

# *Alzheimer's Aid Society's* **FORGET-ME-NOT**

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[www.AlzAid.org](http://www.AlzAid.org)

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**Alzheimer's  
Aid Society**

Supporting the caregiver.  
Remembering the cared for.

Contact Us: 2641 Cottage Way, #4  
Sacramento, CA. 95825

Phone: 916-483-2002  
Toll Free: 800-540-3340  
E-mail: [info@alzaid.org](mailto:info@alzaid.org)

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*By Sheryl Ashby, CEO*



## Dear Friends:

Hello dear friends. If you haven't already noticed, the Alzheimer's Aid Society is no longer putting out a printed newsletter. However, we are providing it online only. It is still the same newsletter online that you used to get in the mail. By not printing the newsletter, the Society is saving a lot of money not only on printing fees, but also on postage fees.

We encourage you to keep sending us your donations. They are vital to our organization. You can make your donation on our new website by clicking one of our donate buttons scattered around the website. If you are not comfortable making your donation online, you can still send us your donation via regular mail. Just send your donation to: **Alzheimer's Aid Society of N. Calif. 2641 Cottage Way #4 Sacramento, CA. 95825.** No matter which way you choose to send your donation, we will still send you a tax deductible thank-you for your donation card. You can still make donations in memory or in honor of a loved one or friend. We will send the family a notification that you have made a donation in their loved one's name. We don't let them know the amount of the donation made, just that a donation has been made in memory/honor or their loved one.

The Alzheimer's Aid Society does not get any government grants or monies, we depend completely on the thoughtful donations made by people like you to keep the Society going. Your donations are deeply appreciat-

ed. Please help us to continue the important work that we do to serve the Alzheimer's / Dementia community in Northern California by making a donation to our cause.

If there is anything that we can do to assist you to care for your loved one, please call us. We would love to answer any questions that you have or help you to find a support group in your area. We have very caring volunteers, who have either cared for a loved one with Alzheimer's / Dementia or who are professionals who have worked with those who have Alzheimer's / Dementia.

*Warm Regards*

*Sheryl*

## **"THANK YOU!" TO EVERYONE WHO HAVE BEEN SUPPORTING THE ALZHEIMER'S AID SOCIETY**

Your donations are greatly appreciated. They are making it possible for the Society to provide our main services, including:

**Support Groups for Caregivers and Patients**  
**'A Practical Guide for the Alzheimer's Caregiver'**  
(Our "Blue Book" in English and Spanish.

**And much more...**

**THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

# GOLDEN LEAVES AND GOLDEN DAYS

Jeanne Hess RN, CGN

As the torrid heat of summer fades into the first gentle coolness of autumn, we look forward to seasonal changes, which in their endless sameness, seem to kindle memories of red and golden leaves drifting down from their summer bower; of soft rains whispering against window panes; of tingling frosty air against an upturned face.

Oaks, Maple, Elm and Sycamore are among the many trees which shed their leaves in showers of red and yellow in the fall, but outstanding among them is the glorious Ginko which stands alone under a huge yellow umbrella of tiny fan shaped leaves. Studies have shown that the Ginko shares a heritage of ancient Chinese dynasties, and that medical men of that era used the seed of the Ginko for a variety of ailments, including ways to enhance memory. Today, modern scientists are exploring the use of an extract of the Ginko leaves in their treatment of cognitive dysfunctions.

As caregivers, we approach the coming cool days with an eye toward keeping our loved ones indoors more, but allowing time for short walks in a park or along a tree lined



street where dimming eyesight can still enjoy the sunlight filtering through the rustling branches, or hold a fallen leaf to smell it's damp, mossy fragrance. When a walk out doors isn't practical, open a window and let the breezes waft in bringing with them an invigorating balm to a mind grown weary with the complexities of dementia



## DID YOU KNOW THAT MAURICE RAVEL HAD DEMENTIA

Maurice Ravel the composer of the famous orchestral work *Bolero*, probably had Pick's disease when he died.

In 1932 he suffered a major blow to the head in a taxi accident. At the time, the injury was not considered serious. Afterward however, he began to experience aphasia like symptoms and was frequently absent minded.

In 1937 he consented to experimental brain surgery looking for a brain tumor, however none was found. After the surgery, Ravel quickly sank into a deep coma from which he never awoke. He died at the age of 62 in Paris.

# 5 Tips How to get an Alzheimer's Patient to Shower

By Bob DeMarco

**Getting a person living with Alzheimer's or dementia to take a shower or bath is one of the most common problems we face as caregivers. One of the earliest problems I faced with my mother, Dotty, was getting her to take a shower.**

In the beginning, I would typically make a common Alzheimer's caregiver mistake—I would try to convince my mom to take the shower.

