

How to Support Someone with Dementia

Practical Information on Dementia in People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)



Expect Change

- Dementia is a progressive condition. That means you can expect that the person's memory and skills will decline over time
- Keep notes to update the health care provider during wellness visits.
- As the person's needs change, additional supports may be needed.



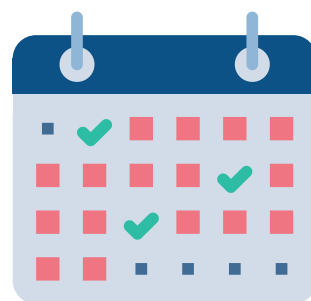
Maintain Well-being

- Maintain health by keeping medical appointments, offering good nutrition, adequate hydration, and enjoyable physical activity.
- Follow-up with the health care provider, agency nurse, or service coordinator when changes:
 - Are unusual for the person
 - Interfere with quality of life



Providing Support

- Provide meaningful, enjoyable activities that focus on maintaining skills.
- Speak simply, clearly and with respect.
- Support speaking with pictures, gestures, and assistance, as needed.
- Reduce distractions and clutter.
- Offer activities earlier in the day, fatigue may occur later in the day.



Plan for the Future

- Be in the moment with the person, but plan for the future.
- Put a health care proxy in place and consider guardianship if the person is unable to make informed decisions.
- Consider end of life care options well before they are needed, including advanced directives and hospice.

REMEMBER!

Report sudden changes to the health care provider right away!



Developed in collaboration with:



Center for Developmental Disabilities Evaluation and Research (CDDER)