



# What is dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet about dementia that will help you prepare to treat people with dementia. How you treat them can significantly affect their coping with the disease, as well as their quality of life. You have the ability to make things easier for them, strengthen them, and allow them to function in an optimal manner.





Dementia is a collective name for a group of degenerative diseases that affect the brain and cause continuous and irreversible cognitive and functional deterioration. That is, in all dementia diseases there is brain damage; a person's memory, thinking and functional capabilities weaken as the disease progresses.

The most common type of dementia is Alzheimer's disease. Other common types are: vascular dementia (at times after stroke) and frontotemporal dementia.



According to the Ministry of Health and the EMDA association,

**There are between**

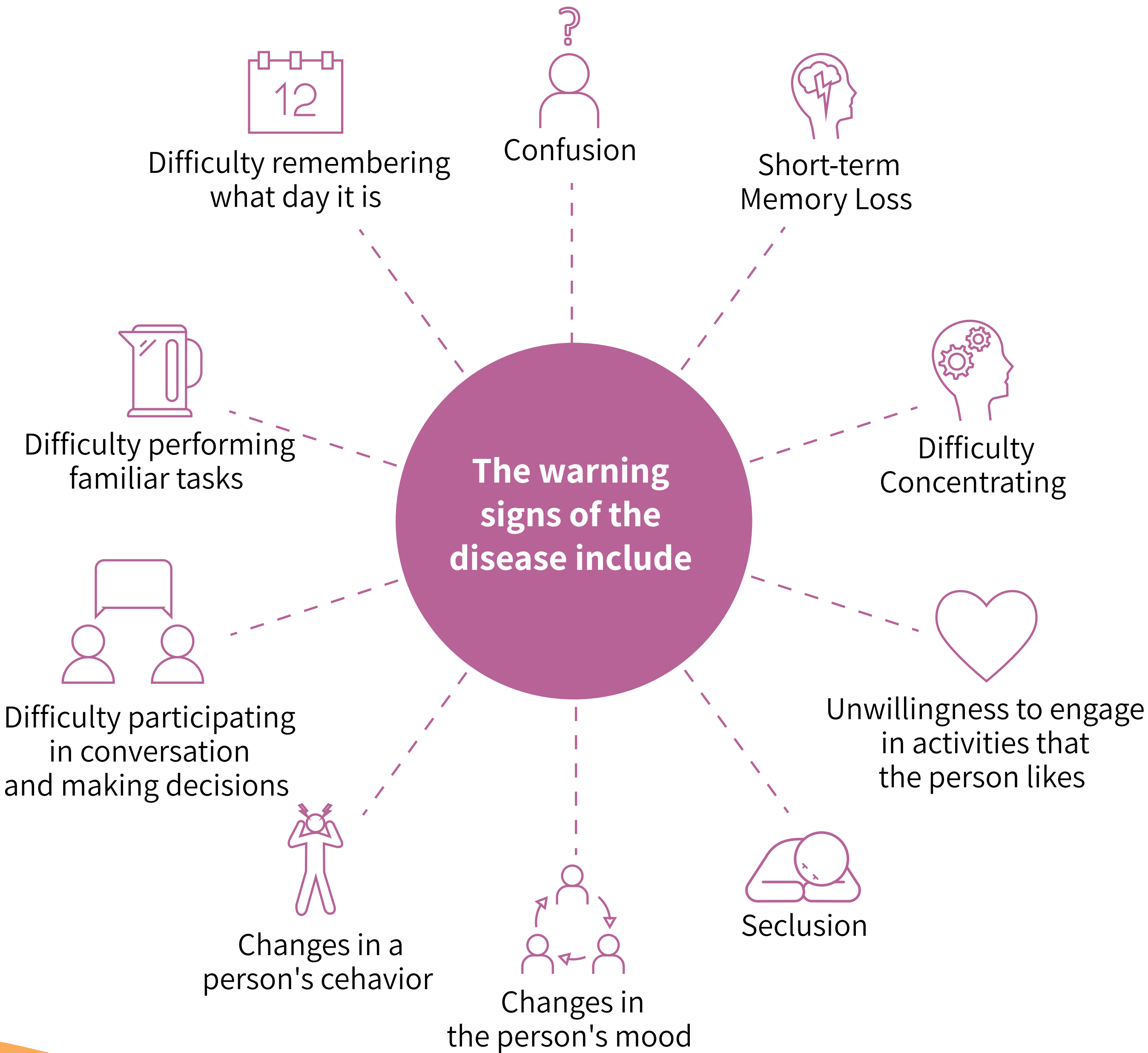
**120-200** thousand people with dementia in Israel.

**Constituting**

**6.4-20%** of those aged 65 and over (depending on the person's age).

**Globally, there are about**

**50** million people with dementia, and another person is diagnosed every 3 seconds.



For more details [pages 17-18](#)



It is customary to divide the disease into 3 stages



Each stage has its own unique characteristics

Currently, there is no cure for the disease and the average duration of the disease ranges from 7-10 years, depending on the person's age, other background diseases, and the time of diagnosis.



For more details [pages 20-21](#) 

Despite the illness and the decline in thinking and memory, the person continues to feel the same way as before the illness and until the day of his death can feel the full range of emotions (such as joy, pleasure, anger, frustration).

Therefore, always make sure to treat the person the way you would like to be treated - **with respect, care and sensitivity.**



You should know that at every stage of the disease, it is possible and worthwhile to offer the person activities that are appropriate for his level of functioning. These activities will help him stay involved in daily life, maintain his abilities for a longer period of time, and increase his chances of achieving maximum quality of life alongside the disease.

## Want to know more?

[Read the Ministry of Health's webpage on dementia](#)

[And the information newsletter by the EMDA association](#)

\* The information is intended for both genders equally





# How to care for a person with dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet about caring for people with dementia that will help you treat them. Know that the care you give may significantly affect the person's quality of life, his functioning and his ability to cope with the disease.





**We will start with 4 important principles in the care of people with dementia:**



## 1. Independence

Help him maintain his independence, to the extent possible, in day-to-day activities (such as eating, dressing, and going to the bathroom).

