

Dementia Caregiver Holiday Tips

Tips for Attending Events

- Take along a favorite “comfort” item
- Plan time for breaks so the person can rest in a quiet area away from noise & crowds
- Prepare host for special needs & let them know what to expect

Tips when Dining Out

- Plan ahead--make reservations
- Avoid noisy restaurants or buffets with too many choices
- Sit near the restroom
- Dine with a few people rather than a large group
- Try to see the menu and make choices in advance

Tips when traveling

- Plan ahead
- Stick with familiar modes of transportation
- Avoid busy places that may cause overstimulation
- If possible, let transportation know about person's needs
- Avoid getting to airport too early
- Try for a direct flight--avoid long delays
- Use family restrooms
- Take refreshments/snacks
- i-Pod/headphones with favorite music
- Books, puzzles & magazines
- Register with Medic Alert/Safe Return
- Dress person with dementia in brightly colored clothing
- Take photo of person each day with cell phone

Tips for Decorating

- Use caution in decoration choices including lights
- Avoid rearranging furniture or creating obstacles
- Limit holiday decorations
- Use cheerful, familiar decorations that help recall memories & family traditions

Tips for Gift giving

- Gifts should be person and age appropriate
- Simple is best
- Identification bracelets
- Magazines/books
- Photo albums of family & friends
- Stuffed animals or soft pillows (if appropriate)
- Favorite music
- Videos/movies
- Lotions/toiletries
- Favorite/special foods
- Easy to fasten clothing
- Gift certificates for beauty care/pharmacy
- Bulletin board
- Night lights
- Window garden
- Recliner or easy chair
- Large clocks
- Simple/familiar games

Tips for Visits

- Have a plan for the visit
- Participate in program/activity happening if in Community
- If visiting in home, plan an activity you can do together
- Avoid negative words and accept where they are; step into their reality
- Check in advance on what you can bring in the way of food or gifts
- Possibly wear name tags
- Sit outside on patio or porch
- Listen to music together
- Go for a walk
- Bring greeting cards to look at & read
- Sing
- Children are great! Watch for overstimulation and too much noise/commotion
- Visit early and for a short time-- QUALITY over quantity
- Have a scrapbook or photo album available- complete with names and short phrases describing the picture & event
- Read stories, the newspaper or magazine
- Prayer, bible reading, familiar spiritual routines and rituals are important
- Go to lunch or bring in a meal