

A CARE PARTNER'S ROADMAP FOR ALZHEIMER'S

Being a care partner to someone living with Alzheimer's disease can be a complicated and tiring task for both, but learning about the road ahead will pave the way to success. While you may not always know what is around the next turn, understanding the progression of the disease will prepare you for what's ahead at each stage. Use these care partner tips as a road map for your journey.

SEVEN STAGES OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

- 1** **No Impairment or Cognitive Decline**
- The disease is not detectable, no difficulty with communication, orientation or judgment.



- 2** **Very Mild Decline with Minimal Cognitive Impairment**
- Individual may notice lapses in memory, but loved ones are generally unaware.

Care Partner Tips

Little hands-on help is required, but emotional support is important. Encourage open and honest discussion in the early stages and develop a plan that honors healthcare choices to make future decisions as the disease progresses. Developing a partnership in these early stages builds trust. So when more sensitive tasks arise, like help with money management, it is a smoother transition.

- Choose medical specialists
- Tour and agree upon a dementia care community
- Know end-of-life care choices



- 3** **Mild Decline**
- Changes in memory, communication and performance of tasks become noticeable to loved ones.
 - Individual may have difficulty recalling words, functioning in social settings, organizing and planning, remembering what they just read or keeping up with personal items.



- 4** **Moderate Decline**
- Decreased knowledge of detail and recent events is more evident.
 - Individual may have difficulty performing complex tasks or managing money, poor short-term memory or become moody and withdrawn.

Care Partner Tips

More hands-on, physical help is required in the moderate stages. Your loved one can still physically care for themselves, but may need prompting to start and complete daily tasks. Care partner should get trained in helpful techniques and approaches such as prompting and cueing.



- 5** **Moderately Severe Decline**
- Impairments are noticeable. Individual needs help with day-to-day activities, but can perform personal care.
 - Individual may be significantly confused, unable to recall personal contact information, unable to recognize loved ones faces or have decrease in judgment.

Care Partner Tips

The later stages becomes a full-time job as safety issues emerge. Your loved one may need extensive assistance with all daily tasks including, personal grooming, bathing, going to the bathroom, dressing, eating and engaging in activities.

- Put a plan in place to take care of yourself
- Seek assistance through support groups



- 6** **Severe Decline**
- Individual needs constant supervision with activities and daily living. There is a severe decline in memory, personality and behavior.
 - Individual may have a reduced awareness of surroundings, incontinence or wander.

Care Partner Tips

Learn new ways to listen to your loved one as communication becomes more difficult.

- Read behavioral expressions and non-verbal communication
- Closely supervise eating as choking risk increases
- Make adjustments to decrease resistance to assisting



- 7** **Late Stage of the Disease**
- Individual loses ability to communicate and respond to their environment. They have no insight into their condition and need assistance with all activities of daily living.
 - Individual has difficulty walking and sitting, loses ability to smile or make facial expressions and swallowing is impaired.

Care Partner Tips

As with any life limiting illness that affects a loved one, begins the grieving process. Consider care.

- The advanced planning and care decisions made in the early stages ensure wishes are followed
- Provide maximum comfort and a positive sensory experience



Concerned about caring for a loved one living with Alzheimer's?

Call one of our national senior living advisors at 855-350-3800 to learn about Brookdale's Clare Bridge program offered in specially designed living spaces for Alzheimer's and dementia care.