



Tips on How Exercise Benefits Your Loved One with Alzheimer's

The Mayo Clinic tells us that physical activity and exercise provide tangible benefits to people with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

The Benefits of Exercise for Your Loved One

- **Improving physical function** – Movement aids flexibility and strength. One study found that women with dementia (average age 80) who exercised three times a week were better able to feed, dress and bathe themselves than a control group of those with dementia who did not exercise.
- **Reducing stress, elevating mood and promoting calm** – Moving the body during the day helps to decrease incidents of aggression and agitation. Exercise can also help reduce the effects of depression, which is common in people with dementia.
- **Improving overall cardiovascular health** – Medical science tells us there is a connection between heart health, blood pressure and Alzheimer's disease. The protective benefits of exercise likewise apply to those with memory loss.
- **Slowing mental decline** – Exercise seems to slow brain atrophy, especially in the hippocampus, which influences memory and spatial navigation.
- **Reducing the risk of falls** – People with Alzheimer's tend to fall more than others in their age group. Exercise can help your loved one with dementia improve their balance and be less fearful of falling.
- **Improving sleep** – Sleep disorders are common for those with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Exercise has been shown to help loved ones get into a better sleep routine.
- **Providing simple joy** – Movement helps to fill your loved one's day and also provides them with enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment.

Tips for Providing Exercise for Your Loved One at Home

- **Walking** – Walking around your yard is fine and in the early stages of the disease, walking in a mall might also be possible.

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- **Exercise class** – Some senior centers and other facilities offer classes specifically for loved ones with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia.
- **Doing chores around the house** – Activities such as vacuuming, dusting and doing laundry are all beneficial.
- **Gardening** – Simply working in the garden can be a pleasant source of exercise and relaxation.
- **Dancing** – Try selecting music from the time when your loved one was in their prime and encourage them to dance with you. If your loved one is confined to a wheelchair, they can still clap or move to the music.
- **Water exercise** – Ask your local Y or senior center that has a pool if you can take classes with your loved one.
- **Practicing Tai Chi** – This popular activity helps with balance as well as providing exercise.
- **Riding a stationary bike** – If you don't have one at home, try the gym or a senior center.
- **Stretching and strength training** – If you do not have hand weights, you can use canned goods as light weights.

North Woods Village at Edison Lakes is the area’s first, single-purpose, residential [Memory Care Assisted Living Community](#) (MCAL) dedicated to caring for those with Alzheimer’s disease, dementia and other memory impairments as well as providing education, support and resources to area caregivers and their families. The unique, [purpose-built architectural design](#) of **North Woods Village at Edison Lakes** is one element of “[NEW DIRECTIONS](#)”SM the community’s signature memory care program that provides the optimal balance of loving care, dignified support, social engagement, wellness and independence.

For more information on **North Woods Village at Edison Lakes** and our [Caregiver Education & Support Calendar](#), please [contact us](#) today!

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