

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVING

Staying Physically Active with Alzheimer's

Being active and getting exercise helps people with Alzheimer's disease feel better. Exercise helps keep their muscles, joints, and heart in good shape. It also helps people stay at a healthy weight and have regular toilet and sleep habits. You can exercise together to make it more fun.

You want someone with Alzheimer's to do as much as possible for himself or herself. At the same time, you need to make sure that the person is safe when active.

Getting Started

Here are some tips for helping the person with Alzheimer's disease stay active:

- Help get the activity started or join in to make the activity more fun.
- Be realistic about how much activity can be done at one time. Several 10-minute "mini-workouts" may be best.
- Take a walk together each day. Exercise is good for caregivers, too!
- Make sure the person with Alzheimer's disease has an ID bracelet with your phone number if he or she walks alone.
- Check your local TV guide to see if there is a program to help older adults exercise, or watch exercise videos made for older people.
- Add music to the exercises if it helps the person with Alzheimer's disease. Dance to the music if possible.
- Break exercises into simple, easy-to-follow steps.
- Make sure the person wears comfortable clothes and shoes that fit well and are made for exercise.
- Make sure he or she drinks water or juice after exercise.



For more information about exercise and physical activity for older adults, visit www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life.

Gentle Exercise

Some people with Alzheimer's may not be able to get around well. This is another problem that becomes more challenging to deal with as the disease gets worse. Some possible reasons for this include:

- Trouble with endurance
- Poor coordination

- Sore feet or muscles
- [Illness](#)
- [Depression](#) or general lack of interest

Even if people have trouble walking, they may be able to:

- Do simple tasks around the home, such as sweeping and dusting.
- Use a stationary bike.
- Use soft rubber exercise balls or balloons for stretching or throwing back and forth.
- Use stretching bands, which you can buy in sporting goods stores. Be sure to follow the instructions.
- Lift weights or household items such as soup cans.

Read about [this topic in Spanish](#). Lea sobre [este tema en español](#).

For More Information About Physical Activity and Alzheimer's

NIA Alzheimer's and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center

1-800-438-4380 (toll-free)

adear@nia.nih.gov

www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

The National Institute on Aging's ADEAR Center offers information and free print publications about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias for families, caregivers, and health professionals. ADEAR Center staff answer telephone, email, and written requests and make referrals to local and national resources.

Alzheimer's Association

1-800-272-3900 (toll-free, 24/7)

1-866-403-3073 (TTY/toll-free)

info@alz.org

www.alz.org

Alzheimer's Foundation of America

1-866-232-8484 (toll-free)

info@alzfdn.org

www.alzfdn.org

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 Endurance



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