

TIPS

for Living With Alzheimer's Disease



Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia, is progressive and destroys memory and other important mental functions. In most people with Alzheimer's disease, symptoms first appear during their mid-60s. A person's risk of developing Alzheimer's disease increases with age. The following tips can help if you have Alzheimer's disease.

Adjust to your diagnosis. Take all the time you need to adjust to your diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. This may include mourning, feeling sad, and grieving losses or the expectation of future changes.

Create a plan for your future. Start making financial and legal plans after receiving your diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. This will allow you to participate in decision making.

Make communicating easier. When communicating with people, always take your time without feeling the need to rush. Avoid distracting noises and find a quiet place to talk. If need be, ask the person that you are speaking with to repeat what he or she is saying, or to speak slowly.

Ask for help from others. Ask a friend or family member to remind you of the important things that you need to do during the day, like going to appointments and taking medication.

Stick to a daily routine. Plan out the daily tasks you want to accomplish. Having a schedule can reduce the time you spend figuring out what needs to be done and when. This

makes you more successful in accomplishing your goals and limiting mistakes.

Simplify the completion of tasks. Give yourself ample time when completing tasks. If a task becomes too difficult, take a break and try it again later. Spending time trying to change something you cannot control can be a waste of energy and can prevent you from focusing your attention on the things you can control.

Remain active and engaged. It is important to keep your body and mind active with the social and physical activities that you have always enjoyed. Research suggests that life-long learning, exercise, and socializing can help people with Alzheimer's disease.

Help yourself remember. As you experience memory problems, you can develop strategies to help your memory. One strategy to help you remember things is to place sticky notes around the house with reminders for yourself. You can also write important information in a notebook.

This page is part of an ongoing series of practical tips for patients with neurologic disorders. If you have compiled clinically relevant tips that you wish to share, please contact the editor at info@neurologyreviews.com.

Tips for Patients are available for download at www.neurologyreviews.com.

