

TOOLS FOR INTERACTING WITH SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA

A GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS & LOVED ONES

1. COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

Remove or turn off distracting visual or auditory input. Use the person's first name. Use brief, concise, clear, language and speech. Stay calm and positive. Simplify multi-step instructions into step by step pieces.

2. MAKE EYE CONTACT

People with dementia often see most clearly two feet below eye level. Kneel or squat below them to make eye contact.



3. DON'T INTERRUPT THEM OR THEIR ACTIONS

When giving instructions, every time you repeat yourself you are "restarting" or "resetting" the command. Allow plenty of time for the action to be executed before repeating yourself.

4 UTILIZE FAMILIAR MUSIC

Studies show that music can activate areas of the brain associated with speech and recall. Encourage singing or listening to music that is familiar to a person with dementia, especially music from their youth.

5. UTILIZE FAMILIAR ACTIVITIES

Recreate activities that a person with dementia once enjoyed. For example, use a baby doll to encourage reaching if this person once cared for and loved babies.