## 2. Initiation

Sometimes, a person with dementia has difficulty initiating activities on his own. By giving a reminder or starting the action, you will help him get started (for example, take out the coffee cup and sugar, but let him make the coffee himself).





### 3. Helping

Even when you help him, do so gently and respectfully; take his preferences into account and allow him to choose (while maintaining his safety).

It is important that you accompany the treatment with an explanation and preparation before each activity, for example: "Now I will accompany you to the shower and help you bathe."

### 4. Involvement

Encourage him to be involved in as many daily activities as possible (choosing clothes, tasting the food while cooking, peeling vegetables, etc.).





# Emphases for daily activities

## Eating



Eating can be an enjoyable activity that's fun to do together. Remember that everyone has their own personal preferences regarding food, and take his personal preferences and habits into account.

Note that in dementia there may be changes in the sense of smell and taste.

If you can, involve him in the preparation of the food, in accordance with his ability.

Often, preparing food together promotes eating.

During the meal, sit with him so he feels that you are eating together (usually, a person will eat more in company).

Make sure the environment in which the meal is taking place is quiet and that there are no other stimuli (such as many dishes on the table).

Don't put too much food on his plate; add each course separately.



Cut the food for him (if he can't cut it by himself), but let him eat by himself.

If he can't use silverware, let him eat with his hands (as long as the food can be eaten that way).

If you are cooking the meal, make him food that can be held with the fingers (such as cut potatoes instead of puree).



Maintain his ability to eat independently. At times, that is the last thing he can do by himself, and it gives him a sense of good control over his environment.

Try to find activities he can do on his own (such as spreading toppings on bread, opening boxes, pouring, cutting, wiping his mouth with a napkin, bringing the bowl closer).

Let him act on his own.



Sometimes, the person will not initiate eating by himself. In such a case, you can begin by feeding him several spoonfuls. After that, put the spoon in his hand and encourage him to continue by himself.

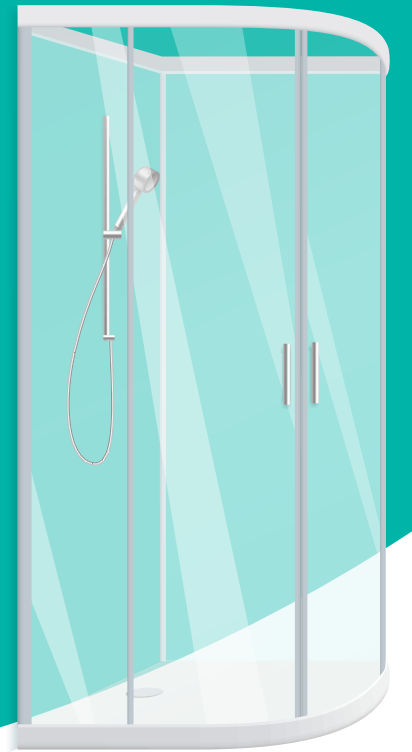
**If he refuses to eat, never force-feed.**




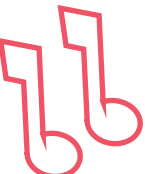

# Emphases for daily activities

## Bathing

Bathing is a very intimate activity, which a person is accustomed to always doing in privacy. Today, when he needs your help and needs you to be with him while he bathe, the situation can cause him embarrassment and even lead to resistance. Therefore, help him gently and carefully and maintain his dignity and safety.



Sometimes, the person may refuse to bathe. There are various reasons for this (such as loss of control, fear, past trauma related to bathing and nudity), so it is important that you prepare:

-  Prepare a pleasant environment in the bathroom in advance, in terms of temperature, a suitable chair, a towel ready for use, and clothes.
-  Play music: Sometimes playing music will make it easier for the person to get in the shower and lead to better cooperation.
-  Give him as much control as possible: let him undress (if necessary, they can also shower wearing underwear) and hold the sponge / shower head / solid soap himself.

Let him perform as many actions in the shower as possible, all according to his ability.



**At every stage - maintain privacy and modesty and do not expose him to other people.**

# Emphases for daily activities

## Dress



When you help a person get dressed, choose a quiet and separate place and allow him maximum privacy.

Let him choose his clothes (from a limited selection so as not to confuse). Remember that this action takes time - be patient and give yourself the time it takes.

If the person is sitting while getting dressed, sit next to him (if you stand over him, this may create an unpleasant feeling), and give him the item of clothing.

It's very important to allow him maximum independence in terms of dress, whether he dress completely by himself or perform only one step in the process (e.g. close buttons or put his hand in the sleeve).

At each stage during the dressing process, ask yourself what the person is capable of performing, and let him perform that action.



Make sure that the clothing is comfortable, easy to wear, suits him (clean clothes, appropriate colors) and is suitable for the season.

Sometimes, the person refuses to get dressed or change clothes. Try to create a routine in the act of dressing, at a fixed time and place. This may reduce such situations.

# Emphases for daily activities

## Toileting

At some point during dementia, problems with bowel/bladder control may appear. Most often, the difficulty will develop gradually, so we need to strive to allow the person as much independence and control as possible.

If difficulty with bowel/bladder control has appeared, going to the bathroom proactively (even if the person has not asked to) can help greatly.

When a person gets used to regular hours, the body does too. Accompany him to the bathroom when he gets up from bed in the morning, before bed at night, after meals, etc.



Pay attention to changes during the day, such as restlessness, wandering (walking back and forth with no purpose) or excessive mobility - these may be a hint that he needs to go to the bathroom, but don't know what to do or where to go.

Sometimes, the person will go to the bathroom but won't relieve himself. Direct him verbally and physically to perform the act itself in the bathroom.

Make it easy for him to find the bathroom quickly - using a sign, keeping the way clear, and finding the shortest way there.

Make sure that the person is wearing comfortable clothes that are easy to take off and put on, that will make it easier for him to relieve himself quickly.





## Emphases for daily activities

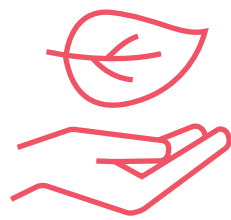
### Preventing pressure sores

In advanced stages of dementia, when the person is mainly sitting or lying in bed, there is an immediate danger of the development of pressure sores.

