

Caring for Your Loved One's Personal Needs

Depending on his or her level of independence, the person with Alzheimer's disease may need help with personal care activities, including eating, bathing, shaving, and using the toilet. To assist with these activities, caregivers need knowledge, skill and patience.

Here are some tips for those personal needs:

Establish a routine. Schedule grooming activities for the same time and same place each day; for example, brush his or her teeth after meals, or schedule baths for the mornings or evenings. Choose the most relaxed time of the day for bathing and grooming.

Respect the person's privacy. Close doors and blinds. Cover the person with a towel or bathrobe.

Encourage the person to do as much as possible. This will help to promote a sense of independence and accomplishment.

Keep in mind the person's abilities. Give him or her enough time to complete each task; for example, brushing his or her hair or teeth.

Give the person encouragement and support as he or she completes tasks. Acknowledge his or her efforts when completed. For example, "You did a nice job brushing your hair today."

Tell the person what you are doing. For example, "I'm going to wash your hair now."

If the person can dress himself or herself, lay out the clothes in the order they are to be put on. Clothing that is easy to put on, with few buttons, is best.

Helpful Tip Provided By: Senior Care Advisors of Texas