This usually resulted in me trying to **convince her** that she needed a shower, **the importance of the shower for good health (hygiene)**, or trying to convince her she would “stink” **if she didn't take a shower.**

**No matter what explanation or cajoling I tried it didn't work.** Dotty would usually get **angry**, and use one of her favorite words—bulls\*\*\*

**I can laugh about it now. But, I can also assure you that it didn't seem funny at the time.**

Do you have this problem? **Or, if you solved the problem, can you laugh about it now?**

The feeling of accomplishment once you overcome this problem, and once you have your loved one all “squeaky” clean, is really quite wonderful. Look at it this way. Would you want to be all smelly?

More important, if you don't get the shower in at least twice a week the odds of **the dreaded urinary tract infection goes up exponentially.** Do you really want to deal with that?

Readers did laugh when I first wrote this—**”it is easier, in my opinion, to get a person living with dementia to**

**take a shower every day, than it is to get them to take a shower twice a week.”**

The importance of **routine** in Alzheimer's care can never be understated.

## 5 Tips

### 1. No More Blah Blah Blah

Forget all the wordy explanations. If a person living with dementia can't remember three simple words after a minute or two, they are not going to **understand or remember your long winded explanation** of why they should or need to take a shower.

When the time comes, **walk up to them slowly, get their attention, smile** and wait until you receive a smile back. Then **stick out your hand**, palm up, and wait for them to take it.

**Be a guide, not an orator.**

My mother would ask, as she took my hand, **where are we going?** I would usually say something like **to have some fun.** I don't care what you say, but limit it to 5 words or less.

The **goal** in this first tip is to get your loved one in **motion** and heading the right direction.

### 2. Get the Bathroom all Nice and Warm

I noticed that when my mother took her clothes off she would say every single time - **I'm cold, I'm freezing.** Now it wasn't cold, I was hot. We had to keep our home at 78 degrees or Dotty would say, I'm freezing. I adjusted to that problem.

The tip. Turn the shower on and **adjust the temperature of the water** to - just right for a shower.

**Close the bathroom door so the room warms up.** You know that nice feeling you get when it is nice and toasty in the bathroom. Make sure you close the door in the bathroom, and then go back to step one. *(continues to page 5)*

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### 3. The Hook

As you are leading the person living with dementia to the shower start layering on the **positive reinforcement**.

I would usually say something like, “you know what mom, let’s take our shower now, then we will have a **nice snack** (potato chips, ice cream), and then we will go out and have some **fun**.”

Dotty would usually focus on the fun. Oh sure she would say. What fun? Notice here she never balked at taking the shower.

I would shift the conversation back to the snack - food.

When applying to the hook, don’t forget to use the word “**WE**.” Always use the word “**WE**”. We are going to take a shower.

No, I didn’t take the shower with Dotty. I got her all showered up, and then I took my own shower, real quick, while she munched on **potato chips and talked to Harvey**.

Make sure you are **not only being positive to your loved one**, but, that you are developing your own positive attitude and retraining your brain to believe that once the shower is finished **you just accomplished your mission**.

Accomplished something important that will hopefully cut down on illness and the dreaded UTI.

### 4. Alzheimer’s Patients Don’t Like Water

It is my belief that most Alzheimer’s patients don’t like water. I think in some sense they are afraid of water.

When it comes to the shower, the water is shooting down from above and I don’t think they can see. In other words, it is invisible to them.

**How would you feel if something invisible started hitting you in the head?**

You would probably freak out. Get it?

Make sure you help the dementia patient into the side of the shower so the **water is not hitting them in the head**. Then, take their **hand** and place it under the water

until they adjust to the water temperature.

Then you can tell them to get under the water. Hand them the soap and wash cloth and encourage them to start washing themselves. Hopefully, at this juncture in the endeavor long term memory kicks in and they start washing themselves.

Let them shower and wash themselves as long as possible. Don’t do it for them until you have no choice.

One thing I learned is that **coaching** an Alzheimer’s patient to do something really works well. It worked well for me in this situation.

### 5. The Gnarly Body Parts

There is no easy way to say or describe this, but here goes.

There are 2 gnarly parts that you will have to deal with. You might have to do the one in the back, or you will sooner or later.

You can usually coach your loved one to do the one in the front. Don’t forget, I am a guy and this was my mo.

Dotty cooperated almost all the way. Thank goodness.

**One way or the other, you have to make sure the gnarly parts get cleaned.**



## GLEN CAMPBELL

We just recently lost the beloved Glen Campbell to Alzheimer’s disease. He was born April 22, 1936 and passed on August 8, 2017.

We wish to send our love and condolences to Mr. Campbell’s family and friends.