Pressure sores are life-threatening, cause significant suffering and are very hard to treat.



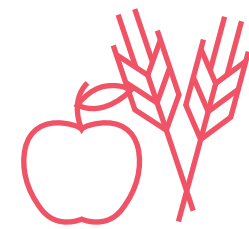
There are various causes of their development:



Sensory  
impairments



Background diseases,  
such as diabetes



Poor nutrition

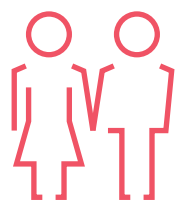


Remember that a person with dementia will have a hard time saying that he is in pain and uncomfortable.

Therefore, you should check the health of the skin and make sure that there are no red spots that do not disappear after a few seconds, and that there are no blisters, abrasions or sores.



## How can you prevent pressure sores (at advanced stages of the disease)?



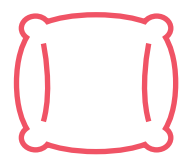
Make sure that the person changes position every two hours. Proactively walking to the bathroom, for example, is a good way to change posture and maintain muscle function.



During bathing or dressing, examine the skin thoroughly and look for signs of discoloration of the skin.



Make sure to change his diaper frequently, 4-5 times a day, and that the area is dry (you can add a booster pad inside the diaper and pull it out every two hours).



Adapt the use of pressure-reducing accessories - ask the family members to consult an occupational therapist or physiotherapist for a special mattress, a wheelchair cushion and a sponge for the arms.



Make sure his nutrition is appropriate (according to instructions received after the family members consult a dietitian).



## Want to know more?

Read the second section of the information newsletter by the EMDA association - caring for a person with dementia:

Read the booklet: Eating and Living with Dignity: On Tailoring Nutrition for Persons with Dementia (published by the Ministry of Health, EMDA and JDC Israel-Eshel):

In Hebrew | In English | In Russian



\* The information is intended for both genders equally

# How to communicate with people with dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet about communicating with people with dementia, which will help you talk to them and treat them.

Remember, your communication with the person has a big impact on his quality of life and his relationship with the environment. In moments in which it is more difficult to converse, you can use non-verbal communication (eye contact, touch, following body movements) to make things easier for him and assist him.

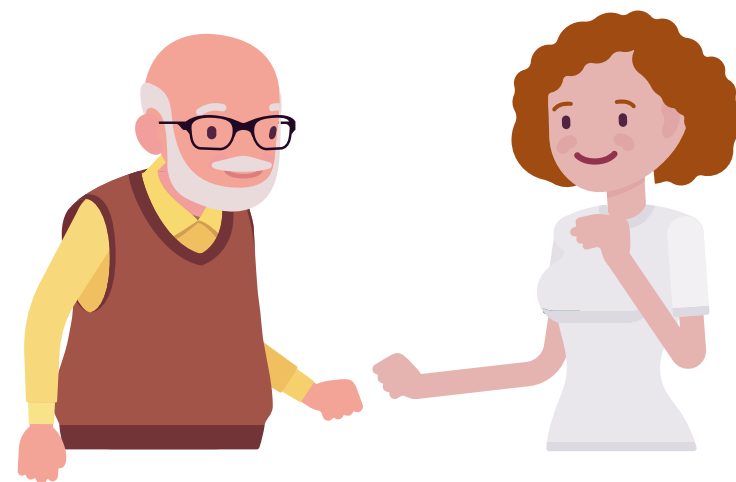


As dementia progresses, a person's conversational abilities become more limited. He gets confused, forgets words he wanted to say, has trouble choosing words appropriate for the conversation, and has difficulty forming comprehensible sentences. In advanced stages of the disease, the person can say only 5-7 words and most of the communication with him becomes non-verbal.

## **4 Important tips before holding a conversation with a person with dementia:**



Use a clear, low and caring tone of speech.



Refer to the person with respect (you can ask what he would like you to call him).



Note whether he needs glasses or a hearing aid; make sure he uses them.



Try to keep the place where you meet quiet.

## And 7 more tips for the conversation itself:



Be patient; listen to him while maintaining eye contact.



Be attentive; respond to what he says or asks.



Explain what you are going to do (for example, I will help you getting dressed and then we will go to the doctor).



Speak in short sentences; give him time to understand, think and answer.



Don't correct him and don't try to educate him; avoid arguments and confrontations.



Don't ask questions to test him or his memory (such as, "who am I?" or "What is this?").



Talk with him about his past, about experiences and events from earlier in his life.

For more details 



### 3 Advice regarding good communication with a person with dementia:

When talking to a person with dementia, there are common communication difficulties you may encounter. These are possible solutions for them:



#### **Repetition of questions or statements:**

Try to answer calmly and patiently. If the questions or statements continue, offer the person something else to do or talk to him about a different topic. Avoid saying sentences such as, "I just explained," "I already told you," "I already answered you."

#### **Unclear speech, confused sentences, content that is inconsistent with reality:**

listening to a person and being with him is enough. It's not necessary to understand what he is saying, but to identify what he is feeling.



#### **Confusion of time and people, for example the thought that their parents are alive or that you are another person:**

the person's reality, even if it is not "correct", is the only reality to be addressed. It is advisable not to correct him and not to argue with him.



## Want to know more?

[Read about the topic on the Clalit HMO website](#)

[Or in the 'Dementia in the Era of Coronavirus' leaflet \(pages 32-34\)](#)

[And learn about the validation method and its use for communication with people with dementia](#)



\*The information is intended for both genders equally

# How to encourage activities among people with dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet about activities with people with dementia, that will help you treat them. Remember, diverse activity is important throughout the stages of the disease and can affect cognitive and physical functioning.

Using tailored activities, you can make things easier for the person and help them maintain their quality of life.



Activities tailored to the individual are activities he likes, enjoys, and can perform in terms of physical and cognitive ability. This is of great importance for the preservation of his abilities.

