

Intercare Corporate Group Inc.  
501-5920 Macleod Trail SW  
Calgary, AB  
T2H 0K2  
Tel: (403) 255-4969  
Fax: (403) 252-6591  
[www.intercarealberta.com](http://www.intercarealberta.com)

Email questions or feedback to:  
[feedback@intercarealberta.com](mailto:feedback@intercarealberta.com)

July 2025

## Inside this issue:

Quality of Life with Dementia / Alzheimer's Disease	Page 1
'Key Considerations' when planning activities for those living with Dementia / Alzheimer's Disease	Page 1
'101 Things to Do' with Residents living with Dementia / Alzheimer's Disease	Page 2 - 4



## Intercare Corporate Group Inc. - "The Heart of Excellence"



### Quality of Life with Dementia /Alzheimer's Disease

Maintaining quality of life for those living with a Dementia and/or Alzheimer's disease can be challenging because of the individual's tendency to withdraw from activities and social interactions. Because of this, it is very important to help maintain interests and relationships that support individuals living with Dementia/ Alzheimer's disease; efforts focused on maintaining their interests and relationships can help them lead a better quality and more enjoyable life.

People living with Dementia/Alzheimer's disease may also exhibit signs of apathy and seem to withdraw; they might fall asleep at inappropriate times or become easily distracted. This can make efforts to engage with them difficult at times.

Activities can play a crucial role in the lives of individuals with Dementia and/or Alzheimer's because they offer numerous physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being benefits. Engagement in enjoyable and meaningful activities can improve mood, reduce symptoms of depression, enhance independence and foster a sense of purpose; meaningful activities can also help maintain cognitive function, improve social interaction and provide enjoyment and relaxation.

### Key Considerations When Planning Activities for those with Dementia / Alzheimer's Disease

Keeping someone with Dementia or Alzheimer's disease engaged and having fun is not just about occupying their time - it is about infusing their day with moments of joy and purpose. Whether it is playing soothing music that evokes fond memories or enjoying simple games that encourage movement and laughter, countless activities can have a positive effect on their well-being.

It is important to celebrate achievements - no matter how small - and to stay patient throughout the activity with them.

When considering activities, start with things that are easy to understand and do not require complex instructions. With success, gradually increase the difficulty to maintain engagement. Most importantly, focus on creating a positive and enjoyable experience, which can result in a joyful activity.

#### 1. Consider the Stage of Dementia:

- Early-Stage Dementia: Focus on activities that promote independence and cognitive stimulation, such as puzzles, gardening, reminiscing or simple crafts.
- Mid-Stage Dementia: Prioritize activities that bring comfort and familiarity, such as listening to music, light exercise, sorting objects or looking at photo albums.
- Late-Stage Dementia: Emphasize sensory stimulation through gentle touch, soothing music, aromatherapy or offering preferred snacks.

#### 2. Cater to their Interests:

- Think about their prior hobbies, experiences and favorite things to do with someone. Did they enjoy music? Painting? Reading? Gardening? Cooking? Plan activities that they may find joyful and helps connect them to their past.

#### 3. Keep it Simple and Fun:

- Simple and unhurried activities are best.

# '101 Things To Do' with Residents living with Dementia/Alzheimer's

People living with Dementia /Alzheimer's disease often find it frustrating to live everyday life with no work and limited purpose; this can indirectly lead to resistance to dementia care. Their everyday challenge is to live a normal life, but it is just too difficult for them to do so. Frustration with feelings of incompetence can cause them to feel/get irritated, annoyed or bored.

Numerous studies suggest that residents living with Dementia/Alzheimer's disease benefit from engaging in enjoyable activities. In addition to keeping them in high spirits and preventing depression, stimulating activities can also ease anxiety and irritation.

This newsletter outlines **101 activities** that family, friends and loved ones can enjoy with residents who are living with Dementia /Alzheimer's disease:

## Reminiscence Activities

**Reminiscence exercises** enable people with dementia to remember their past and stimulate long-term memory. These activities involve reliving and sharing prior experiences, which may be both calming and entertaining for residents living with dementia. Here are some ideas:

- ♥ Reminisce with old photos
- ♥ Look through old magazines or newspapers
- ♥ Create a scrapbook of memories
- ♥ Look through a photo album
- ♥ Make a family tree poster
- ♥ Sort through a box of old letters and cards
- ♥ Talk about famous events
- ♥ Listen to a favorite childhood story
- ♥ Listen to a favorite fairy tale
- ♥ Look through a book of children's songs



## Sensory Activities

**Sensory activities** engage the five (5) senses and can be both relaxing and stimulating. These activities are particularly beneficial for residents in the later stages of dementia, providing comfort and reducing anxiety. Here is the list of ideas:

- ♥ Listen to favorite music
- ♥ Have a gentle hand massage with scented lotion
- ♥ Paint with watercolors
- ♥ Play with soft fabrics
- ♥ Hear calming nature sounds
- ♥ Finger paint with non-toxic paint
- ♥ Smell fresh flowers or herbs
- ♥ Play with sensory fidget toys
- ♥ Create a sensory garden
- ♥ Play with a kaleidoscope



## Cognitive Activities

**Cognitive activities** are designed to engage a resident with dementia's mind, thereby helping to maintain cognitive function and provide a sense of accomplishment. The activities used should be simple, yet stimulating and tailored to the resident's cognitive abilities. Here is the list of ideas:

