

BATHING

When bathing is a challenge:

- Make sure the bathroom is warm, inviting and well lit
- Prepare the bath ahead of time
- Put only 1 to 3 inches of water in the bathtub
- Play soft music in the background to create a calming and relaxing atmosphere
- Simplify the task of bathing... one step at a time
- Don't give the person a bath every day. If bathing continues to be difficult, do partial sponge baths daily with a full bath every 3 to 4 days

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COMMUNICATION

*To communicate more successfully
with your loved one:*

- Try to remain calm using a gentle matter-of-fact approach
- Talk with the person in an area that is free from distraction
- Use simple short sentences
- When you need to repeat something you said, use the exact wording as the time before
- Keep the pitch in your voice low (the person can hear it better and will remain more calm)
- Look directly at the person and make sure you have his or her attention before you start

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DRESSING

When dressing becomes more difficult:

- Keep the daily routine for dressing the same
- Avoid delays or interruptions in the morning routine
- Make sure the room is well lit and warm
- Label each dresser drawer with a description of contents
- If you lay out clothes, make sure the first item to put on is on the top and the last item is on the bottom
- Try using jogging suits, sweat pants and shirts for easier dressing

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EATING

When healthy eating is a concern:

- Provide the person with a good dental checkup
- Improve lighting in eating areas to avoid glares
- Reduce distractions at the table (remove papers, books, shut off the TV or radio)
- Make eating simple by providing finger foods
- Provide meals at regular and consistent intervals
- Verbally guide the person through his or her meals

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INCONTINENCE

When there is an issue with incontinence:

- Have the person use the toilet before and after each meal, as well as before going to bed and after getting up in the morning
- Simplify clothing. Try velcro tape instead of zippers and buttons, and trousers with elastic waist bands
- Purchase inexpensive washable chair cushion covers. Put them over large garbage bags to water proof the cushions
- Paint the wall behind the toilet a dark color (dark green, maroon, dark blue) as this will make the toilet easier to see
- Keep a bell or light handy for the person to use if he or she has trouble getting to the bathroom

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SLEEPING

When sleeping becomes more difficult:

- If the person awakens during the night, check to see if he or she appears to be too hot or cold
- Limit or discontinue any use of caffeine
- Provide night lights or safety lighting to help cut down confusion
- Play soft relaxing music
- Allow the person to sleep in a chair or couch if he or she refuses to get into bed
- Establish a routine of the person getting up and going to bed at the same time every day
- Try to discourage napping during the day

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WANDERING

When wandering becomes an issue:

- Allow the person to wander about the home, but make sure the environment is safe and secure
- Remove scatter rugs to prevent falling or tripping
- Place familiar objects, furniture and pictures in the person's surroundings
- Remove items that may trigger a desire to go out such as shoes, coats, hats, and purses
- Take the person out for regular walks
- Camouflage interior doors to match the walls by using the same paint or wallpaper

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