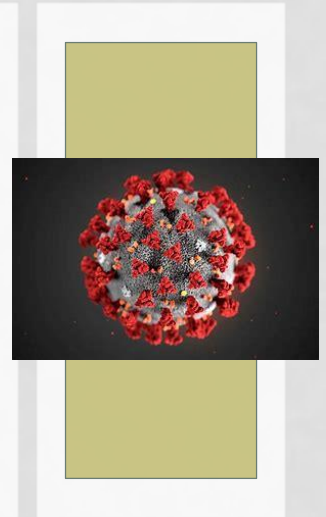


DEMENTIA CAREGIVING IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

HEALTH, SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION



HEALTH



- We are all susceptible to catching Covid-19 (aka novel corona virus), and need to take special care
- Covid-19 can cause serious illness.
- Older adults are at greater risk



HEALTH

- Wash hands- get creative, make it fun! 20 seconds or longer is best (less time is still good, and better than not washing!)
- Hand sanitizer is ok (if you can find it, at least 60% alcohol is better). Soap and water are best but hand sanitizer is still good, and better than not washing!
- Avoid touching our faces, noses, mouths and eyes. Some people find that wearing gloves or a mask are a good reminder (these do not take the place of hand washing)

HEALTH



- Home is the safest place to be
- Currently, the CDC says that wearing a facemask in public mainly protects other people so we don't need to if we're practicing social distancing, unless we're sick
- N95 respirators are in short supply and should be saved for frontline health care providers
- If you feel safer in public wearing a homemade mask, it's ok to wear one as long as it's clean. If our loved ones with dementia won't wear one, that's ok too (as long as s/he isn't sick)



HEALTH

- Stay well hydrated, get rest, eat well, keep taking and administering medications
- Stay away from sick people
- Bonus points if you have at home a digital thermometer, home BP cuff, step-on scale, and pulse oximeter

SAFETY



- Social distancing is not easy for humans, people with dementia included
- Don't hang out with friends, avoid large groups, stay home
- In public: play a game, distract, prevent issues as much as possible
- If an awkward situation happens, let strangers know that I'm trying to follow guidelines and I can be indirect, or hint that my loved one has an impairment

URGENT ISSUES

- Call 9-1-1 if you or your loved one has trouble breathing, chest pain, if lips or face turn bluish, if speech is slurred, if you feel confused yourself

URGENT ISSUES

- Call primary care provider if I or my loved one experiences:
 - Fever, new cough, body aches, new shortness of breath, or if my loved one has a sudden change in alertness, memory or level of function
 - Consider now who to call if I needed hospitalization, who would take over the care of my loved one?
 - Consider now what my options are if I get sick and don't need to be hospitalized- can I isolate myself from my loved one?

IF I OR MY LOVED ONE IS SICK

- If I **have** to leave home, wear a mask, stay 6' away from others, don't take public transportation
- Consider getting food/groceries/prescriptions delivered
- Cover sneezes and coughs, wash hands often, don't share items
- Disinfect high touch surfaces daily: door knobs, phone, bathroom fixtures, remote control, tables, counters, refrigerator door handle

PREPARATION



- Advance Directives: much harder in the midst of a health crisis, everyone benefits from clarity
 - What matters to me and what does quality of life mean for me and my loved one? Ask for recommendations from trusted people who know us well or who have experience
 - Choose a proxy, preferably two
 - Let family/friends/POA/health care providers know
- Keep an up to date medication list, chronic conditions, allergies, primary contacts, along with advance directives in purse, wallet or take photo with a smart phone so this information is there in an emergency situation



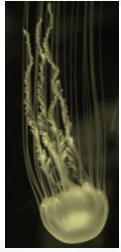
COMMUNICATION

- Explaining social distancing, “this is how we stay safe right now”
- Give only the amount of info that is needed, and only the amount that is being requested. Consider limiting the news: tv, radio, print, online
- Each answer or discussion should have the underlying message of “you are safe, known and loved”
- “We’re doing everything we can to keep our family healthy”

HOPE IN HARD TIMES



- Anxiety is normal and can help by alerting us to the need to protect ourselves and our loved ones
- Daily routines help by limiting how many decisions we have to make and helping us to control what we can
- Do fun things together every day
- Ask for/accept help: online support groups, family or friend virtual check-ins, therapists, care managers, faith community, neighbors
- Managing our own stress level is important to our loved ones



COMPASSION AND GRACE

- Meditation, prayer, exercise, quiet space, watching the jellyfish cam, laughing: 2 minutes can matter
- Adjust our expectations: be gracious, forgive ourselves, and give ourselves credit
- This is hard! Have compassion: for ourselves, others and our loved ones with dementia. Kindness has power, and can go viral too!
 - Compassion: recognizing suffering, showing concern, and being motivated to relieve that suffering as much as possible
- We're in this together, you are not alone

GOOD RESOURCES

- coronavirus.wa.gov
 - doh.wa.gov
 - cdc.gov
 - alz.org or call 1-800-272-3900
 - pennmemorycenter.org/covid-19 (scroll down to the Stay-at-Home Survival Guide)
 - prepareforyourcare.org
 - theconversationproject.org
 - depts.washington.edu/mbwc/events/community-events-programs (more community wellness talks 2x/week: email mbecker1@uw.edu, or call 206-744-2017 to sign up)
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- The diagram features three horizontal arrows pointing left, each associated with a category of resources. The top arrow is red and labeled 'COVID-19 info', pointing to the first three URLs. The middle arrow is olive green and labeled 'dementia-specific info', pointing to the fourth and fifth URLs. The bottom arrow is dark grey and labeled 'advance directive info', pointing to the sixth and seventh URLs.