- ♥ Play simple card games like 'Go Fish'
- ♥ Sort objects by color or shape
- ♥ Read aloud from labels
- ♥ Arrange colored beads into patterns
- ♥ Play simple board games like Snakes and Ladders
- ♥ Sort coins into different containers
- ♥ Build with building blocks or Legos
- ♥ Play with a simple shape sorter toy
- ♥ Sort playing cards by color
- ♥ Look through a book of riddles



# '101 Things To Do' with Residents living with Dementia/Alzheimer's

## Physical Activities

**Physical activities** are vital for maintaining physical health and emotional well-being. Gentle exercises and movements help improve mobility, balance and mood. The following are examples of some activities that can be enjoyed with residents who are living with dementia:

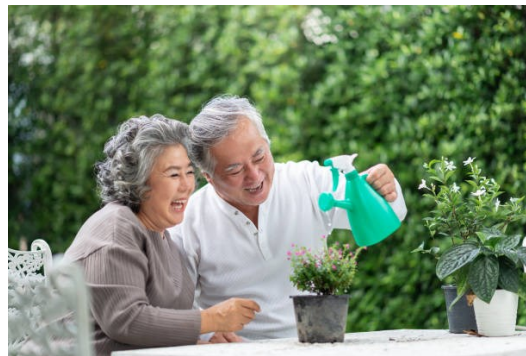
- ♥ Take walks (in a safe environment)
- ♥ Engage in gentle stretching exercises
- ♥ Engage in chair yoga exercises
- ♥ Play with balloons
- ♥ Enjoy a picnic (in a safe environment)
- ♥ Play balloon volleyball
- ♥ Dance to favorite songs
- ♥ Enjoy a ride on a bus or train together
- ♥ Play catch with a stuffed animal



## Fulfilling Activities

Engaging in simple 'household-type' tasks (**fulfilling activities**) can provide a sense of accomplishment and routine. **Fulfilling activities** are familiar and can help residents who are living with dementia feel productive. Here are some ideas:

- ♥ Arrange flowers in a vase
- ♥ Practice simple gardening tasks
- ♥ Fold laundry or towels
- ♥ Sort / organize household items together
- ♥ Do simple household chores together
- ♥ Water flowers
- ♥ Decorate a flowerpot
- ♥ Plant seeds indoors or outdoors
- ♥ Bake simple recipes together
- ♥ Make homemade jam or preserves together
- ♥ Visit or volunteer at an animal shelter together
- ♥ Decorate a family photo frame



## Social Activities

**Social activities** help combat feelings of isolation and depression, which are common in residents who are living with dementia. Engaging in **social activities** can combat loneliness, improve mood, reduce anxiety, enhance overall well-being and foster bonding with others. Here are some ideas:

- ♥ Enjoy afternoon tea
- ♥ Play a spelling bee
- ♥ Play a game
- ♥ Sing songs or hymns
- ♥ Watch a classic movie
- ♥ Share nursery rhymes
- ♥ Read poetry out loud
- ♥ Visit or volunteer at an animal shelter together
- ♥ Invite children to visit
- ♥ Dress in team colors and talk about sports



## Creative Expression

**Creative activities** allow dementia residents to express themselves and engage their senses. These activities are fulfilling and can help improve fine motor skills. **Creative expression** can be incredibly fulfilling for residents who are living with dementia. They are:

- ♥ Make a collage from magazines
- ♥ Cut-out paper dolls
- ♥ Paint with string



# '101 Things To Do' with Residents living with Dementia/Alzheimer's

## Seasonal and Holiday-themed Activities

Incorporating **seasonal and holiday theme activities** adds variety and helps orient residents living with dementia to the time of year. These activities can be festive and fun, offering a sense of normalcy and tradition. Celebrating holidays and seasons can help residents living with dementia feel more connected to the world around them and provide opportunities for creativity and social interaction.

- ♥ Decorate a flowerpot (Spring)
- ♥ Plant seeds indoors or outdoors (Spring/Summer)
- ♥ Have a picnic (Summer)
- ♥ Make homemade jam or preserves together (Fall)
- ♥ Bake simple recipes together (Seasonal/Holidays)
- ♥ Decorate a family photo frame (Winter/Holidays)
- ♥ Enjoy a ride on a bus or train together (Seasonal/Holidays)

## Digital and Audio-Visual Engagement

Modern technology offers unique opportunities for engagement through digital and audio-visual means. **Digital and audio-visual engagement activities** can be beneficial when in-person interaction is limited. Technology can provide new ways for resident living with dementia to engage with the world, whether through virtual visits with family, watching favorite shows/movies or exploring digital games designed for cognitive stimulation.

- ♥ Watch familiar movies or TV shows
- ♥ Listen to audiobooks
- ♥ Play with a sensory light projector
- ♥ Have video chats with friends or family
- ♥ Play with a handheld electronic game
- ♥ Listen to guided relaxation recordings
- ♥ Listen to favorite radio programs or podcasts



## Nature and Outdoor Activities

Engaging in **outdoor activities** can be a relaxing and rejuvenating way to connect with nature. **Nature and outdoor activities** provide residents with fresh air, physical movement and a change of scenery, all of which are important for maintaining mental and physical health. Enjoying **nature and outdoor activities** can be as simple as a walk in a courtyard or garden; or as involved as an enjoyable picnic or bird watching.

- ♥ Watch birds from the window or in a courtyard/garden area
- ♥ Create a sensory garden
- ♥ Enjoy a picnic in an outdoor courtyard/garden area
- ♥ Plant seeds indoors or outdoors
- ♥ Rake garden leaves
- ♥ Blow bubbles outdoors
- ♥ Enjoy a ride on a bus or train to see different scenery together

