

After a Diagnosis



A guide for people diagnosed with
dementia and their care partners



At the time of diagnosis:

When you are diagnosed with dementia, you should expect your physician to provide you with specific and helpful information, about your diagnosis, and available support and resources in your community. The following are a list of questions for your physician that may be helpful:

- What can I expect in the near future and over time?
- What can I do to maintain my health and wellness?
- Would speech, occupational, and physical therapy be helpful for me?
- Are there any specific activities that I should consider?
- Are there medications that might help with memory loss and/or behavior changes? If so, what are the risks and benefits of these?
- Where can I get more information about my diagnosis?
- What resources are available to me in the community?
- What should/can my care partner learn that will be helpful to both of us?
- What resources and support are available for my friends and family?



What should you know and do?

Now that you have a formal diagnosis, you might feel relieved or overwhelmed. Soon after a diagnosis, is the time to: build a strong support network, make plans, to share your wishes, and have some important conversations with the people in your life, that will be joining you on this journey.



Some important steps to consider and take after receiving your diagnosis:

- Learn as much as possible about your diagnosis, and what resources are available to you, to help you better plan for your future.
Contact The Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Northwest Wisconsin at 877-485-2372.
- Create or review your Power of Attorney (POA) for healthcare and finances.
Be sure that this document is current and up-to-date. If you do not have this document, it is available at your physician's office and at the ADRC.
- Learn how to continue living in your home safely.
The ADRC and Alzheimer's Association have information and resources available for this. Visit <https://adrcnwwi.org> or www.alz.org/safety for more information.
- Learn what you can do to maintain your health and well-being.
Contact the ADRC to learn more about: educational events, programming, publications, support groups, and more.
- Decide who your support network will be.
Talk with your friends and family about what your current needs are, and plan for these needs to grow over time. Establish who your care partners and greatest supports will be. Be very clear and specific in identifying your needs. Be sure that the people supporting you know your long-term wishes.

- Create a back up plan for your primary care partner.

If you plan on having a specific person providing your primary support or care, it is essential to create a back up plan. A back up plan is useful in the event that your primary care partner is unable to provide care or support due to hospitalization or other life event.

- Learn about safe driving tips and create a plan for when it is time to stop driving.

Visit the Dementia and Driving Resource Center at www.alz.org/driving



What can care partners and those who care about a person living with dementia do?

- **Learn-** Learn about how the person's diagnosis and medical condition(s) may affect not only their own life, but yours as well. Learn how to be supportive and patient when communicating. Learn about available resources.
- **Plan Ahead-** Plan with the person you care about or are caring for. Make legal and financial plans. Plan to support and care for them now and in the days ahead. Have a family meeting to discuss who and how the person living with dementia will be supported and cared for.
- **Ask For Help-** This can be tough for some of us, but may be necessary with the demands of life. If people offer to help, accept it and be specific about what help you or the person living with dementia need.
- **Take Care of Yourself-** Make your own well-being a priority. Make time for yourself. Stay on top of your own appointments and medical check-ups. You will not be able to provide care for others, if you are not caring for yourself.



We know that staying as healthy and independent as possible, is important to you. We are here to help. Please contact The Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Northwest Wisconsin, so that we can get you connected with local services and resources, and support you on your journey.



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