

# Alzheimer's Foundation of America

[alzfdn.org/caregiving-resources/fact-sheets-information/tips-assist-dressing/](https://alzfdn.org/caregiving-resources/fact-sheets-information/tips-assist-dressing/)



Getting dressed for the day can be a gradual process and may be a challenge for people experiencing dementia related illness, such as Alzheimer's disease. In the beginning stages of Alzheimer's disease, a person may benefit from friendly reminders of where they put their shoes or pocketbook. As the disease progresses, cueing and supervision, and eventually the need for help with the physical act of dressing will occur. Here are some strategies to help care partners assist their person with dressing:

- Allow for extra time when necessary.
- Consider non-verbal cues, such as gentle touch, eye contact, or a smile to reassure the person that you are there are help.
- To avoid pain or discomfort, be aware of skin irritations particularly on the neck, back, backside, elbows and heels. A person living with dementia may have difficulties telling you exactly what is wrong.
- Be mindful. Getting undressed is very personal and can be a sign that the person is feeling discomfort for many things, including pain, temperature, or infection. Ensure garments are soft, warm and are not restrictive. Choosing clothing with openings in the back, or that are easily put on and off, can be helpful!
- Look for clothing that is tag-less and has flat seams on the inside to minimize skin irritation, pressure points, and bed sores.

- If incontinence is an issue, adaptive pants with alternate waist and leg openings can make frequent visits to the restroom easier.
- Be aware of your body language. Standing to the side of a person may allow for them to feel like they are being assisted, not confronted.
- Let the person be a part of the process. Providing choice is helpful, such as “would you prefer this blue sweater or green sweater?” Choose clothes in their favorite color or fabric, taking style cues from the person’s past.