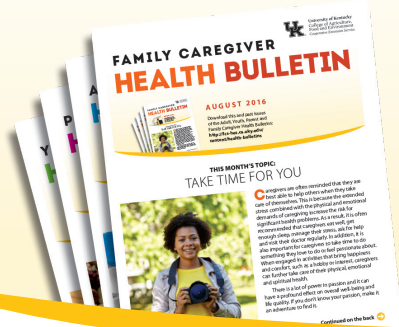


FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN



NOVEMBER 2019

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE



Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. It causes increasing issues with memory, thinking, and behavior and worsens over time eventually affecting daily living. According to the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's disease is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. There is not a cure, but research continues to investigate ways to treat the disease, delay its onset, and prevent it from progressing. In addition, researchers are also looking for treatments to improve life quality for those living with the disease and for

Continued on the back 



It is important to define a person with Alzheimer's disease as the person they have always been rather than by their condition.

➔ Continued from page 1

their caregivers. The following tips can help you live with Alzheimer's disease and enhance life quality.

Treat people as people, not a condition

Dr. Graham Stokes, director of memory care at HC-One in the United Kingdom, believes that the biggest fear for people living with Alzheimer's disease is their fear of losing their personality. As with other diseases, it is important to define a person with Alzheimer's disease as the person they have always been rather than by their condition. Throughout the disease, caregivers and family should focus on present-day things that make the person who they are.

Focus on ability

People often focus on loss when it comes to Alzheimer's disease and what people can no longer do. But there are many things a person with Alzheimer's still can do, and this can be empowering. Find activities that are enjoyed and set people up for success so that they feel confident and useful.

Encourage meaningful relationships

It is important for people with Alzheimer's disease to continue to have meaningful social encounters, Stokes said. While memories may fade and the ability to recall names declines, a person with Alzheimer's can still recognize the attention, feelings, and moods of those near. Maintaining interests and relationships can even help ease some of the symptoms of memory loss. Even in the later stages, when a person may not remember or be able to articulate a visit, they do enjoy the company in the moment. This feeling of companionship can have positive lasting effects throughout the day.

Promote physical activity

Physical activity cannot cure the disease, but, according to Stokes, it can keep the blood flowing to the brain and provide additional nourishment, which can help alleviate some of the symptoms and

enhance overall well-being. According to WebMD, exercise helps people sleep better, feel more alert during the day, and it can promote a better day-and-night routine. Repetitive activity also proves to lower anxiety and contribute to feelings of accomplishment. The type of exercise will depend on many factors such as a person's symptoms, fitness level, and overall health. Check with a health-care professional before implementing an exercise plan.

Participate in a dementia care survey research study

If you care for a loved one with dementia, live in Kentucky, and are at least 18 years old, the University of Kentucky Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension and the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work invite you to participate in an online survey about dementia care experiences. The purpose of the survey is to learn more about dementia service needs and service delivery preferences for those who provide care to someone with dementia. Your feedback will help inform efforts related to reducing caregiver burden. Participants will be eligible to enter a drawing for a \$50 gift card.

https://louisvillekent.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3gTJrePrDM9sRBr

REFERENCES

- Alzheimer's Association. (2019). Retrieved from <https://alz.org>
- Cherian, D. (2019). Gulf News. World Alzheimer's day: What do you know about Alzheimer's. Retrieved from <https://gulfnews.com/lifestyle/health-fitness/world-alzheimers-day-what-do-you-know-about-alzheimers-1.2088922>
- Dementia Care Central. (2018). The importance of maintaining social interactions & activities with dementia or Alzheimer's. Retrieved from <https://www.dementiacarecentral.com/caregiverinfo/handsoncare/socialization>
- WebMD. (2018). Alzheimer's disease and exercise. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/alzheimers/guide/alzheimers-exercise>

**FAMILY CAREGIVER
HEALTH BULLETIN**

Written by: Amy F. Kostelic, Ph.D.
Edited by: Alyssa Simms
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com

