

Care Partner Information

Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Caregiving Tips

Exercise

Why is Exercise is Important ?

Exercise keeps our bodies in shape. It keeps our muscles, joints, and everything inside of us working better. It also helps us lose weight, sleep better, and it can improve our mood.

Exercise is important for someone with dementia. It not only helps them feel better, it also helps them to do more things for themselves, for as long as possible. It helps give them strength, balance, and good flexibility. Some research says that exercising every day might help people with mild dementia keep their memory and thinking skills longer.

Staying Safe with Exercise

You should make sure someone with dementia is safe while exercising. If possible, they should exercise with someone else. This is very important if they take medicine that might make them dizzy or if they get tired easily. If they do exercise alone, have them wear an ID bracelet with your phone number. Comfortable clothes and shoes that fit well are also important.

Several 10-minute workouts may be best, instead of one long one. Drinking plenty of water is important. Drink before and after exercise.

Tips for Helping Someone with Dementia Stay Active

Take a walk together	Throw a rubber ball back and forth
Turn on some music and dance	Use stretching bands
Use a stationary bicycle	Use soup cans as weights
Join an exercise program that is designed for older adults with dementia	Clean the house together
Build a garden	Grocery shop together

This Care Partner Information page is part of a series on caregiving tips. They are written to help family and community caregivers, direct care workers and community health representatives care for someone with Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia. Available in English and Spanish at www.aging.arizona.edu

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Here are some exercises to try at home. Start with one set and build up from there.

Toe Stands



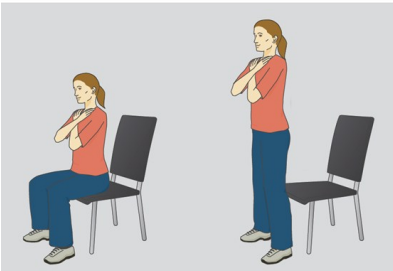
Hold the backrest of a sturdy chair and stand hip width apart.

Lift your heels as much as possible then bring them back to floor.

Repeat this movement 10 times for one set.

Rock back on your heels and lift your toes to stretch between sets.

Chair Sit to Stand to Sit



Sit on a sturdy chair and cross your arms on the chest.

Rise from the chair to a fully up right position and then slowly return to a sitting position.

Repeat this movement 10 times for one set.

If needed, use an armrest to make this exercise easier.

Stair Steps



Hold the handrail of a staircase for safety.

Step up on a step one foot at a time.

Step down one foot at a time.

Repeat 10 times alternating the leading foot.

Rest and repeat another 10 times for one set.

Useful Websites

National Institute on Aging: www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/publication/exercise-and-physical-activity

Caregiver Guide: www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/alzheimers_caregiver_guide.pdf

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