities that he or she has enjoyed for years. It may be necessary to modify the person's ability to do these activities or to find new activities that are more enjoyable and less frustrating.

Choosing activities

In the early stages of dementia, the person may withdraw from activities he or she previously enjoyed. It is important to help the person remain engaged. Having an open discussion about any concerns and making slight adjustments can make a difference. For example, a large social gathering may be overwhelming, but the person may be able to attend more successfully if a

SAMPLE DAILY PLAN

Morning

- Wake, brush teeth, get dressed
- Prepare and eat breakfast
- Have a conversation over coffee
- Discuss the newspaper or a craft project, reminisce over old photos
- Take a break, have some quiet time
- Do some chores
- Take a walk or play a game

Afternoon

- Prepare and eat lunch, read mail, wash dishes
- Listen to music, do crossword puzzle, watch TV
- Do some gardening, take a walk, visit a friend
- Take a short break or nap

Evening

- Prepare and eat dinner, clean the kitchen
- Talk over coffee and dessert
- Play cards, watch a movie, give a message
- Take a bath, get ready for bed, read a book

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Caregiver Stress



10 Symptoms of Caregiver Stress

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Social withdrawal
4. Anxiety
5. Depression
6. Exhaustion
7. Sleeplessness
8. Irritability
9. Lack of concentration
10. Health problems

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24/7 Helpline

- Free Service
- Available around the clock, 365 days a year
- Helpline specialists and master's level clinicians offer confidential support and information
- Bilingual staff and translation service in over 200 languages
- Live Chat available
- TTY Service 866.403.3073



24/7 Helpline
800.272.3900

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 Live Chat

Virtual Programs

- Free education programs available at www.alz.org
 - 10 Warning Signs
 - Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia
 - Dementia Conversations
 - Effective Communication Strategies
 - Legal and Financial Planning
 - Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors
 - And more!



We have transitioned in-person support groups and education programs to virtual platforms during COVID-19 pandemic

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Community Resource Finder

www.communityresourcefinder.org

Get easy access to resources, community programs and services.

Based on guidance from local governments and health departments during the COVID-19 crisis, many programs will be offered virtually rather than in person.

 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS	 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS	 CARE AT HOME
 COMMUNITY SERVICES	 HOUSING OPTIONS	 MEDICAL SERVICES

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ALZConnected®

www.alzconnected.org

ALZConnected® is a free online community for everyone affected by Alzheimer's or another dementia, including:

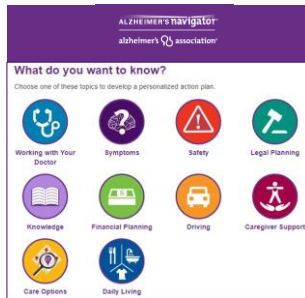
- People living with the disease
- Caregivers
- Family members
- Friends
- Individuals who have lost someone to Alzheimer's or another dementia



Alzheimer's Navigator®

www.alzheimersnavigator.org

Alzheimer's Navigator is a free online tool that helps guide caregivers to answers by creating a personalized action plan and linking you to information, support and local resources.



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Questions?


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