Therefore, it's important to encourage the person to perform various activities, throughout all stages of the disease.

## 7 Important points to emphasize:

1. Adapt the activity to the person's preferences, existing hobbies and even previous occupations. You can also encourage him to help with household chores, depending on his abilities (e.g., drying dishes, setting the table).



2. Despite the decrease in cognitive ability, the activity should be adapted to adults (and not children).

3. The personal connection with you, the atmosphere and the shared experience are more important than the activity itself.



4. Suggest only two activities at a time and allow him to choose. The suggestion of several activities at once can be confusing (especially in the advanced stages of the disease).



5. Do not force the person to perform any specific activity. If he is uninterested in a particular activity, offer him a different activity. If he is uninterested in this activity as well, let him be and try again later.

6. Before the activity, describe it in short sentences and even demonstrate how to perform it.



7. During the activity, give him simple tasks that are easy to understand.

# How to match the activity to the disease stage?

## Initial stage

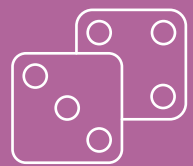
The person needs mild assistance in daily functioning. He can understand you and have a conversation with you using short sentences, even if it's accompanied by word distortions, recurring questions and difficulties in orientation.

### What activities can be appropriate for this phase?



#### Thought-based activities

crossword puzzles, sudoku, nanograms, math puzzles, reading.



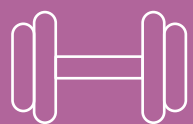
#### Games

cards, rummikub, backgammon, checkers, set, computer games.



#### Handicrafts

knitting, macrame, sewing, painting, mosaics, ceramics, paper pulp, sculpture, woodwork.



#### Exercise

dancing and exercises with music, fitness exercises with videos on YouTube or TV.



#### Social activities

participation in lectures, social visits and trips.



#### Communication

using the Internet (searching for information, participating in social networks, writing emails), watching shows or plays on the TV or on the computer.



#### Reminiscence memories

looking at photo albums, writing a life story, writing down family recipes.



## Mid-stage disease

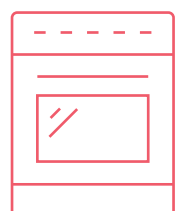
The person has difficulty communicating in words, recognizing mistakes or solving problems. Sometimes you will need to persuade him to perform an activity and he may forget what he is doing in the middle. In addition, he needs more help on a daily basis and there may be a change in his behavior, such as anxiety, refusal to treat, shouting, aggression and wandering.

### What activities can be appropriate for this phase?



#### Thought-based activities

sorting and matching objects / pictures, inserting objects into containers, using a computer / tablet (with your help), reading a newspaper and having light conversations.



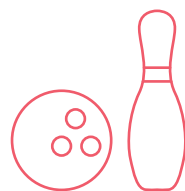
#### Social activities

cooking and baking together, looking at albums and reminiscing.



#### Games

Bingo, the "War" card game, sorting and matching games, adult puzzles with few pieces.



#### Physical activity

playing catch (also while sitting), home bowling, target throwing on the floor, exercise while imitating movements.



#### Handicrafts

painting, simple weaving, basic mosaics, free work with clay.



## Advanced stage

The person needs considerable assistance in all functions of daily life. He is almost immobile, has a great difficulty with single words, and often does not recognize people or objects.

## 2 Guidelines for activities during this stage:

1. The appropriate activities are the ones that you do for the person in which the degree of involvement required of him is very low.
2. You can check whether the activity suits him according to his eyes - if it holds his gaze, he is attentive and interested. You can also pay attention to his facial expressions (a smile or an angry expression) and to his body posture (stiff and tense, or calm and relaxed).



## What activities can be appropriate for this phase?



### Movement

playing catch with a ball or a balloon, soap bubbles (that you blow), an app / game on a tablet that responds to light touch.

### Sensory communication

Smell - smell a variety of scents (e.g. cinnamon, talcum powder, perfume, lemon, flowers);  
sight - display pictures on a screen or album, place a mobile or an aquarium in a convenient place to watch;



taste - taste different foods (depending on the recommended texture);  
touch - massage their hands or feet, feel the texture of fur or brass;  
hearing - play music that the person likes.

## Want to know more?

For more details and for examples of suitable activities:

['Dementia in the Era of Coronavirus' leaflet, pages 17-31](#)

['Old Age in the Era of Coronavirus - A Database of Leisure Activities for the Homebound' leaflet, pages 11-12\)](#):

[Leisure and Occupational Activities Book for the Elderly - A Guide to Increasing Participation in Purposeful Leisure Activities](#)

## Want to see videos as well?

[For videos with ideas for activities at home - Dr. Dana Peer](#)



\* The information is intended for both genders equally

# How to cope with challenging behaviors in dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet about challenging behaviors in dementia that will help you treat people with dementia. At times, these behaviors may be frightening or make treatment difficult, but there are many things that you can do in order to minimize them and help the person.



We all have the same basic needs. We all want to be loved, taken care of, and appreciated. It's important to every one of us to be well fed, to be clean, and to sleep well. It's important to us to realize our potential and feel needed.

When the needs of a person with dementia aren't being met, He may act in a way that is harmful, to himself or others

