



Caregiver Fact Sheet

Caring for a Person Living with Dementia

Dementia affects your person's memory, behavior, and ability to do things. It can be hard caring for someone who may need help with things that used to be easy, acts in unexpected ways, and has problems telling you what's needed. You can help your person and yourself by doing the following things.

- Don't take the things your person does and says personally.
- Become a detective. If your person gets upset, try to figure out why. Is it because he or she is trying to do something that's too hard and needs help? Is the environment too noisy? Is he or she bored? Achy? Hungry? Try to find patterns or clues.
- Smile and keep your tone of voice and body language positive, even if you don't feel that way. Your person may have trouble understanding your words but is likely to understand your mood and respond to it.
- Use simple words and give your person extra time to respond.
- Don't argue with or correct your person. It only makes things worse.
- Recognize and respond to your person's feelings. It's okay to say things like, "Wow, you sound very mad or upset, and I'm sorry about that. I'll do my best to help."
- Use gestures to show your person what to do.
- Give your person a smile, thumbs-up, or compliment when he or she does things well.
- If your person resists doing something that doesn't have to be done right away, change the focus to another simple task or an activity your person enjoys, and try again later.
- Give your person a sense of purpose by asking for help with a simple task and provide a compliment. For example, ask "Can you help me fold these towels? You always do such a good job."
- If you need help, talk to a dementia professional with the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900. If you need resources, call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 855-937-2372.

You can get more information about dementia and related resources at:

- <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/alzheimers-disease>
- [NCTCOG - Resources for People with Memory Loss & Family Caregivers](#)
- [NCTCOG - Training to Understand Dementia & Provide Better Care](#)



Dementia Friendly North Central/East Texas 800-272-3921