

Impressions

MEMORY CARE

at BRYN MAWR 

Engaging Days. Meaningful Moments.

Tips for a Stress-Free Holiday

As much as the holidays are a time of good cheer, they can also be very stressful and exhausting. This is especially true for at-home caregivers and families of loved ones living with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia.

Fortunately, these **Alzheimer's Association** and the **Mayo Clinic** articles offer a variety of useful tips that can keep your holidays calm yet bright. Highlights include:

- **Prepare Your Loved One Early** – Prepare your loved one for holiday visitors ahead of time. Provide a private “sanctuary” that your loved one can retreat to when things get too hectic. Avoid giving them alcohol as it can cause depression.
- **Keep the Mood Calm** – Loved ones with dementia can feel overwhelmed or irritated with the change in normal routine and increased levels of noise, people and overall stimulation. Try to limit your number of guests and visitors at any one time.
- **Be Practical** – You can only do so much! Set realistic expectations for yourself and your loved one. Avoid taking on too many tasks and consider scaling down your traditions (e.g. limiting travel and reducing your number of guests).
- **Decorate in Moderation** – Over decorating and using bright, blinking lights can cause overstimulation. Avoid lit candles and other safety hazards as well as decorations that could be mistaken for edible treats — such as artificial fruits. Also, do not rearrange your furniture as this can cause confusion.
- **Involve Your Loved One to The Extent They Are Able** – You can share the joy with your loved one and enjoy the season in many ways. Take a ride to see holiday decorations, sing or listen to holiday music, read cards, bake cookies or hang ornaments together.
- **Be Open and Honest with Others** – Let family and friends know about your loved one's condition and your concerns about them. Prepare them for what to expect and how best to communicate with your loved one. Let them know that their patience and understanding is important and appreciated.
- **Give Safe, Useable Gifts** – Your loved one will enjoy such gifts as photo albums of family and friends, stuffed animals or soft pillows, favorite music, videos and movies and simple games.
- **Visiting and Traveling Tips** – If you are visiting friends and family, take a favorite “comfort item” with you and prepare the hosts for your loved one's special needs, including a quiet area away from the crowd and noise. If you're traveling long distances, be sure to plan ahead for all possible eventualities.

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- **Ask for Help!** – Friends and relatives often want to help, but don't know how. Ask them for *specific assistance* during the holidays. For example: "Please pick up Mom's prescriptions next Thursday."

A gift certificate for respite care is a great idea for both of you. It affords your loved one a change of scenery while providing you with some valuable "me time" and time away from your caregiving duties to relax and do some of the things you haven't had time for.

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Loved ones with Alzheimer's disease or other memory impairments require [specialized care](#) and support. They also deserve a lifestyle rich in dignity and fulfillment.

Impressions Memory Care at Bryn Mawr provides residents with *Engaging Days* and *Meaningful Moments* that [emphasize individual abilities](#), encourage [socialization](#) and promote the highest level of [independence](#) possible. We offer a complete continuum of leading-edge [programs, services and amenities](#) that address the total physical, emotional and social needs of residents in a caring setting that offers [individual suites](#) with large private baths and the comforts of home. Our community touches hearts and changes lives.

If and when the time comes to seek additional help, place your trust in **Impressions Memory Care at Bryn Mawr**. We lift the stresses and worries of being a caregiver from your shoulders, enabling you and your family to enjoy time with your loved one again. For more information, please call **Sharon** at **(484) 380-5404**, or [contact us](#) online.

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