



## PRESS RELEASE

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**Please print the following announcement:**

### **Dementia and the Holidays**

During the holidays, people with dementia and their family caregivers get to visit and reconnect with family, friends, and neighbors. But it also can be overwhelming for them. So, this article will provide helpful tips for making it easier this holiday season.

The overall goal is to find balance, only celebrate holiday traditions that are important to you. Set limits and be clear about them with others. You do not have to live up to past holiday expectations, your situation is different now. However, you still can include the person with dementia as much as possible.

Prepare your guests before they come and visit. By arranging a phone call for the person with dementia and the visitor beforehand. The call gives the visitor an idea of what to expect and gives the person with dementia the opportunity to become familiar with the visitor. Let your guests know that the visit may be painful for them. Explain that the person with dementia behaviors may seem odd or rude, but it is the disease not them. Remind guests not to take it personally if the person with dementia does not recognize them, is unkind, or gets angry. The meaningfulness of the time together matters more than what the person remembers.

Once your guests are over make sure you watch your person with dementia for signs of dementia related behaviors such as fidgeting, or pacing, and find time for them to get rest. Try to avoid situations that may confuse or frustrate them, such as crowds, changes in routine, strange places, loud music, and lighting. Prepare quiet distractions to use, such as a family photo album, if the person with dementia becomes upset or overstimulated. Also, limit the number of guests at any one time and have quiet place for the person with dementia to rest.

Taking a person with dementia on a trip can be challenging. Whether taking a short trip or traveling farther for vacation. It is important to consider the difficulties and benefits of traveling with someone with dementia. Traveling can make the person more worried and confused, so it is important to think ahead. Inform relevant staff that you are traveling with someone with dementia.

NEMCSA Region 9 AAA offers many other services for dementia caregivers, to learn about caregiving resources in your area, visit [www.nemcsa.org/senior-services](http://www.nemcsa.org/senior-services) or contact Brooke Mainville at 989.358.4616 or [mainvilleb@nemcsa.org](mailto:mainvilleb@nemcsa.org).

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging is a division of division of Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA), a Community Action Agency improving the quality of life for people facing crisis while strengthening families, communities, seniors, and children since 1968.