

Everyone needs a break. Respite care provides caregivers a temporary rest from caregiving, while the person living with Alzheimer's continues to receive care in a safe environment. Using respite services can support and strengthen your ability to be a caregiver.

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## Using respite care

### Center for Dementia Respite Innovation

The Alzheimer's Association's Center for Dementia Respite Innovation funds new respite care innovation projects. Local organizations or providers, currently, or interested in, providing dementia-related respite services with a focus on underserved communities are encouraged to apply.

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Respite care can help you as a caregiver by providing a new environment or time to relax. It's a good way for you to take time for yourself.

Respite care can provide:

- A chance to spend time with other friends and family, or to just relax
- Time to take care of errands such as shopping, exercising, getting a haircut or going to the doctor

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## Hardest of going to the doctor

- Comfort and peace of mind knowing that the person with dementia is spending time with another caring individual

Respite care services can give the person with dementia an opportunity to:

- Interact with others having similar experiences
- Spend time in a safe, supportive environment
- Participate in activities designed to match personal abilities and needs

Locate respite care services through our [Community Resource Finder](#), a free, online tool to help you find community programs and services.

### Plan Ahead: Respite Care for Unexpected Situations

Emergencies, unplanned situations or unexpected trips can create a need for immediate care by an alternative caregiver. Try providers out in a non-emergency situation, so you're ready if the need arises. Also, talk with people you trust — including family, friends and neighbors — about helping out in an emergency. It's a good idea to have contact information for the person with dementia's medical team as well as a list of all current medications (with dosage and frequency taken) easily accessible at all times.

## Types of respite care

### Coordinate your helpers

Build your care team, share tasks and coordinate helpers using free, online care calendar resources [Live Chat](#)

## Learn More

Respite care can be provided at home — by a friend, other family member, volunteer or paid service — or in a care setting, such as adult day care or long-term care community.

**In-home care services** offer a range of options including:

- Companion services to the individual with companionship and supervised activities
- Personal care or home health aide services to provide assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting and exercising
- Homemaker or maid services to help with laundry, shopping and preparing meals
- Skilled care services to help with medication and other medical services

Adult day centers offer a place where the person with Alzheimer's can be with others in a safe environment. Staff leads planned activities, such as music and art programs. Transportation and meals are often provided.

Long-term care communities may offer the option for a stay overnight, for a few days or a few weeks. Overnight care allows caregivers to take an extended break or vacation while the person with dementia stays in a supervised, safe environment. The cost for these services varies and is usually not covered by insurance or Medicare.

Tip: Sometimes, a person with dementia may have difficulty adjusting to a new environment. Regular stays can allow the overall adjustment to

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become easier.

Learn more: [In-Home Care](#), [Adult Day Centers](#), [Long-term Care Communities](#)

## Overcoming concerns

It's normal to be apprehensive about trying something new. Common concerns caregivers have about using respite care include:

- **Cost:** You may be concerned about how to pay for services. Look into financial assistance such as scholarships, sliding scale fees or government programs. Contact your local Alzheimer's Association to learn what kind of financial assistance may be available.
- **Reliability:** You may be concerned about the dependability of the aide or service. Those who work for an agency or care community should be reliable and well trained, and are often certified. Ask each individual and care setting about training and qualifications. If hiring someone independently, interview the person thoroughly and check references.
- **Guilt:** You may believe that you should be able to "do it all." Seeking help does not make you a failure. It's important to remember that respite services benefit the person with dementia as well as the caregiver.

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