



REGION 9 AREA AGENCY ON AGING CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

Serving the Counties of: Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon

MANAGE YOUR STRESS BY



1. Recognize warning signs early. These might include irritability, sleep problems, and forgetfulness. Know your own warning signs, and act to make changes. Do not wait until you are overwhelmed.
2. Identify sources of stress. Ask yourself, "What is causing stress for me?" Sources of stress might be that you have too much to do, family disagreements, feelings of inadequacy, or the inability to say no.
3. Identify what you can and cannot change. Remember, we can only change ourselves; we cannot change another person. When you try to change things over which you have no control, you will only increase your sense of frustration. Ask yourself, "What do I have some control over? What can I change?" Even a small change can make a big difference.
4. Take action. Taking some action to reduce stress gives us back a sense of control. Stress reducers can be simple activities like walking and other forms of exercise, gardening, meditation, or having coffee with a friend. Identify some stress reducers that work for you.

SELF-CARE IDEAS



- Establish an exercise routine. Increasing physical activity to at least 2.5 hours a week can slow the decline in quality of life.
- Find a neurologist you trust.
- Dispense medication consistently on time.
- Identify the symptoms which are most bothersome and discuss them with your doctor.
- Practice good sleep habits.
- Take control of the things that you can. It will help you minimize stress.
- Continue face-to-face interactions with family members, friends, and neighbors.
- Set short-term goals. Do not over-schedule yourself.
- Be open and honest about what you are going through, rather than isolating yourself.
- Support groups can offer comfort and practical advice.



TYPES OF DEMENTIA

Dementia is not a specific disease; rather, the term describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory and thinking. It is commonly associated with certain medical conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease. Dementia is a general term for loss of memory and other mental abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life. It is caused by physical changes in the brain. Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia, but there are many kinds.

- **Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease**
 - The most common human form of a group of rare, fatal brain disorders known as prion diseases.
- **Lewy Body Dementia**
 - A type of progressive dementia that leads to a decline in thinking, reasoning and independent function because of abnormal microscopic deposits that damage brain cells over time.
- **Down Syndrome and Alzheimer's Disease**
 - As they age, those affected by Down syndrome have a greatly increased risk of developing a type of dementia that's either the same as or very similar to Alzheimer's disease.
- **Frontotemporal Dementia**
 - Caused by progressive nerve cell loss in the brain's frontal lobes or its temporal lobes.
- **Huntington's Disease**
 - Is a progressive brain disorder caused by a defective gene. This disease causes changes in the central area of the brain, which affect movement, mood and thinking skills.
- **Mixed Dementia**
 - In some cases, a person may have brain changes linked to all three conditions: Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia and Lewy body dementia.
- **Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus**
 - Brain disorder in which excess cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) accumulates in the brain's ventricles, causing thinking and reasoning problems, difficulty walking, and loss of bladder control.
- **Posterior Cortical Atrophy**
 - Gradual and progressive degeneration of the outer layer of the brain (the cortex) in the part of the brain located in the back of the head (posterior).
- **Parkinson's Disease Dementia**
 - A decline in thinking and reasoning that develops in many people living with Parkinson's at least a year after diagnosis.
- **Vascular Dementia**
 - a decline in thinking skills caused by conditions that block or reduce blood flow to various regions of the brain, depriving them of oxygen and nutrients.
- **Korsakoff Syndrome**
 - A chronic memory disorder caused by severe deficiency of thiamine. It is most commonly caused by alcohol misuse, but certain other conditions also can cause the syndrome.



STAGES OF ALZHEIMER'S

The symptoms worsen over time, although the rate at which the disease progresses varies. On average, a person with Alzheimer's lives four to eight years after diagnosis, but can live as long as twenty years, depending on other factors.

Mild Alzheimer's (Early-Stage)

Person may function independently, may still drive, work and be part of social activities. Despite this, the person may feel as if he or she is having memory lapses, such as forgetting familiar words or the location of everyday objects.

- Problems coming up with the right word or name.
- Trouble remembering names when introduced to new people.
- Challenges performing tasks in social or work settings.
- Forgetting material that one has just read.
- Losing or misplacing a valuable object.
- Increasing trouble with planning or organizing.

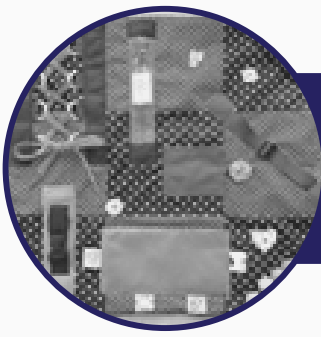
Moderate Alzheimer's (Middle-Stage)

- Forgetfulness of events or about one's own personal history.
- Feeling moody or withdrawn, especially in socially or mentally challenging situations.
- Being unable to recall their own address or telephone number or the high school or college from which they graduated.
- Confusion about where they are or what day it is.
- The need for help choosing proper clothing for the season or the occasion.
- Trouble controlling bladder and bowels in some individuals.
- Changes in sleep patterns, such as sleeping during the day and becoming restless at night.
- An increased risk of wandering and becoming lost.
- Personality and behavioral changes, including suspiciousness and delusions or compulsive, repetitive behavior like hand-wringing or tissue shredding.

