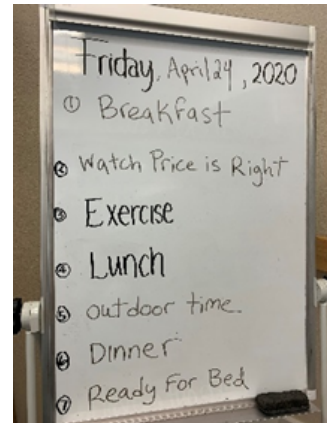


Engaging Activities at Home

Taking part in activities and everyday tasks can provide benefits for both the physical and mental well being for someone with dementia. While activities can help someone stay active and healthy, they can also help express feelings, retain skills and improve self esteem. They can also serve as opportunities for caregivers and their loved one to connect and do enjoy activities together. This handout provides tips and activity ideas to make staying home less stressful:

Maintain a consistent schedule:

- Consider posting a daily schedule: having a schedule can help with anxiety. Let your loved one know what to expect. If they can tell time, then include time on the schedule or calendar. When they ask “What’s next?”, bring them to the schedule and show them, so they can get used to looking at the schedule for their cues.



Post signs and written cues around the house:



- Post a sign in the bathroom to remind them to wash their hands
- Label doors if needed. The more cues you place in the environment the better; it promotes independence and means you can do less reminding and directing

Helping a person with dementia enjoy activities:

- Choose the right time of day- when they are most alert
- Keep things simple- breakdown activities into simple, straightforward steps
- Be prepared to adapt or modify activity as you go
- Give lots of support, praise and encouragement
- Aim to do the activity **with**, rather than **for**, the person. Otherwise they may lose confidence
- Watch for signs they want to finish or change activities. For example, fidgeting, avoiding eye contacting or irritation
- Don't feel like you have to finish- you can pick up where you left off another day if they would like to stop
- Pick activities based on previous hobbies or interests. Not everyone enjoys art and painting.

Activity ideas:

- Folding & organizing laundry (matching socks)
- Sorting coins, buttons, or beads (grouping by color or size)
- Puzzles and activity books
- Coloring
- Look up “this day in history”; discuss events and share memories
- Sorting silverware (grouping forks and spoons)
- Matching Tupperware containers to their lids
- Garden tasks: watering plants, picking flowers, arranging bouquets; planting herbs
- Scrapbooking and photo albums; reminisce on family and previous vacation photos
- Simple baking and cooking ideas
- Aromatherapy and hand massages





- Music ; easy to play instruments like tambourines or drums
- Reminisce by watching performances by their favorite artists. Music is a powerful tool!
- Explore different textures; different fabrics or clay
- Having tea or coffee outside
- Light at home exercises; tai chi, chair yoga/exercise, stretches (can be found on Youtube)
- Have friends or family visit with their pet
- Engage in a free “virtual activity” through the Alzheimer's Foundation of America. Scroll to the bottom of the website to see what is offered and how to sign up: <https://alzfdn.org/>
- Enjoy a virtual field trip through a museum. Many museums are now offering virtual tours. One is through the Museum of Natural History: <https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/>
- Enjoy an online concert. You can view nightly operas streamed through the Metropolitan Opera: <https://www.metopera.org/>