



Coronavirus COVID-19

Tips for People Living with Dementia

- Be mindful of the symptoms of coronavirus COVID-19 such as fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness and shortness of breath. If you display any of these symptoms, contact your doctor for advice or call the Coronavirus Health Information Line for advice on **1800 020 080**.
- Practice proper hygiene:
 - Tips on proper hand washing can be found on the World Health Organisation website here: https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/
 - If you cannot get to a sink to wash your hands, hand sanitiser or anti-bacterial hand wipes may be a quick alternative.
 - Try to cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, instead of your hands, and ensure the tissue is discarded in the bin.
 - Make sure that any visitors wash their hands or use hand sanitiser.
 - When cleaning pay attention to things that are handled often such as remote controls, door handles, taps and phones.
- This is a stressful time for many people in our community. For tips to reduce your stress visit: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- For the most up to date information and advice about coronavirus visit the Department of Health website: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- If you live alone during this time you may need to put in place additional strategies so you can manage day-to-day tasks, continue to be safe, independent and in touch with your networks.



- Having a good support network in place is very important when you live alone. These networks may include family, friends, neighbours or professionals. They might offer help with practical things you find difficult, look out for your wellbeing, or just be there to share your thoughts and concerns with.
- Put plans in place to connect with others, during this time it may need to be over the phone or via video links.
- 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.
- Keep a list of contacts by your phone so you can reach them if you need to. Talk to other people regularly. You could arrange regular phone calls.
- Stay connected with technology. If you have a computer, smart phone or tablet, consider using a video calling program such as Skype or social media to stay in touch with people.
- If you don't have any relatives or friends, or if you are no longer in touch, there are still ways of getting support and staying connected. Online communities or forums allow you to talk to other people with dementia.
- If you are not already, you may consider becoming a member of Dementia Alliance International (DAI) as they offer peer-to-peer support groups for people with a diagnosis of a dementia. These groups meet regularly to discuss their experiences, problems and 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
- We are aware that many social opportunities have been cancelled or limited during this time. It is important to continue to structure your day and include activities that you enjoy or are important to you. You may want to break your day up by setting your alarm to change activities every hour or every couple of hours. You may schedule time for a walk, or spending time in the garden, calling a friend or family member, listening to music, reading or watching your favourite television show or movie. The Dementia Australia Library also has a number of e-books and audiobooks available online (<https://www.dementia.org.au/library>)



- Please ask for help if you need it. Contact your doctor or the **National Dementia Helpline** on **1800 100 500** for information about extra assistance.

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.

We do not offer personalised medical advice, however we can direct you towards other services and provide support.

Ideas for ways to pass the time in self-isolation

- Staying as active as possible is important. Try some gentle exercises either in a chair or around the house.
- Put plans in place to connect with others, during this difficult time it may need to be over the phone or via video links.
- Participating in activities at home such as reading books and magazines, doing jigsaws, listening to music, knitting, watching tv and listening to the radio may help.
- Consider sensory experiences such as hand, neck and foot massages, hair brushing, smelling flowers from your garden, or a rummage box that contains things that the person has been interested in.
- Why not try some artistic expression? For tips on art at home visit our help sheet: https://www.dementia.org.au/files/helpsheets/Helpsheet-TipsToAssistSocialEngagement04-TipsForArtAtHome_english.pdf
- If you have an iPad or Android tablet you can download **A Better Visit**. The **A Better Visit** app features a range of two-player games such as Tic Tac Tango, Marble Maze and Gone Fishing designed to enhance communication and facilitate positive social interactions between people with dementia, their carers and families.



- The Dementia Australia Library has a number of e-books and audiobooks available online. Browse our online collection today: <https://www.dementia.org.au/library>
- 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: <https://artsandculture.google.com/>
 - The Metropolitan Opera in New York City is streaming full performances online for free. You can watch on their website: <https://www.metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams/>
 - Talk a walk around Disney World and Disneyland using Google Maps.
 - Visit Disney World in Orlando, Florida here: <https://disneyparks.disney.go.com/blog/2018/03/disney-parks-launches-first-ever-360-degree-panoramas-on-google-street-view/>
 - Visit Disneyland in Anaheim, California here: https://www.google.com/maps/@33.8120336,-117.9189703,3a,30y,347.32h,92.38t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sDelpK5A-dz6kl1K_2fSXww!2e0!7i13312!8i6656
 - 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. Explore some of the many videos here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgQRLYCo3ddB7hE6neK053A>
 - 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: <https://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: <https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>



For further advice contact our contact **National Dementia Helpline** on **1800 100 500**

The Centre for Dementia Learning has a comprehensive range of education programs to help aged care providers address many of the issues raised above. For further details contact **1300 DEMENTIA**.

The above information was based on information provided by Alzheimer's Disease Chinese (ADC) and shared by Alzheimer's Disease International. You can find the full presentation here: www.alz.co.uk/news/covid-19-sharing-experience-and-advice-from-adis-member-association-in-china

The coronavirus situation is rapidly evolving. This information is provided as a guide only and may not be appropriate for every situation. For up to date information on the coronavirus, visit www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert

Dementia Australia would like to acknowledge Alzheimer's Disease International and Alzheimer's Chinese for their advice in putting together this help sheet.