

Helpful Facts When Caring for My Loved One

The following information has been provided in the hopes that you will remember that _____ has Alzheimer's Disease. Though my loved one has experienced memory loss, it is my hope that you treat them with the same respect and courtesy that you would give to your own loved one.

- Alzheimer's is a degenerative disease of the brain that affects daily life function. It occurs when brain tissue deteriorates causing a decline in memory and mental ability.
- Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging and affects 5.3 million Americans and while there is medicine to slow down the process of Alzheimer's, there is no cure for the disease

Communicating with my loved one:

- When talking, make sure you have their attention, call their name until they look up at you, making eye contact
- Repeat the question or statement, if needed
- Make sure there is no background noise that may affect their hearing or concentration
- Never talk about the person in front of the person, they are still capable of understanding what you are saying
- Avoid talking in a baby voice or down to the person
- Never criticize them for not understanding
- Politely help them come up with a word if they are having trouble thinking of it
- Ask them to point to something they are referring to, or give them a pad of paper to draw the object

Focus on what they can do:

- Find activities that they can still participate in, avoid crossword puzzles or board games that require intellectual thinking
- Try simplifying hobbies that they once enjoyed in the past
- When going through their morning routine, please be patient with them, giving them step by step directions on how to accomplish something, like getting dressed
- Give them encouragement and praise when they do something correct
- Do things with the person, instead of for them
- Ask questions that will get a yes or no response, this limits the amount of choice they have, but not their choice altogether

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One of the hardest issues for my loved one to deal with is the loss of their privacy, it is important to still give them the respect that they need:

- If they need help using the bathroom, assist them, but then leave the room for a few minutes, coming back to check on them and help them
- If they have an accident, don't scold them, instead politely ask them to come with you to change. Never refer to an incontinence product by its brand name or as a diaper.
- When bathing, please keep their robe or a large towel near them so they are able to cover up
- If they are in a room with the door shut, please knock before entering

Expressing their feelings:

- At times, my loved one can go from being happy to sad or aggressive within seconds, please try to understand how they feel and console them
- Also, my loved one can seem passive and opt out of activities, try to encourage them to participate
- Listen to what they are saying, showing them that you are there for them

In a case of an emergency

Please do not hesitate to call me, I can be contacted at

Cell Phone: _____

Other: _____