

# Caring for a loved one with dementia

Psychology



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Caring For a Loved One With Dementia Dementia is an illness that causes declined intellectual functioning in an individual. The decreased intellectual functioning in turn affects the individual's performance in the functions of everyday life. The complexity of the issues that the patients of dementia encounter make it very challenging for the new caregivers of dementia to choose the right way to deal with these patients. This paper identifies five issues that are of prime concern for the caregivers who want to perceive and solve the problems of the older patients of dementia. The paper also proposes intervention strategies to deal with the identified issues and discusses the significance of the very issues.

Older patients of dementia find bathing an emotionally as well as physically demanding activity. Factors that cause them to retaliate when asked to bath include but are not limited to weakness, fatigue, confusion, the fear of falling, the embarrassment of getting naked in front of an unknown person, and the inconvenience caused by the cold water shower. This makes bathing more of a human interaction than a task. " Bathing independently, one of the most personal and complex of the activities of daily living, requires significant cognitive and physical abilities, including dexterity, flexibility, balance, strength, and coordination" (Rader et al, 2006). The patient of dementia in need of help in bathing experiences both physical and emotional unrest.

The patients of dementia have short-term memory loss. This can be very challenging for a caregiver since he/she needs to know what the patient was fed or whether or not he/she took the medicines on time. To deal with this issue, the caregiver needs the assistance of an individual that would note down the patient's diet and the timings of medicines. This individual can <https://assignbuster.com/caring-for-a-loved-one-with-dementia/>

either be a relative of the patient or a nurse employed by the healthcare center.

The patient of dementia frequently switches between the present events and the ones he/she experienced in his/her life long ago. This causes lack of focus. The caregivers attention is diverted and he/she is distracted. In order to deal with this challenge, the caregiver needs to be an active listener to be able to ask the patient to resume a discussion right from the point that it was distorted.

The patients of dementia have mood swings. Generally, they are in the most pleasant mood in the morning. Therefore, the caregiver should tend to deal with these patients in the morning than at any other time. “ Clients and staff in long-term care facilities benefited from

morning care that was oriented toward the abilities of people with dementia. Clients were

less agitated and caregivers were more relaxed” (RNAO, 2004, p. 55).

Dementia causes aggression and anger in the older patients (Helpguide. org, 2011). Caregivers can optimize their performance by prescribing them anti-depressant medicines. In addition to that, the caregiver should build a routine for the patient that includes consumption of nutritious diet on time, exercise and sleep.

Concluding, five of the most common issues with the patients of dementia include reluctance to bathing, memory loss, distraction, mood swings and aggression. The patients of dementia have multiple impaired functions like loss of memory and linguistic skills, and decline in the ability to judge or reason. Patients of dementia often lose rational decision making skills and experience emotional and psychological upsets. The caregivers of dementia

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need to be extra careful while dealing with these patients.

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