**For example:**



**Become passive or keep to himself**

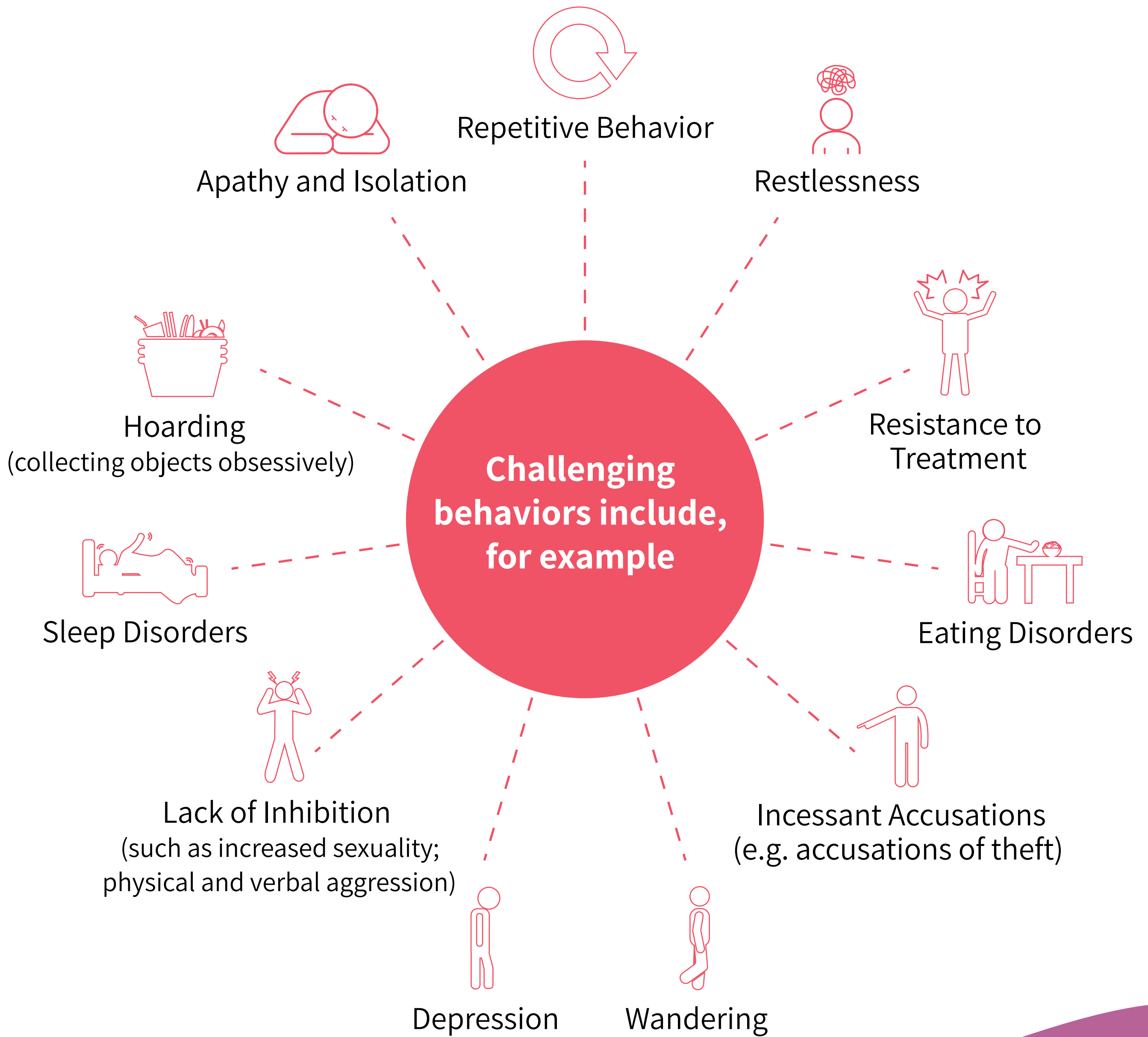


**Get up and wander incessantly**



**Yell or throw a punch**

The person is suffering, and his behavior may be disruptive to his environment, to his family members, and to you. We call these behaviors "challenging" because they can create great difficulty in treating the person with dementia.



[For more details](#) 

## What can you do?

First, ask yourself the following questions:



Does the behavior endanger the person, you, or others in his environment?

Does the behavior bother others in his environment?

If the behavior doesn't bother anyone, let it continue in a safe environment. If the person is endangering himself or his environment, action must be taken immediately and his safety and dignity maintained.



## Remember, every behavior has a reason (even if we don't know what it is).

Ask yourself:

Does the person have basic needs that are not being met (such as: hunger, thirst, pain, love, appreciation and meaning)

### **A need for emotional expression (such as longing, anger, anxiety):**

If you see the person shouting and hitting, he may need to express his anger and frustration about the situation.

Let him express his anger.

You can also offer to do physical exercise together, go for a walk outside or tap on the table with music.



### **A need to satisfy physical needs (hunger and thirst, a desire to go to the bathroom, constipation, pain, illness, sexual satisfaction):**

If you see the person getting up many times, moving about in his chair and restless, making indistinct noises, it may be a sign that he needs to go to the bathroom / eat / alleviate pain.

Ask him simple yes / no questions, such as: does anything hurt? Do you need to go to the bathroom?





## **A need for security (the desire to be in a safe place with familiar people):**

If you see the person asking the same question over and over again, it may be that he does not know what to do and is feeling insecure.

Ask him if he needs anything, and listen to him. You can also help him find a pleasant place to be and an activity he likes.

## **A need for communication (being in touch with people, by verbal and non-verbal communication, such as eye contact and touch):**

If you see that the person is following you all the time and is staying close to you, he may be expressing a desire for communication and closeness.

Sit next to him, talk to him, play a game with him, or do something together.



## **A need for a suitable environment (physical environment - light, heat/cold, noise, messiness):**

If you see that the person is very distracted, looks sideways all the time and can not concentrate, it may be related to noise, inappropriate temperature or smells.

See if you can change something in the environment or leave the environment all together and go to a more suitable place.



## Important highlights

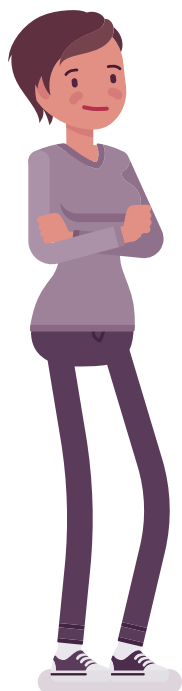


Usually, if you address the person's real need, the challenging behavior will diminish.



Often, using music helps to calm and even stop challenging behavior (such as difficulty getting into the shower).

## How can you prevent/reduce challenging behaviors?



Notice when the challenging behavior occurs?  
At particular times, in the presence of a specific person or in a particular place.

[For more details](#) 

Help the person create a regular routine and a clear and relaxed schedule. The more a person engages in meaningful activities for him, the more he feels that he have a unique identity, self-worth and belonging.



