

How to improve your home when you're caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's

Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's is a big job, and it can take a toll on your physical, mental, and emotional health. One of the best ways to take care of yourself together with your loved one is to prepare for their safety and comfort as much as possible. While you can't always plan for every contingency, there are many things you can do to make your home the best possible place.

One of the most important things you can do is make sure your home is safe. Alzheimer's disease affects [many parts](#) of the body and mind, including issues with balance and depth perception, wandering or getting lost, changes in vision and memory, and confusion. These problems can lead to serious injury or mental health issues for the person you are caring for, and they can bring worry, stress and anxiety for you.

Fortunately, there are many ways you can help your loved one stay as safe and healthy as possible for the best quality of life. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Consider a service dog

Service animals have many jobs, and they can be specially trained to help a variety of issues, from PTSD to Alzheimer's. Not only do they provide comfort and companionship to an individual who is coping with the condition, they can also help with safety and health issues such as high blood pressure. Spending time with a calm animal has been shown in studies to reduce stress and help individuals cope with depression and other mood disorders. Click [here](#) for more information on service animals for Alzheimer's patients.

Evaluate your rooms

Your home should be a place of comfort for your loved one and each room should be evaluated for [safety issues](#). The bathroom and kitchen, especially, will likely have problems that need to be addressed, as they are the rooms where the most accidents occur for older people and people with Alzheimer's.

Bathrooms should have grab bars in the shower, rubber non-slip mats, a shower seat, and a soft tap cover. The kitchen should have bare floors (rugs can be trip hazards), clearly labeled items in cabinets and drawers, and a cabinet with a lock on it for potentially dangerous items, such as medication or sharp objects. Remove the knobs

from your stove, install carbon monoxide detectors, and make sure your smoke alarms have working batteries in them.

Simplify your home

People who are living with Alzheimer's often become overwhelmed in homes that have too much décor or clutter, so it's a good idea to [simplify your home](#). Declutter each room, clear all walkways, make sure floors are free of debris or trip hazards, and use labels for important items. Making your home more accessible will help your loved one retain some independence, as well as give you some peace of mind when you can't be there.

Prevent wandering

People who are living with Alzheimer's can be prone to wandering, especially after they experience a change in their living situation, so it's imperative to do all you can to prevent a mishap. T

his can include anything from installing locks that are outside of your loved one's reach to placing motion sensor alarms near every exit. Installing fencing and keeping swimming pools and other bodies of water off limits are also important. Read [here](#) for more safety tips.

Making your home safe for the person you care for can take a lot of work, and it might be overwhelming if you don't have a good plan in place. Talk to your family and get their support during this time to help reduce your stress, which can in turn help you create the best environment for your loved one.