

Keeping your dementia patient safe during COVID-19 outbreak

While dementia does not necessarily increase the risk for COVID-19, the Alzheimer's Association is stressing that those living with dementia could be at higher risk. Patients are in this category because of dementia-related behaviors, older age, and common health problems that go with dementia and aging. So caregivers should be cautious when caring for their loved ones at home.

The Alzheimer's Association points out that people with dementia might forget to wash their hands or forget to wash them properly. They might forget to take other precautions, such as social distancing, to stop the spread of germs. As a caregiver, you need to keep both yourself and your loved one healthy. Diseases such as COVID-19 can worsen the cognitive impairment that comes with dementia.

To help keep your loved ones safe at home, the CDC and Alzheimer's Association recommend that caregivers do these things.

- For people living with dementia, increased confusion is often the first sign of any illness. If a person living with dementia shows rapidly increased confusion, call your health-care provider.
- People living with dementia may need more support to remember important hygienic practices. Try extra and/or written reminders where needed.
 - Place signs at the sinks to remind them to wash their hands with soap for 20 seconds.
 - Show your loved one how to properly wash their hands.
 - If the person with dementia cannot get to a sink easily, a quick option is alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Ask your pharmacist or doctor about filling prescriptions for more days to cut down on trips to the pharmacy.
- Make other plans for the person with dementia in case adult day care, respite, etc., is changed or closed.
- Make back-up plans for care if the primary caregiver becomes sick.

Reference:

Alzheimer's Association. (2020). Retrieved March 18, 2020 from [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)

Source:

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