Often, patience and empathetic communication will greatly facilitate the care of a person with dementia. When a person feels loved and understood it's easier for him to cooperate.

Note that challenging behavior can be related to an illness, such as a urinary tract infection. In such a case, and in case of any other small changes you notice, contact the family members.



## Want to know more?

The book: Saar, Ayelet (1999). The Strength to Go On: Guidebook to Improving the Quality of Life of Alzheimer Patients and their Families (pages 42-45)

'Dementia in the Era of Coronavirus' leaflet (pages 25-42)



\*The information is intended for both genders equally



# How to maintain safety in the home of a person with dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

Every day you meet with the person under your care and enter his home. Often, you see things that family members or others are unaware of. Therefore, we wish to draw your attention to things that are important for you to know in order to maintain the person's safety. Your entry into his home and your awareness of these dangers will help you and his family protect him.





## Before we begin, 2 important points to emphasize:

1. When visiting the home of a person with dementia, remember that he has lived there for many years and is used to the way the furniture and objects are laid out.
2. For any change you think is worth making, consult him (to the extent possible) and his family members and think about how the change will affect him.



For example, you may think that the kitchen should be arranged differently, but for the last 60 years the person has been used to having the glasses in the top cupboard on the right, and now, after the new arrangement, he will not be able to find them.



# How to make adjustments in the home and maintain safety?

Pay attention to the following things in the person's environment:



## At the entrance to the home

Sometimes there are obstacles on the way to the home (for example, a disorderly access path, no railing, insufficient lighting in the stairwell or carpets at the entrance). If you notice such problems, report them to the family members.

In parallel, check whether there are things that you can take care of, such as putting a chair in the stairwell (if the person gets tired and needs a break while climbing the stairs) or moving mats that may be an obstacle.

## Keys and locks

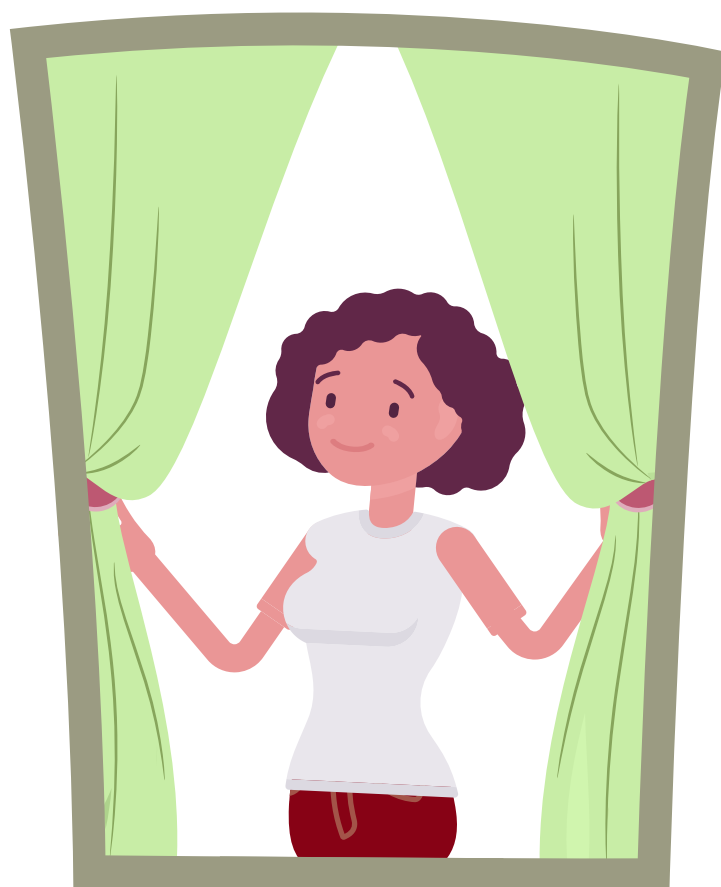
A person with dementia may lock himself in a room and be unable to open the door, thus endangering himself.

Together with the family, consider removing the keys or locks. When it comes to the front door of the house, make sure that the person does not go out unattended (by locking the door from above using a chain lock, or by removing the key).



## Inside the home

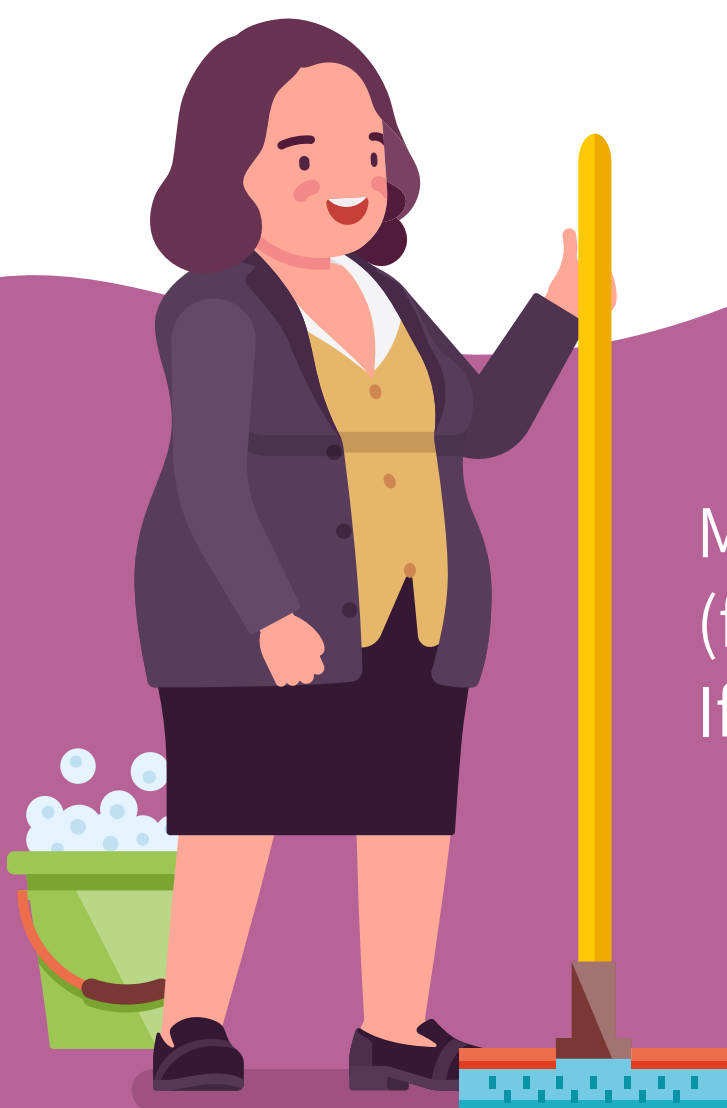
Pay attention to indoor lighting - very weak lighting, a dark room or strong and dazzling lighting will make things difficult for the person. Notify the family members to the issue.



