

COVID-19 CAREGIVER CHECKLIST #2 – DEMENTIA CARE

Individuals with moderate to severe dementia or another cognitive impairment often require special care and that can present additional challenges to families and caregivers. Diseases like COVID-19 may worsen cognitive impairment due to dementia.

- For people living with dementia, increased confusion is often the first symptom of any illness. If a person living with dementia shows rapidly increased confusion, contact your health care provider for advice.
- People with Alzheimer’s disease and all other dementia may forget to wash their hands or take other recommended precautions to prevent the spread of diseases like COVID-19. Caregivers can give extra and/or written reminders and demonstrate proper hand washing technique.
- Caregivers should utilize alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol as an alternative to hand-washing if the person with dementia cannot get to a sink or wash his/her hands easily.
- Ask your pharmacist or doctor about filling prescriptions for a greater number of days to reduce trips to the pharmacy.
- Make alternative plans for the person with dementia with adult day care, respite or other services being modified or cancelled in response to COVID-19.
- Think ahead and make alternative plans for care management for your loved one if you should become sick.
- There are various options open to you for respite care while you care for a loved one. Contact the Area Agency on Aging District 7 at 1-800-582-7277 for respite care options.

Sources:

Alzheimer’s Association: [https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

Family Caregiver Alliance: <https://www.caregiver.org/caring-adults-cognitive-and-memory-impairment>



There are a number of things you can do to help encourage someone to eat and to help the person in your care enjoy meals, such as offering the most nutritious foods at the beginning of the meal when the person is most hungry— save breads and desserts for the end. Answer True or False to the questions below.

- 1. Offer food when the person is most hungry, and be sure dentures fit correctly and eyeglasses are on. T F*
- 2. Special diets and products to improve nutrition should only be used on the advice of a doctor or registered dietitian. T F*
- 3. The dirtiest place in your house is the bathroom. T F*
- 4. Germs cannot grow in cutting board grooves and nicks. T F*
- 5. Most older people need fewer calories, but their bodies absorb fewer nutrients so they must eat high-nutrient food to maintain good health. T F*
- 6. To get your produce really clean, dunk it in a mild vinegar and water solution first (about ½ cup vinegar to 5 cups water), then scrub under tap water. T F*
- 7. Pasta, along with beans and lentils, are among the most economical foods. T F*
- 8. Daily home-delivered meals help keep 8 out of 10 recipients who have previously fallen from falling again. T F*
- 9. Sometimes emotional, physical or medical conditions cause a person to lose their desire to eat. T F*
- 10. Memory loss or mental confusion cannot make handling utensils and the eating process confusing. T F*

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. T 9. T 10. F