



UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA & ALZHEIMER'S CARE

A Family Guide to Supporting a Loved One

EldoCare Home Health Services Inc.

Caring for someone living with dementia or Alzheimer's disease can present unique challenges. Understanding changes in memory, communication, behavior, and daily functioning can help families provide compassionate support.

What Is Dementia?

Dementia is a general term describing problems with memory, thinking, communication, and the ability to perform everyday activities.

Alzheimer's disease is one of the most common causes of dementia.

Common Changes

A person with dementia may experience:

- Memory loss
- Difficulty finding words
- Confusion about time or place
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Difficulty making decisions
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Increasing need for assistance with daily activities

Symptoms and progression can vary significantly from person to person.

Communicating With Someone With Dementia

Communication can become challenging. Try to:

- Speak calmly
- Use simple, clear sentences
- Give one instruction at a time
- Allow extra time for responses
- Maintain eye contact

- Reduce background distractions
- Avoid arguing about confused statements
- Use reassuring language

Instead of repeatedly correcting someone, focus on understanding the emotion behind what they are saying.

Create a Familiar Environment

A familiar and organized environment may help reduce confusion.

Consider:

- Keeping commonly used items in consistent locations
- Maintaining a regular daily routine
- Using labels when helpful
- Keeping rooms well lit
- Reducing unnecessary clutter
- Keeping emergency contacts accessible

Daily Activities

Encourage appropriate activities that provide purpose and engagement.

Examples include:

- Listening to music
- Looking through family photographs
- Simple household activities
- Walking when safe
- Reading
- Conversation
- Simple hobbies

Activities should be adapted to the individual's abilities and interests.

Nutrition and Hydration

Monitor eating and drinking habits and follow the patient's healthcare recommendations.

Contact a healthcare professional if you notice significant changes such as:

- Loss of appetite
- Difficulty swallowing
- Frequent choking
- Significant weight changes
- Signs of dehydration

Safety Considerations

Depending on the person's condition, families may need to consider:

- Fall risks
- Medication safety
- Kitchen safety
- Bathroom safety
- Wandering or getting lost
- Emergency contacts
- Appropriate supervision

Supporting the Caregiver

Dementia caregiving can be demanding. Family caregivers should seek support when responsibilities become overwhelming.

Support may come from:

- Family members
- Friends
- Healthcare professionals
- Home care services
- Community resources
- Caregiver support organizations

When to Contact a Healthcare Professional

Contact the patient's healthcare provider if there are significant or sudden changes in:

- Memory
- Behavior
- Mobility
- Eating or drinking
- Communication
- Sleep
- Overall functioning

Sudden changes should be evaluated promptly because they may have causes other than dementia.

EldaCare Home Health Services

EldaCare Home Health Services Inc. is committed to providing compassionate support for individuals and families managing care at home.

Phone: (267) 996-4393

Website: eldacarehomehealth.com

Disclaimer: This guide is educational and does not diagnose, treat, or replace advice from a qualified healthcare professional.