Ensure a pleasant temperature in the house (warm enough in winter and pleasant in summer).

When entering the house, note whether it is aired out or closed and stuffy. Make sure to air out the house and open the windows (when there is no risk to the person).

Make sure that the house is tidy and that there is no furniture or accessories that can pose an obstacle.



Make sure that the floor in the house is not too slippery (for example, if you use floor wax liquid - the floor will be slippery). If it is, choose a floor cleaner that doesn't make the floor slippery.

## Doors

It is advisable to install a sliding door or a door that opens outwards (doors that opens inwards are dangerous) and remove locks. Consult the family regarding this matter.



## Kitchen

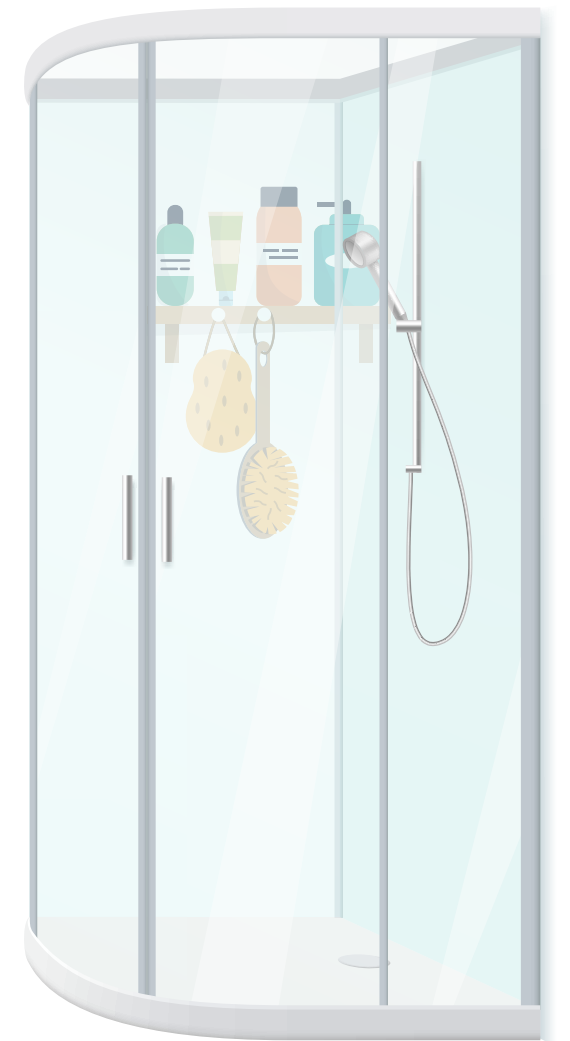
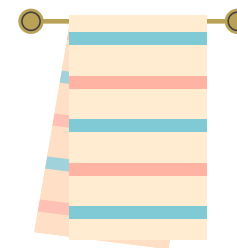
There are safety measures for gas (gas detectors, gas timers) and protection against the use of electrical products.

If you are concerned that the person will endanger himself while using appliances and gas, report the issue to the family members and ask for a suitable solution.

## Bathroom and shower

When going to help the person in the shower, prepare everything needed (clothes, soap, shampoo, a towel) in advance.

Warm up the bathroom and make sure it's nice to enter.



Make sure to perform all transitions in the bathroom with extreme care - make sure, for example, that the place where the person is standing is dry (or use an anti-slip mat) and that there is a chair inside and outside the shower, and keep the person from slipping as he moves from chair to chair. If the person is in a wheelchair, transfer him to the shower chair outside the bathroom.



Make sure that the person is sitting on a special shower chair and that the chair is placed on a flat surface, next to a bathing curtain and grips that will help a safe transition - this is the most recommended way to help the person shower.

If there is a glass shower in the house - take extra care, as the danger is even greater in the event of a fall.



If there is a bathtub - use a bathing board that attaches to the edge of the bathtub and avoid placing a chair in the bathtub (it is unstable and dangerous). Inside the bath, place a non-slip mat or use special stickers.

When setting the water temperature, check it on yourself first to avoid burns.



## Making adjustments inside the home

Suggest the family members to consult with occupational therapists who specialize in the subject regarding everything related to making adjustments inside the home, the use of assistive devices, and housing changes.



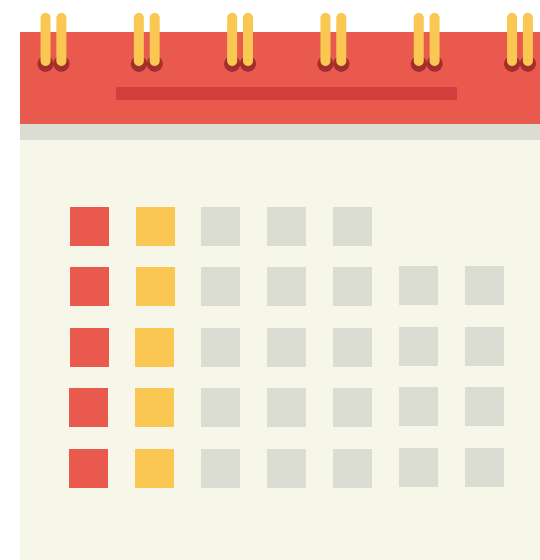
In situations in which you have difficulty lifting the person from chairs / the toilet / the bath / the bed, the seat may not be high enough and the person is weakened and has difficulty helping get himself up. Consult with family members about the possibility of raising the chair (this can be done in a variety of ways).