# Alzheimer's Aid Society's New Website *Nancy Gemignani*

## We Have a New, Redesigned Website!

We are proud to unveil our new, redesigned website. Our address is still [www.alzaid.org](http://www.alzaid.org). The new layout provides an easy way to find information about Alzheimer's and dementia, advice for caregivers and their loved ones, and our publications and services. Check out the new site today! We look forward to your feedback!

Here's what's new:

- A full presentation of our new logo and color theme. You have seen our new logo on "Happenings!" and it is now on our website too. Our new tagline "*Supporting the caregiver. Remembering the cared for.*" reflects the Alzheimer's Aid Society's mission.
- "Living with Alzheimer's" – a new section which includes both the caregiver and the cared for point-of-view. This section will grow as we add articles dedicated to issues encountered on the Alzheimer's journey. We look forward to your suggestions and ideas for what information would be useful in this section.
- "Facts about Alzheimer's" discusses the symptoms, treatments, stages, diagnosis, etc. of Alzheimer's. The page for "What is Alzheimer's?" presents an excellent video that may be good for families and others who are not familiar with Alzheimer's.

● "Publications" now has an electronic version of our "Practical Guide for Alzheimer's Caregivers" in both English and Spanish.

You can now give a one-time donation or you can set up a regular donation to the Alzheimer's Aid Society online

Register as an individual golfer or a foursome for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament online. You can also register just for the banquet.

The "Volunteer" page lists the positions we have open for volunteers. Can you help?

Note, if you have bookmarks to individual pages of our previous site, they may not work now.



**THANK YOU!!**

The Alzheimer's Aid Society depends entirely on your generous donations. You can make your donations online or mail them to:  
Alzheimer's Aid Society  
of N. Calif.  
2641 Cottage Way #4  
Sacramento, CA 95825

**Donations Received *In Memory of*:  
February 8, 2017—August 18, 2017**

*Frances Arnold  
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Frances Lucille Welsch  
William (Sonny) Werlinger  
Donald Wiggins*



**SUPPORT GROUPS LIST NOW ONLINE**

Our 'Forget-Me-Not' newsletter will no longer carry the Support Group information. To get this information, please, either call our office at (916) 483-2002 or (800) 540-3340 and talk with one of our volunteers, or go to our website at [www.AlzAid.org](http://www.AlzAid.org). The information will be posted there.

## Alzheimer's Aid Society Art Group With Tiffany Paige

July's Art Reflections session titled, "Summer in Spain", opened opportunity for connections through conversations on a number of levels.

In the morning session, each attendee was asked to share about their favorite travel experience. This gave insight to each person, what they valued and it also opened the opportunity to relate with and engage their peers, encouraging social interaction and while sharing important personal experiences. Max shared that he had sailed around the world and landed in Australia for four years and loved it so much he wrote a book about it. Henry loved Frankfurt, David shared about his recent trip to San Francisco and Po loved her trip to China, walking all over and how fun it was being the only woman on the travel group! Sherrill loved Alaska and her son loved it so much he ended up living there and building a nice life for himself. Perry worked hard to find the words to share with the group and Sherrill saw his struggle and offered support, encouragement and patience as he was able to tell us that he traveled all over and that his whole family was in the service.



As we moved into the artwork, Salvador Dali's painting called "Persistence in Time" gave the group a chance to get curious and think about what they thought the melting clocks meant. Roy said he thought it was "time standing still", while Po interpreted it as saying that "memory

keeps coming back and it's not always the same."

In the afternoon session, Sig and Jim also shared about their favorite places. Sig's detailed story about the many Sundays spent at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago as he was growing up gave him a meaningful connection to his vocational quality of life, while Jim shared how he was glad that he got to stay home and would not be recruited back to serve in the war. Jim also got to connect with a valuable part of his life that

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had impacted him emotionally. Being able to talk about it during the session validated his emotions and dedication to that time of his life.



As we looked at Francisco de Goya's "Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuniga, Sig thought the young boy needed blue eyes and rosy cheeks. He expressed his creative vision as he looked at the drawing provided of the painting on the screen and talked through his vision for the colors. He decided to take it home and make the drawing his own. Jim was curious about what the boy was thinking and said in an animated voice "What am I doing here?" Identifying the cats opened humorous stories between Sig and Jim as they compared pet stories and laughed

with each other, supporting their emotional well-being through positive social interaction.

Both groups decided they would like more time to paint the drawing from the slide and we will continue in September.

## CRUSHED POTATOES

12 Small red potatoes  
3 Tbsp. Olive Oil  
Salt and Pepper to taste  
Chives or other herb of choice  
to taste

### Instructions:

Boil potatoes until they are fork tender.

On a sheet pan, drizzle Olive oil.