Severe Alzheimer's (Late-Stage)

Dementia symptoms are severe. Individuals lose the ability to respond to their environment, to carry on a conversation and, eventually, to control movement.

- Need round-the-clock assistance with daily activities and personal care.
- Lose awareness of recent experiences as well as of their surroundings.
- Experience changes in physical abilities, including the ability to walk, sit and, eventually, swallow.
- Have increasing difficulty communicating.
- Become vulnerable to infections, especially pneumonia.



PLANNING ACTIVITIES FOR SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA

Plan activities that the person with Alzheimer's enjoys in your daily routine, and try to do them at a similar time each day. He or she can be a part of the activity or just watch. Daily activities for people living with Alzheimer's disease tend to change as the disease progresses. Alzheimer's tends to limit concentration and cause difficulties in following directions.

Here are things you can do to help the person enjoy the activity:

- Match the activity with what the person with dementia can do.
- Choose activities that can be fun for everyone.
- Help the person get started.
- Decide if they can do the activity alone or needs help.
- Watch to see if the person gets frustrated.
- Make sure they feel successful and has fun.
- Let them watch if that is more enjoyable.

Benefits to Meaningful Activities:

- Mental Stimulation and Cognitive Health
- Physical Activity and General Health
- Social Interaction
- Improved Sleep Habits
- Improved Self-Esteem
- Decreased Depression and Anxiety
- Minimize Behavioral Challenges
- Improve Quality of Life
- Caregiver Benefit

Here are some activities people with dementia may enjoy:

- Folding Towels
- Largeprint playing cards
- Fake flower arrangements
- Large piece puzzles
- Household Chores
- Plastic nuts and bolts set
- Watch a favorite movie or television show
- Tabletop bowling
- Go for a walk
- Simple Crosswords
- Photo Albums
- Fidget Blankets
- Create a Memory Box with simple objects and photos
- Magazines
- Read to them
- Old movies
- Photo cards
- Wooden Puzzles
- Connect the Dots
- Coloring pages
- Chair Yoga
- Box of different materials and fabrics
- Busy Boards
- Stuff animals
- Play their favorite music
- Get a Digital Photo Frame
- Favorite smells
- LED Lights
- Baby Dolls
- Lacing Cards
- Small cooking activity
- Adult Day Centers
- Card Matching
- Piper Cleaners
- Fake jewelry
- Aquapaintings



RISK FACTORS FOR FALLS

Falls are common in older people and can cause serious injury. Discover how a fall risk assessment can help prevent them. Many falls cause at least some injury. These range from mild bruising to broken bones, head injuries, and even death. In fact, falls are a leading cause of death in older adults. There are many factors that increase the risk of falling in older adults.

- Mobility problems
- Balance disorder
- Chronic illnesses
- Impaired vision
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Improper use of medication
- Irregular or rapid heartbeats
- Previous falls
- Muscle weakness
- Gait problems
- Home Hazards

Recommendations to Reduce your Risk of Falling

- Exercising to improve your strength and balance.
- You may be given instructions on specific exercises or be referred to a physical therapist.
- Changing or reducing the dose of medicines that may be affecting your gait or balance. Some medicines have side effects that cause dizziness, drowsiness, or confusion.
- Taking vitamin D to strengthen your bones.
- Getting your vision checked by an eye doctor. Looking at your footwear to see if any of your shoes might increase your risk of falling.
- You may be referred to a podiatrist (foot doctor).
- Reviewing your home for potential hazards. These may include poor lighting, loose rugs, and/or cords on the floor. This review may be done by yourself, a partner, an occupational therapist, or other health care provider.

A Matter of Balance Workshop:

A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels for participants. The program emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls.

You Will Learn to:

- View falls as controllable
- Set goals for increasing activity
- Make changes to reduce fall risks at home
- Exercise to increase strength and balance

Who Should Attend?

- Anyone concerned about falls
- Anyone interested in improving balance, flexibility and strength
- Anyone who has fallen in the past
- Anyone who has restricted activities because of falling concerns

If you have questions talk to your health care provider.

IMPORTANT DATES

**Caregiver Webinar:
Assistive Devices**
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
August 13, 2021
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**Caregiver Webinar:
Preparing for the Future**
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
September 10, 2021
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Creating Confident Caregivers
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
OCTOBER 12, 2021
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Powerful Tools for Caregivers
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
JANUARY 4, 2022
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

A Matter of Balance
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM
JANUARY 5, 2022
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM



TEEPA SNOW, DEMENTIA SPECIALISTS

In this free, monthly web broadcast, Teepa discusses a dementia-related topic and then answers questions from the audience. This is your opportunity to get your questions answered!

[Join Teepa Snow for the live broadcast!](#)



CAREGIVER TIPS

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8. Set short-term goals. Do not over-schedule yourself.
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10. Support groups can offer comfort and practical advice.



WHERE CAN I FIND MORE HELPFUL INFORMATION?

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Special Projects Coordinator is available weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer your questions, register you for caregiver workshops, provide resources, and support you and the person you are caring for.

**Contact Brooke at 989.358.4616 or
mainvilleb@nemcsa.org**