# How can the environment be used to help a person with dementia?

Following are some examples of how to use the environment to help a person orient himself, function better and even reduce challenging behaviors they display:

## Orientation

When you meet a person who is disoriented and asks recurring questions, such as "what day is it today?", use a large, legible writing calendar, a large, prominent clock, and a reminder board.



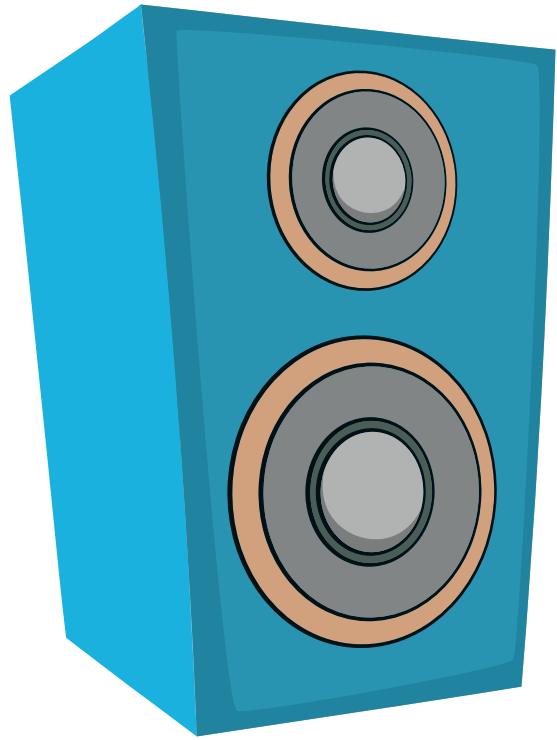
## Safety

Note hazardous substances (medicines, detergents and other toxins) present in the home unattended and lock them in the closet or keep them out of reach in an inaccessible place.

## Environment

Pay attention to the sound environment in the home and make sure, for example, that there are no noises that are too loud. Try to differentiate between times when the TV is on and quiet times with no noise at all. Consider playing music at regular times of the day (for example before and during a shower, or during meals).

Remember, music is a tool that can help you gain the person's collaboration.



## Mirrors

Sometimes, when a person with dementia looks in the mirror it can confuse or frighten him.

Pay attention to this and consider caring for, combing, showering and grooming the person without placing him in front of a mirror.





In case of need, a list of emergency numbers which is recommended to hang in a central and clear place in the house

Want to know more?

Read the following article by Melabev

Watch this video about environment adjustment of a person with dementia, from Dr. Dana Peer

Read about the application Milbat Home

Visit the "Azarim" website: the Israeli database of technology to support rehabilitation, care and accessibility

\* The information is intended for both genders equally





# How can you help a person with advanced dementia?

Dear Caregiver,

This is an information sheet that will help you treat people with advanced dementia. How you treat them can significantly affect their quality of life at this stage of the disease, as well as how their family members cope.



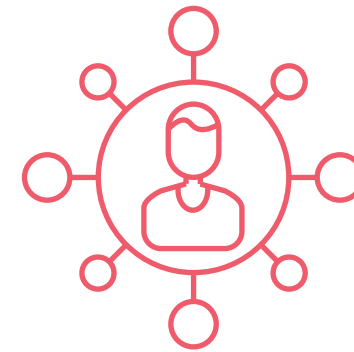


Dementia is a terminal illness; advanced dementia refers to the last stage of the disease. Each person with dementia reaches this stage at a different time. The length of time one can live with advanced dementia also varies, from several months to several years.

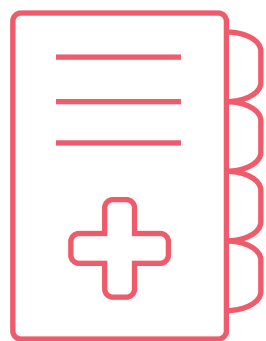
## What characterizes advanced dementia?



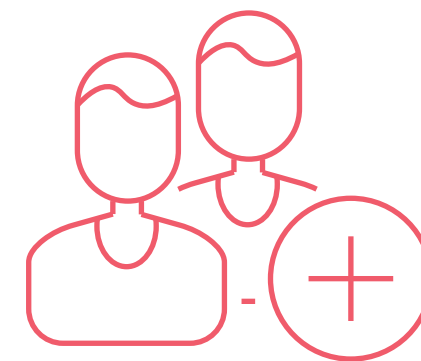
The person has difficulty communicating (says only 5-7 words or does not speak at all).



The person suffers from severe memory problems (he does not recognize even close family members).



The person is at risk for eating and swallowing problems, fever and infections (e.g. pneumonia or urinary tract infection).



The person is completely dependent on someone else for all daily functions.

For more information about approaches to eating problems, decisions regarding hospitalization and treatment of infections - see pages 25-17

[For more details](#) 

## How to care for a person with advance dementia?

Pay attention to facial expressions and body movements; learn his behavior to understand how he feels (refusal to eat - a tight face, or holding his head, for example, can indicate that he is in pain).



Make sure that your treatment helps him feel as comfortable as possible, reduces pain and allows him to be in a pleasant, loving and understanding environment.





Remember that even at this stage you can make things easier for him by focusing on activities that involve the senses.

### For example:



playing music  
he likes



using pleasant  
scents



giving him food  
he likes and  
can eat



making eye  
contact with him



touching him in a  
pleasant and  
warm way

It is also important that you adjust their environment (at home or in an institution). Ask family members to consult an occupational therapist or physiotherapist for advice regarding the use of assistive devices, such as an adapted mattress, a wheelchair and a seat cushion.



## Want to know more?

Read about tailoring food:

[In Hebrew](#) | [In English](#) | [In Russian](#)

[Using music](#)

[Use of assistive devices](#)

[Read the leaflet on advanced dementia - the guidebook for families](#)

[And the information on dementia at advanced stages published by the EMDA association](#)



\* The information is intended for both genders equally