Place the cooked potatoes on the cookie sheet leaving room between each potato.

With a potato masher, gently press on each potato until it slightly mashes. Brush the tops of each with more olive oil.

Sprinkle potatoes with salt, pepper and chives or other herbs of choice (like rosemary, thyme or whatever you like).

Bake in a 450 degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes until they are golden brown

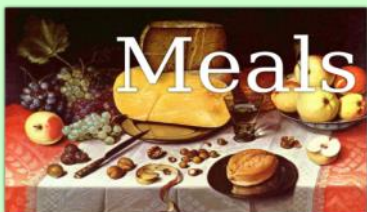
Serve.



## MAKING MEAL TIMES EASIER

By Mayo Clinic Staff

**Alzheimer's and eating can be a challenge. Understand what causes eating problems and take simple steps to ensure good nutrition.**



Alzheimer's disease and eating challenges often go hand in hand. As Alzheimer's progresses, poor nutrition can aggravate confusion and lead to physical weakness, as well as increase the risk of infection and other health concerns.

If you're caring for a loved one who has Alzheimer's, understand what causes eating problems and how you can encourage good nutrition.

### **Consider underlying conditions**

If your loved one is having trouble eating, check for underlying problems, such as:

**Oral problems.** Make sure dentures fit properly and are being used. Check for mouth sores or other oral or dental issues.

**Medication effects.** Many medications decrease appetite, including some drugs used to treat Alzheimer's. If you think medications are contributing to eating problems, ask your loved one's doctor about substitutions.

**Chronic conditions.** Diabetes, heart disease, digestive problems and depression can dampen interest in eating. Constipation can have the same effect. Treating these or other underlying conditions might improve your loved one's appetite. Also con-

sider talking to your loved one's doctor about removing dietary restrictions.

### **Acknowledge declining skills and senses**

In the early stages of Alzheimer's, your loved one might forget to eat or lose the skills needed to prepare proper meals. Call to remind him or her to eat or help with food preparation. If you make meals in advance, be sure to review how to unwrap and reheat them. You might also consider using a meal delivery service.

In addition, your loved one's sense of smell and taste might begin to diminish, which can affect interest in eating.

As Alzheimer's progresses, your loved one might forget table manners and eat from other's plates or out of serving bowls. Changes in the brain might cause him or her to lose impulse control and judgment and, in turn, eat anything in sight — including non food items. During the later stages of the disease, difficulty swallowing is common.

### **Expect agitation and distraction**

Agitation and other signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's can make it difficult to sit still long enough to eat a meal. Distractions at mealtime might make this even worse. To reduce distractions, turn off the TV, radio and telephone ringer. Put your cell phone on vibrate. You might also clear the table of any unnecessary items.

If your loved one needs to pace, try cutting a sandwich into quarters and giving him or her a section while he or she walks.

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### **Expect agitation and distraction (cont'd)**

Discourage your loved one from drinking alcoholic beverages. Although alcohol might stimulate the appetite, it can lead to confusion and agitation as well as contribute to falls.

### **Get Visual**

Use white dishes to help your loved one distinguish the food from the plate. Similarly, use placemats of a contrasting color to help distinguish the plate from the table. Stick with solid colors, though. Patterned plates, bowls and linens might be confusing.

### **Try large-handled utensils**

To prevent slipping, apply suction cups to the bottom of plates or use placemats that have traction on both sides. You could also make placemats from a roll of the rubbery mesh typically used to line shelves. Sometimes bowls are easier to use than plates.

Likewise, spoons might be easier to handle than forks. The larger the spoon's handle, the better. Try bendable straws or lidded cups for liquid.

### **Offer foods one at a time**

If your loved one is overwhelmed by an entire plate of food, place one type of food at a time on the plate. You could also offer several small meals throughout the day, rather than three larger ones.

Cut food into bite-sized portions. Finger foods are even easier—but avoid foods that can be tough to chew and swallow, such as nuts, popcorn and raw carrots.

### **Take your time**

Don't rush mealtimes. Remind your loved one to chew and swallow carefully, and allow him or her as much time as necessary.

Encourage your loved one to follow your actions, such as holding a fork or drinking from a cup—or gently place your hand over your loved one's hand to hold a utensil and bring food to his or her mouth.

### **Sneak in extra nutrition**

If you're having a hard time getting your loved one to eat enough, prepare favorite foods. Avoid diet foods. Serve a filling breakfast or several light breakfasts in a row. You might also offer high-calorie snacks—such as protein milkshakes. Consult the doctor if sudden weight loss occurs.

Ensuring good nutrition in Alzheimer's can be a challenge, but it's worthwhile. Good nutrition can help your loved one better cope - both physically and emotionally - with the changes of Alzheimer's.

