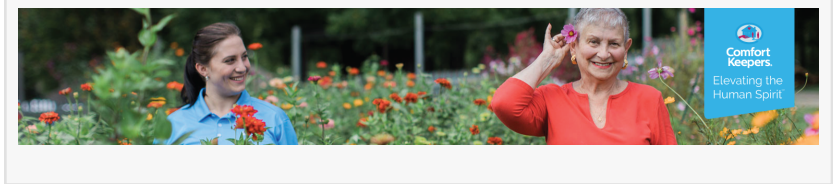


What Are Some Non-Medical Ways to Help Care for Dementia & Alzheimer's Disease?

OMAHA, NEBRASKA, UNITED STATES, November 1, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/

-- Caring for family members with Alzheimer's disease or another diagnosis of dementia can be challenging. But, you've evaluated your care options and decided that a nursing home wasn't the best choice for your loved one. Fortunately, Alzheimer's care and dementia care can be made less difficult for the caregiver and the care recipient with a better understanding of and respect for the feelings of agitation, confusion, and anxiety experienced by a person with these memory loss conditions.



Below are a few non-health care ideas for providing a calming environment for daily living contributive to an improved dementia care experience:

Regular Activity and Exercise

Routine activities and exercise are essential for everyone's physical and mental well-being, no matter what age. Persons with Alzheimer's and related dementias will be less agitated if offered and involved in activities that are of interest to them. The activity should be a planned fundamental of Alzheimer's care and dementia care.

Normal Meal Time and Nutrition

Alzheimer's may impact an older adult's sense of smell and taste and even the ability to feel hunger or fullness. Because of this, eating may not be an enjoyable experience like it once was, which can lead to a person with dementia possibly refusing food even on an empty stomach - or, request a meal immediately after eating.

As a result, Alzheimer's patients and dementia patients are at greater risk for dehydration and malnutrition, which can potentially lead to even more confusion.

To encourage healthy eating, try serving meals in a quiet place that's free of distractions, with your loved one facing a wall. Maintain a comfortable room temperature as individuals with

Alzheimer's tend to be more sensitive to rooms that are too cold or hot.

Pacing and wandering is a common behavior for those suffering from memory problems, even at mealtime. If this scenario occurs, offer finger foods that can easily be eaten while on the move. For older adults who can manage to sit at the table for only a short time, calorie-dense foods such as dried fruit or peanut butter may be the solution. High protein drinks and food bars are also a healthy alternative.

Dealing With Agitation

While providing home care for an individual with memory loss problems can be frustrating at times, arguing with an agitated Alzheimer's patient is counterproductive for family caregivers. Remain calm and reassure your loved one that you are there to help. Distract them with a joyful activity, such as music or looking at photos.

Helping With Personal Care

When providing dementia care and Alzheimer's care, encourage your loved one to partake in as much personal care themselves as possible - with your guidance. Be prepared to help with decision-making and to provide reminders of what task comes next. It may be helpful to pass the soap or a towel to your loved one at appropriate times.

As with all plans of care, review these tips with the senior's primary physician to ensure they are appropriate for the individual before implementing them into their routine. And, after implementing these tips, make sure to keep up with the senior's regular check-ups.

Comfort Keepers Omaha Can Help

Our Comfort Keepers are experienced in supporting the care needs of older adults with all stages of dementia - from the early stages to the later. If you are interested in learning more about any of our [Omaha in-home care](#) services such as dementia care, respite care, long-term care, or more - contact Comfort Keepers Omaha today at (402) 991-9880. Together, we can get you the caregiver support you need and provide your loved one with a better quality of life.

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