

# Tips to 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. The person with this disease in the beginning stages might require friendly reminders of where they put their shoes. As the person progresses towards the middle stage, cueing and supervision will be needed, followed in late stages with the physical act of dressing entirely done by a caregiver. Here are some strategies to help care partners assist with dressing.



Allow extra time to get your person dressed. It may be beneficial to provide the individual you are assisting non-verbal cues, such as gentle touch, eye contact, or a smile, to reassure them you are there are help.



While dressing, look for skin irritations particularly on the neck, back, backside, elbows and heels. A person with dementia-related illness might not be able to articulate a skin irritation that may lead to pain and discomfort.

Disrobing can be a behavioral cue of discomfort for many things, including pain, temperature, or infection. Ensure garments are soft, warm and aren't restrictive. Choosing adaptive garments with openings in the back can be helpful. It is important to recognize the cues the person is giving us. Look for garments that are tag-less and have flat seams on the interior to minimize skin irritation, pressure points, and bed sores.



If the person is combative when being dressed, stand to their side out of their direct frontal view. This can help them feel you are working with them not against and will lessen the chance they feel threatened. Standing to the side of a person may allow them to feel as though they are being assisted, not confronted. This can help during the dressing process.

If incontinence is an issue, adaptive pants with alternate waist and leg openings can make frequent visits to the restroom easier.



Let the person be a part of the process. Providing choice is helpful, "would you prefer this blue sweater or green sweater". Choose garments in their favorite color or fabric, taking style cues from the person's past.

**ALIUM**

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For more information on adaptive clothing and dressing for aging, please visit:

[ALIUMADAPTIVE.COM](http://ALIUMADAPTIVE.COM)