



THE SILVER TSUNAMI

AGING INFO

Your Ticket to Compassion, Navigating the Dementia Journey

Caregiver Checklist: Supporting Eating in Dementia

Before the meal:

- Create a calm, quiet space (turn off television, reduce clutter, etc)
- Use a plate color that contrasts with the food you are serving.
- Offer familiar or preferred foods.
- Prepare small portions to avoid being overwhelmed.
- Check that dentures fit and the mouth is comfortable. Check on other possible medical conditions.
- Ensure the person is seated safely and comfortably.
- Have adaptive utensils or finger foods if needed.
- Wash hands together to cue the person that it is mealtime.

During the meal:

- Sit at eye level and maintain a relaxed supportive tone.
- Model eating by taking bites of food and sips of drinks yourself.
- Offer one food at a time if attention is limited or the person seems overwhelmed with a whole plate of food.
- Use simple encouraging cues, such as “Here is your spoon,” or “This is your sandwich.”
- Use hand-under-hand support if needed.
- Watch for signs of fatigue, frustration, or discomfort.
- Offer sips of fluid throughout the meal.
- Allow plenty of time – avoid rushing the person.

After the meal:

- Praise effort, not outcomes. Comments such as “You did a great job!” or “Thank you for eating as much as you could.” Try focusing on the positive not the negative.
- Offer a small dessert or a high-calorie snack if the meal is small.

- Document what was eaten and any challenges as this information will be helpful if and when you need to provide the information to a medical professional.
- Note any changes in chewing, swallowing or appetite. The more specific you can be the more helpful this information will be.
- Clean up calmly to maintain a positive association with mealtimes. Ask the person to help you clear the table or dry dishes if they are still able to help.

Ongoing strategies:

- Provide many small meals or snacks throughout the day.
- Add calorie boosters such as olive oil, butter, avocados, and powdered milk to increase calorie intake.
- Keep favorite foods stocked and visible.
- Adjust textures as needed, soft, minced or even pureed if necessary.
- Consult with a healthcare professional if choking, coughing, or weight loss occurs or increases.

Miracle Berries can be purchased on Amazon.



OUR CONTACT INFORMATION –

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