

Communication

- ❖ be comforting and reassuring
- ❖ be patient
- ❖ use short, simple sentences
- ❖ speak slowly and clearly
- ❖ use the person's name
- ❖ repeat information or questions
- ❖ allow them time to respond
- ❖ make positive comments

Home Safety

- ❖ remove all dangerous objects from the home
- ❖ install secure locks on all windows and doors, childproof locks on all cabinets, get appliances with an auto shut off feature
- ❖ label medications and keep them locked up
- ❖ remove clutter and throw rugs from the house to help avoid falls



References:

www.alzheimers.nia.nih.gov
www.alz.org

Basics of Caring for Loved Ones with Alzheimer's Disease



Caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease can be very challenging and overwhelming at times. Just keep in mind there are many different ways to care for your loved one as each individual is unique. Be positive, creative, and flexible!

The Section on Geriatrics applauds the efforts of this brochure's authors:

Ashley Zehner, SPT & Franny Enzler, SPT
University of Evansville
Physical Therapy Program

Bathing

- ❖ **routine** and consistency is important
- ❖ plan bath or shower when your loved one is calm
- ❖ be gentle, respectful, patient, & calm
- ❖ draw the bath ahead of time and have all materials ready to use
- ❖ test the water temperature
- ❖ make room temperature comfortable
- ❖ for safety of your loved one install handheld shower head, shower bench, grab bars, non-skid bath mats
- ❖ never leave your loved one alone in the bathtub

Toileting

- ❖ have a **routine** for taking them to the restroom, don't wait for them to ask
- ❖ watch for signs that they need to go to the restroom such as restlessness and pulling at clothing
- ❖ be understanding when accidents occur, stay calm, & reassure your loved one that it is okay
- ❖ take extra clothing when going on outings in case of accidents

Dressing

- ❖ keep to a **routine**
- ❖ encourage independence
- ❖ organize clothes in the way that they should be put on
- ❖ allow them to choose clothing, but limit choices of clothing types
- ❖ choose comfortable, simple clothing (avoid buttons and zippers)

Eating

- ❖ make **routine** meal times
- ❖ aim for a quiet and calm atmosphere to keep attention
- ❖ offer appealing foods with familiar flavors and textures
- ❖ serve small portions of several meals throughout the day to avoid overeating
- ❖ encourage independence and the use of utensils
- ❖ utilize straws, cups with lids, and bowls instead of plates
- ❖ maintain routine dental check-ups

Sleeping

- ❖ make a bedtime **routine**
- ❖ avoid day time napping
- ❖ restrict caffeine late in the day
- ❖ use night lights throughout the home