

Tips for people living with dementia

Looking after yourself

- If you develop any of the symptoms of coronavirus COVID-19, such as fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness and shortness of breath, contact your doctor or call the Coronavirus Health Information Line for advice on **1800 020 080**.
- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you don't have access to running water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Do not cough or sneeze into your hands or a hanky. Tissues should be put straight into the rubbish bin.
- Make time in your day to do some gentle exercise. Community classes are closed, but you can still go for a walk around the block, or find an exercise routine you enjoy on YouTube.

Keep your home safe

- We know that the virus can live for some time, even days, on many surfaces.
- Regularly clean door handles, taps, benches and other parts of your home that are touched often with your hands.
- Regularly clean your mobile phone with an alcohol wipe, especially if you use your phone when you are out.
- If someone is coming into your home, make sure they wash their hands with soap and water straight away.

Physical distancing

- Remember, if you are over 65 or have a chronic illness you should limit your face-to-face contact with other people.
- If you live alone, make a plan for how you can manage shopping, appointments and other day-to-day tasks.
- Talk to family, friends or your neighbours about how they might help. Can they go to the shops and drop it at your door? Does your local grocer, pharmacy or supermarket deliver?

Stay connected

- Even though we are physically distancing, we can still stay in touch with friends and family using technology.
- If you have a smart phone, you can make video calls. If your computer has a camera you can also use Skype or Zoom to talk to your loved ones.
- Social media is a good way to talk to other people living with dementia all over the world.
- Keep a list of contacts next to your phone so you can find them easily.
- Think about making a regular time to phone friends and family. For example, call your friend every Tuesday afternoon, or join your grandchildren's story time using Skype.
- Asking for and accepting help can be difficult. You may feel that it will stop you being independent. However, having people around who can help you, if you need it, is important for everyone during this time.
- You may consider becoming a member of Dementia Alliance International (DAI). DAI offer peer-to-peer support groups for people with a diagnosis of a dementia. These groups meet regularly to discuss their experiences, strategies for coping and living more positively with dementia. They also have opportunities for one to one buddying and mentoring. For more information contact DAI at **info@infodai.org** or go to their website **www.joindai.org**

Fighting boredom

- Break up your day and change activities every one or two hours. You may like to set an alarm to remind you.
- Go for a walk outside or spend time in the garden. Read, listen to music, watch television and movies. Crafts, like knitting, and puzzles are great for keeping the brain active.
- The Dementia Australia Library has a number of e-books and audiobooks available online **www.dementia.org.au/library**
- Why not try some artistic expression? For tips on art at home visit our help sheet: **www.dementia.org.au/files/helpsheets/Helpsheet-TipsToAssistSocialEngagement04-TipsForArtAtHome_english.pdf**
- There are also ways to explore the world without leaving the couch. Many museums, theme parks and zoos are available to explore virtually. Some of the many to choose from are:
 - Art and culture lovers can peruse the Guggenheim museum, take a (virtual) walk through national parks or visit the Taj Mahal thanks to Google Arts & Culture: **artsandculture.google.com/**
 - If you looking for more thrill and adventure, you can also go on a virtual rollercoaster. There are plenty of virtual rollercoaster rides on YouTube.
 - You can see what the baby snow leopards and the penguins are up to at Melbourne Zoo and Werribee Open Range Zoo by watching their live stream: **www.zoo.org.au/animal-house**
 - If you prefer underwater animals you can also tune in to the live stream from the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, USA to watch the jellyfish, turtles and sea otters: **www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams**

Where can I find the latest information about Coronavirus?

- For the most up to date information and advice about coronavirus visit the Department of Health website: **www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert**

Where can I get advice about dementia?

- **Dementia Australia's National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500** is available to provide information about dementia. We can also give you tips if you find it difficult to follow the Department of Health advice about coronavirus.