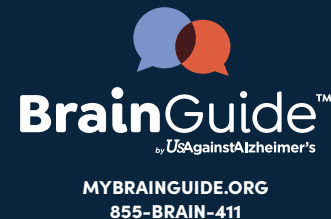


Caring for A Loved One with Alzheimer's



It's totally normal to feel overwhelmed and alone when caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease – but you're not. Caregivers and experts have discovered many proven methods to help you deal with symptoms and meet the needs of those with Alzheimer's, while keeping yourself physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.

You Can Take Action

Giving the best care to your loved one is only possible if you're taking the best care of yourself, too. These tips can help:^{1,2,3,4}

Communicate and collaborate. Giving and receiving care is a two-way relationship, make sure to talk openly with your loved one about how they're feeling and what they need. Also, be candid about how you're feeling and what you're noticing in them. Keep in mind, you may have to answer questions more than once or help them with reminders. Additionally, if any important financial, legal or care-related technicalities need to be resolved, it's best to get them settled quickly before the disease progresses.

Develop a routine – and stick to it. A regular schedule can help you and your loved one manage their symptoms. As you notice patterns, tailor the routine around them. For example, try planning more difficult tasks like bathing or going to a doctor's appointment at times when your loved one is at their peak energy or alertness. Also, it's important to find time for activities that can be a relief. Look for things you both can enjoy and make sure they're part of the schedule.

Do a home safety check. Whether they're staying elsewhere for now or in your home, take a careful look at where your loved one will be living and rearrange anything that could cause an injury. Get rid of clutter that could cause a fall, lock up dangerous items or substances, and secure fire hazards, like stoves. A great place to start is the National Institute on Aging's [home safety checklist](#).

Know what to expect. Learning about Alzheimer's disease and its symptoms can help you plan ahead

and be ready for changes when they happen. One important thing to keep in mind is that Alzheimer's may change your loved one's mood and behavior. Agitation is a common symptom of Alzheimer's, which might cause them to become aggressive or irritable. If that happens, remember it's a symptom of the disease. Do your best to stay calm, acknowledge their feelings and not react to it as a personal offense. The resources and links you'll find on this site can give you a good start. For more information, the [National Institute on Aging](#) has many additional resources.

Be patient. You'll quickly find that day-to-day activities take more time for people with Alzheimer's. It's important to stay patient, flexible and understanding. Keep trying different activities and schedules until you find what works and adjust as symptoms evolve.

Take advantage of local resources. Ease some of the weight of caregiving by making use of the resources in your area, like support groups, care services, adult day care centers, and doctors or health professionals.

Build a support network. Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's is not something you need to do all by yourself. Reach out to family members and friends who can help, join a support group with other caregivers, or seek professional respite care that can let you recharge and take needed breaks.

1. <https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/stages-behaviors/early-stage>
2. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/caregivers/in-depth/alzheimers-caregiver/art-20047577>
3. <https://www.caregiver.org/caregivers-guide-understanding-dementia-behaviors>
4. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/home-safety-checklist-alzheimers-disease#:~:text=Turn%20ringers%20on%20low%20to,their%20functioning%20and%20batteries%20frequently>