

## New to Dementia Care?

Here are some steps you can take once your loved one has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia:

- Talk with a doctor to decide what should be done about the patient's diagnosis, addressing what will be most beneficial for him/her and your family in terms of home care
- Research about the disease to acquaint yourself with what will happen to your loved one and what their needs may be as the disease worsens, as well as to prepare yourself for what will be expected through home caring
- Plan on setting a meeting time with other family members to discuss the diagnosis and the different roles that the family can take in their loved ones life
- Assess the living arrangements to make sure all the necessary precautions are taken for maintaining an [Alzheimer-Friendly safe home](#).
- Find an [Alzheimer's support group](#) in your area that can help with coping and dealing with home caring and to learn about the programs the group offers. Join the [Care@Home message board](#); share your experiences and learn from other seasoned caregivers.
- Be sure that an identification card is on your loved one at all times, using a lanyard or hospital bracelet
- Register with a wandering program that helps in safe returns, visit the Alzheimer's Association's [Safe Return Program's website](#).
- Make copies of any credit or bank cards, their social security or other identification cards that a loved one may have in case they accidentally misplace them, depending on severity or stage, it may be best to keep hold onto their cards for them
- Designate someone to keep track of their financial expenditures
- Start a home caring notebook to keep track of daily information like what they ate, how they responded to daily activities, and their behaviors, this will help communicate between other caregivers to know the person's likes and dislikes
- Use the [Incontinence Log](#) to monitor bathroom breaks and bathroom urges.
- Create a separate notebook to document medical information, including medical history, medicines taken and doctor visits
- Check insurance coverage to see which doctors are covered and will be most helpful to the patient, this will help keep the cost down
- Since mobility will be limited, arrange different transportation methods either using public transportation or relying on family and friends
- Consider making a memory book using pictures with captions and put photo albums and other memorabilia in places that can be seen
- Create a master calendar of important events, to serve as a reminder doctor's appointments, birthdays, etc and to recall what month and day it is